

**MONTHLY**

# **NEWSLETTER**



**JULY 2026**

## REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE

Dear Reader,

July has been a month of both reflection and progression for IAMC Hyderabad. Globally courts and institutions continued to sharpen the guardrails of arbitration and mediation: from the UK Court of Appeal's reaffirmation of sovereign immunity principles in *Devas v. Republic of India*, to the DIFC Court of Appeal's landmark first-ever setting aside of a DIAC award on due process grounds. Closer home, our courts have been equally active: the Supreme Court's clarification on Section 33/34 timelines and the Delhi High Court's robust enforcement of the Vedanta awards both signal a judiciary increasingly committed to minimal interference and institutional confidence in ADR.

The evolving relationship between technology and human judgement in dispute resolution was a recurring theme that ran through much of the discourse – from UNCITRAL's 59th Session to our own fireside chat on "AI, Advocacy and Adjudication". As CJI Surya Kant rightly observed in London, artificial intelligence can sharpen process, but it cannot substitute for the trust, empathy, and judgment that human neutrals bring to the table. This is a balance IAMC remains deeply committed to as we shape our own technology-enabled initiatives.

On the institutional front, it was a privilege to engage with practitioners from AAA-ICDR, Panag, Babu & Sarangi, and Reed Smith, and to address the next generation of legal minds at Symbiosis Law School. As we look ahead to the Commonwealth Peace Mediation Conference in Jaipur, the VMAC 2026 finals, and our expansive seven-event programme at Singapore Convention Week, August promises to be an equally consequential month for the IAMC and for ADR in India more broadly.

As always, I thank our editorial team and our growing community of practitioners, partners, and students for their continued engagement with IAMC's work.

Warm regards,  
A.J. Jawad  
CEO & Registrar, IAMC Hyderabad

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### **1. The UK Court of Appeal Upholds State Sovereign Immunity**

In the latest judgement of *Devas (Mauritius) Limited v. Republic of India*, the UK Court of Appeal examined whether ratification of New York Convention amounts to waiver of sovereign immunity. The dispute stemmed from treaty arbitration awards obtained by Mauritian investors in Devas after India terminated an S-band satellite spectrum lease agreement between Devas and state-owned Antrix Corporation. Dismissing the claimant's appeal, the UK court made three critical observations. [Read more](#)

### **3. SICC Rules Partial Awards on Liability Are Final**

The Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) issued an important ruling in *South Pacific Oil Ltd v. Pacific Islands Energy Pte Ltd*, offering critical guidance on the intersection of multi-stage arbitral awards and statutory limitation periods. The claimant sought to set aside a final award on quantum by contesting the underlying liability findings originally decided in an earlier partial award. Dismissing the application, the SICC reaffirmed that under the International Arbitration Act (IAA), a partial award on liability is final and binding on the issues it determines. [Read more](#)

### **5. UNCITRAL 59th Session Advances ISDS & Arbitration Reforms**

The UNCITRAL concluded its fifty-ninth annual session at UN headquarters in New York on 10 July. Significant reforms and legal developments were advanced. Key outcomes of the session related to UNCITRAL's work on Investment State dispute settlement (ISDS) reform and international arbitration. The Commission finalised the draft statute of the Advisory Centre on International Investment Dispute Resolution, and with respect to international arbitration the commission adopted few recommendations and revisions. [Read more](#)

### **7. Thailand Appoints Conciliators in Gulf Maritime Dispute**

In the dispute relating to sea in the Gulf of Thailand, known as the Overlapping Claims Area, Thailand has appointed conciliators from South Africa and Germany for U.N. Arbitration process, initiated by Cambodia to resolve a long running maritime dispute. [Read more](#)

### **2. ICC's 2026 Rules Introduce Financial Integration of Med-Arb**

The 2026 Arbitration Rules of the International Chamber of Commerce aim to strategically integrate the multi-tier dispute resolution process, specifically targeting the financial efficiency of "Med-Arb" (Mediation-Arbitration). Under this framework, if parties attempt to settle their dispute through ICC Mediation but fail, the administrative costs already incurred during the mediation phase will be credited towards the subsequent ICC arbitration costs. [Read more](#)

### **4. Singapore High Court Limits Late Set-Aside Grounds**

In *DLS v. DTL*, the Singapore High Court refined the procedural rules under the International Arbitration Act (IAA) for challenging arbitral rulings. A contractor sought to set aside a First Partial Award based on a breach of natural justice, later trying to introduce an apparent bias argument after an arbitrator failed to disclose sitting on a related tribunal. The High Court clarified a critical procedural boundary: while parties can introduce new grounds or legal arguments after the strict three-month limitation window has passed, they are generally barred from introducing entirely new facts or circumstances that could, and should, have been raised when the initial set-aside application was filed. [Read more](#)

### **6. Peru Faces 22 pending ICSID Arbitrations**

Peru's new government will take over 22 pending investment arbitration cases before ICSID, along with hundreds of domestic arbitration disputes, making it one of the largest investor-state arbitration caseloads in Latin America. While the move appraises investor confidence, the real value lies in the enforceability of the arbitral awards. [Read more](#)

### **8. Kazakhstan Joins International Organisation for Mediation**

Kazakh Foreign minister Yermek Kosherbayev signed the Convention on the Establishment of the International organization for mediation, confirming Kazakhstan's accession to the new body. It's a significant move to attract investors and build stronger bilateral relations with China. [Read more](#)

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### 9. DIFC Proposes Major Arbitration Law Reforms

The Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) closed its 30-day public consultation on radical amendments to its Arbitration Law, marking the framework's first major reform in 18 years. Set to be renamed the Arbitration and Mediation Law, the legislation significantly expands tribunal powers by introducing summary determination for weak cases, security for costs, and provisions for appointing Emergency Arbitrators. Regional companies must adapt their dispute strategies to accommodate the updates. [Read more](#)

### 11. Mikhail Fridman Launches BIT Claim Against Netherlands

Russian billionaire Mikhail Fridman has launched legal action against the Netherlands at the Permanent Court of Arbitration over the sanctions-driven collapse of Amsterdam Trade Bank, citing a 1989 bilateral investment treaty to demand damages and asset restoration. Fridman alleges that Dutch regulators subjected his institution to a targeted harassment campaign prior to its insolvency following EU sanctions. This case directly tests whether legacy investment treaties can override EU sanctions frameworks and expose European states to massive compensation claims. Yet, with European courts increasingly blocking awards that undermine sanctions, whether arbitrators will enforce liability remains an open question. [Read more](#)

### Insurance Ombudsman Rules Lack Binding Force: CAM Analysis

A recent Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas analysis highlights that while the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017 allow the Ombudsman to act as a mediator, mediation success rates fell from 42% in FY24 to 39% in FY25. The authors argue that the current framework is limited because the Ombudsman's mediation recommendations lack binding force, allowing non-compliant insurers to simply wait out formal awards. Drawing parallels to the success of the RBI's Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, the article advocates that the upcoming Draft Insurance Ombudsman Amendment Rules should formally integrate consent-based mediation and make mutually accepted settlements legally binding to drive efficient consumer dispute resolution. [Read more](#)

### 10. Study Shows Arbitral Variance Across AI Models

A study testing 99 real fintech disputes across different Large Language Models (LLMs) revealed that AI arbitrators produce dramatically different outcomes based on the specific model and software version used, with Claude favoring consumers significantly more than ChatGPT, and a simple version update of the same model raising a company's win rate from 86% to 95%. Because AI models possess distinct default leanings and update unpredictably, choosing which model decides a dispute becomes a major procedural and tactical issue, mirroring traditional arbitrator selection. [Read more](#)

### 12. DIFC Court Sets Aside DIAC Award Over Due Process Breach

In Oheo Bank v. Parker, the DIFC Court of Appeal made history by setting aside an arbitral award for the first time. The appellant successfully challenged a DIAC award where the tribunal held them liable on a claim introduced only in a post-hearing brief. The Court ruled that this severely denied the appellant a reasonable opportunity to present its case, violating basic due process under Article 41(2) (a)(ii) of the DIFC Arbitration Law. This landmark decision establishes critical, authoritative guidance on the high threshold required for court intervention in DIFC-seated arbitrations. [Read more](#)

## DOMESTIC NEWS

### **1. Delhi HC refers decision on Limitation Period of Mediation to a Larger Bench**

The Delhi High Court while hearing a chamber appeal arising from a commercial suit, found that the earlier decisions were conflicting and therefore has referred to a larger bench the question of whether the time spent by parties in mediation should be excluded while computing the limitation period prescribed for filing a written statement or replication under the Delhi High court (original side) Rules, 2018. The decision by the larger bench will help determine the wave of 'Vivad Mukht Bharat.'

[Read more](#)

### **3. Allahabad HC maintains Writ Jurisdiction despite arbitration clause**

A bench of justices Ajit Kumar and Swarupama Chatterjee of Allahabad High Court ruled that the presence of an arbitration clause does not entirely strip a Court of its writ jurisdiction under Article 226, especially when the state body is acting arbitrarily. It emphasised that public bodies like National Highway Security of India are bound by the principles of natural justice and must maintain fairness and reasonableness in their contractual dealings, allowing contractors to seek immediate relief. [Read more](#)

### **5. Supreme Court clarifies section 33/34 award challenge timelines**

The Supreme Court has held that once an arbitral tribunal formally entertains an application under Section 33 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, the limitation period for filing a challenge to the arbitral award under section 34 begins only after that application is decided. It is irrelevant whether the section 33 application is ultimately allowed or dismissed. Thus, reducing chances of parallel court challenges while applications before the tribunal remain pending. [Read more](#)

### **2. Delhi HC enforces \$45.4M Vedanta Arbitral Awards**

The Delhi High Court enforced two foreign arbitral awards totaling USD 45.4 million in favor of Vedanta Limited, explicitly ruling that an enforcement court under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act cannot revisit the merits of a case or act as an appellate court. The High Court emphasized that the scope of interference with foreign awards is strictly limited to the narrow public policy grounds enumerated under Section 48 of the Act. This judgement affirmed the confidence of MNCs in enforceability of arbitral awards in Indian jurisdiction. [Read more](#)

### **4. CJI highlights delays in Arbitration Council of India**

While delivering the inaugural address at ADR Summit 2026 organised to mark silver jubilee celebrations of the Indian Institute of Arbitration & Mediation in Delhi, CJI Suryakant flagged the delay in the formation of the Arbitration Council of India and also stressed that India is moving towards treating alternative dispute redressal (ADR) not as a lesser substitute for justice but as one of its ordinary pathways. With commercial disputes rising, businesses look towards a streamlined and institutionalised dispute resolution.

[Read more](#)

### **6. Delhi HC judge calls for reform of Section 34**

Expressing his concerns about the Indian Arbitration framework, the Delhi High Court Justice C Hari Shankar, remarked that Section 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996 is very badly worded and requires a clear explanation of what constitutes the 'fundamental policy of Indian law. Further, he enunciated on the importance of institutional arbitration and encouraged retired judges to empanel themselves as arbitrators with such institutions, underscoring the preference for institutional arbitration over ad-hoc proceedings. [Read more](#)

## DOMESTIC NEWS

### **7. Delhi High Court enforces arbitral document confidentiality**

In the latest judgement passed by the Delhi High Court, it dismissed a petition challenging an arbitral award issued in November 2023 on the ground that confidentiality under section 42A of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 cannot be undermined. The judgement strengthened statutory confidentiality protections by making unapproved arbitral records inadmissible in collateral court proceedings.

[Read more](#)

### **9. Insurance Ombudsman Rules Lack Binding Force: CAM Analysis**

A recent Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas analysis highlights that while the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017 allow the Ombudsman to act as a mediator, mediation success rates fell from 42% in FY24 to 39% in FY25. The authors argue that the current framework is limited because the Ombudsman's mediation recommendations lack binding force, allowing non-compliant insurers to simply wait out formal awards. Drawing parallels to the success of the RBI's Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, the article advocates that the upcoming Draft Insurance Ombudsman Amendment Rules should formally integrate consent-based mediation and make mutually accepted settlements legally binding to drive efficient consumer dispute resolution. [Read more](#)

### **8. CJI Surya Kant advocates for a hybrid framework of technology and human judgement**

At a milestone dispute resolution event organized by the Indian High Commission in London, Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant highlighted how technological innovations like virtual hearings and secure data platforms are driving cross-border mediation. However, he drew a firm boundary regarding the adoption of artificial intelligence in ADR: AI can manage virtual setups, synthesize case details, and help human neutrals pinpoint key friction blocks, but it cannot replace human mediators. Stressing that dispute resolution fundamentally hinges on interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, and mutual trust, CJI Kant advocated for a hybrid framework where technology amplifies human judgment without overshadowing it.

[Read more](#)

## IAMC EVENTS

27 JUNE 2026

### **IAMC Participates in BiSy Seminar on Global Expansion and UAE Markets**

IAMC Hyderabad participated in the seminar "Global Expansion, Standards and Export Opportunities in UAE." During the session, Mr. A.J. Jawad, Registrar, IAMC, highlighted the importance of well-drafted arbitration and mediation clauses in cross-border contracts to help businesses effectively manage international disputes.

29 JUNE 2026

### **IAMC CEO & Registrar Delivers Keynote at Symbiosis Law School**

IAMC's CEO & Registrar, Mr. A.J. Jawad, delivered the keynote address at the Deeksharambh 2026 induction ceremony of Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad. His address highlighted the values of interdependence, Ubuntu, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, encouraging students to carry these principles into their legal careers.

### **Distinguished Practitioners Visit IAMC Hyderabad**

IAMC Hyderabad hosted Ms. Thara Gopalan, Vice President, AAA-ICDR; Ms. Shruti Raina, Partner, India Disputes Team, Panag, Babu & Sarangi; and Ms. Niyati Ahuja, Senior Associate, International Disputes Team, Reed Smith LLP, at the Centre. During the visit, the participants engaged in discussions on recent developments in arbitration and mediation, exchanged perspectives on the evolving ADR landscape, and shared best practices in dispute resolution, reflecting a common commitment to advancing effective dispute resolution.

10 JULY 2026

### **IAMC Hosts MSME ODR Training Session**

IAMC Hyderabad hosted a training session for MSMEs on the new ODR platform, ahead of its launch on 15 October 2026. Conducted by Ms. Isha Aggarwal, Senior Legal Consultant, Ministry of MSME, the session covered the platform's e-filing process, document uploading, and case management features.

24 JULY 2026

### **IAMC Participates in Lex Witness Grand Masters 2026**

IAMC's CEO & Registrar, Mr. A.J. Jawad, participated as a panelist at the 12th Annual Grand Masters 2026 – Hyderabad Edition, hosted by Lex Witness. A key takeaway from the discussion was the importance of deal mediation in preventing disputes by building stronger consensus during contract negotiations.

25 JULY 2026

### **IAMC Hosts Fireside Chat on AI, Advocacy and Adjudication**

IAMC Hyderabad, in collaboration with RPC Legal, hosted a fireside chat on "AI, Advocacy and Adjudication: Are the Guardrails Sufficient?" The session featured Ms. Kirtan Prasad, Partner at RPC Legal, London, Mr. Krishna Grandhi, Senior Advocate, High Court of Telangana, and Mr. Roopam Verma, Partner at IRIS Legal, Hyderabad. The session explored diverse facets of artificial intelligence in the legal domain, including the potential of AI and AGI, ethical and regulatory considerations, confidentiality and data protection, explainability, accountability, and the indispensable role of human oversight in legal decision-making.

## IAMC EVENTS

- 31 JULY 2026** **IAMC to participate in CPMC 2026**  
The Commonwealth Peace Mediation Conference (CPMC) 2026 will be held in Jaipur from 31 July to 2 August 2026, bringing together judges, lawyers, mediators, and policymakers to discuss developments in mediation and the rule of law. Mr. Jawad, Registrar, IAMC Hyderabad, will participate as a speaker in Session 3: "From Retribution to Restoration – Reimagining Justice through Mediation in Criminal Law."
- 2 AUG 2026**
- 7 AUG 2026** **IAMC to Host VMAC 2026 Final Rounds**  
The International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC), Hyderabad, in collaboration with SettleWiseNow (SWN), will host the final rounds of the inaugural Virtual Mediation Advocacy Competition (VMAC) 2026 from 7–9 August 2026. The final rounds will see qualified teams from the preliminary stages compete in advanced mediation advocacy simulations as they vie for the championship title.
- 9 AUG 2026**
- 24 AUG 2026** **IAMC Hyderabad to Participate in Singapore Convention Week 2026**  
IAMC Hyderabad will participate in Singapore Convention Week 2026, to be held from 24–28 August 2026, by hosting seven events as part of the official programme. Organised in collaboration with leading international institutions and law firms, the events will bring together practitioners and industry experts to discuss contemporary issues in mediation, arbitration, and cross-border dispute resolution.
- 28 AUG 2026**  
IAMC Hyderabad's programme will commence on 25 August 2026 with a panel discussion organised in partnership with Presolv. On 26 August 2026, the Centre will host a discussion in collaboration with the Oman Commercial Arbitration Centre (OCAC). The programme for 27 August 2026 will include a debate organised with Rajah & Tann, alongside two panel discussions in collaboration with JSA and the Arbitration Bar of India and JSA. The series will conclude on 28 August 2026 with two panel discussions organised with Drew & Napier under the YIAMC initiative and Saraf and Partners.

### EDITORIAL TEAM :

*This newsletter contains summaries of recent developments compiled from publicly available sources and is intended for educational and informational purposes only. Readers are encouraged to refer to the linked original publications for complete information.*

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