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Call for Papers

Special Issue:
Honour of Professor Mahendra Pal Singh
(July, 2027 Issue and January, 2028 Issue)



Professor Mahendra Pal Singh (1940–2026)

Professor Mahendra Pal Singh was born on 15 July 1940 in Jitholi, a village in the Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. He lost his parents early and was raised by his grandparents. He later recalled how village life shaped his understanding of the ways people in India encounter law. After taking degrees in arts and law at the University of Agra, he studied constitutional law under Professor V. N. Shukla at the University of Lucknow. Years later, as the revising author of successive editions of *V. N. Shukla's Constitution of India*, Professor Singh carried that relationship into classrooms across the country. Readers who never attended a lecture by either scholar encountered both through the same book.

At Columbia Law School, Professor Singh earned a second master's degree and studied with Walter Gellhorn, a scholar of administrative law and civil liberties. He also earned a doctorate in law from Lucknow. He began teaching in Meerut in 1964 and joined the University of Delhi in 1970, where he taught until 2005 and served as Head and Dean of the Faculty of Law from 1994 to 1997. His writing from those years shows how he approached a constitutional question. In an essay on judicial appointments, he examined a public exchange about the representation of women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the bench. What, he asked in effect, did those responsible for selecting judges mean when they invoked merit?

During his Delhi years, Professor Singh held an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship at Heidelberg University and pursued research at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law. In *German Administrative Law in Common Law Perspective*, he explained to readers trained in the common law how a different legal tradition controls the exercise of public power. At the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin in 2002–03, he turned to the protection of minorities, asking what Indian and European experience might teach each other.

Professor Singh brought this comparative approach to Nepal's constitution-making debate. At a United Nations Development Programme conference in Godavari in March 2007, he traced India's concentration of power at the Centre to the experience of Partition. For participants debating how Nepal should distribute power, his observation gave the Indian example a history. He also asked whether a federal settlement would enable governments to respond to communities whose concerns had long gone unheard.

As Vice-Chancellor of the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences in Kolkata, Professor Singh encouraged students to take responsibility for a quarterly law review. The *NUJS Law Review* began publication in 2008 with Professor Singh as its founding Editor-in-Chief. He later chaired the Delhi Judicial Academy and held the Chair of Comparative Law at National Law University Delhi. His commitment to education also took him back to Jitholi, where he ran a school for children from the surrounding villages. Law students from Kolkata and volunteers with Increasing Diversity by Increasing Access visited the school. The village in which Professor Singh had grown up thus became a place where the next generation of law students could meet children considering their own educational futures.

The Asian Journal of Legal Education invites original articles in honour of Professor Mahendra Pal Singh. We invite law teachers, researchers, practitioners and students to examine how Indian constitutional law is taught, interpreted and put to use. Contributions may engage directly with Professor Singh's writings or take up a question arising from them in an Indian or comparative Asian setting.

Themes for contributions

1. **Equality, reservation and the meaning of merit**: How should students understand the relationship between formal equality and the case for affirmative action under Articles 15 and 16? Authors might examine how judgments, recruitment records or accounts of exclusion alter the way a casebook presents merit and representation.
2. **Judicial independence and appointments**: What evidence allows a student to assess whether an appointment process protects independence, promotes diversity or satisfies public expectations of accountability? Contributions may evaluate the teaching of the collegium through judgments, institutional records or comparison with another Asian jurisdiction.
3. **Fundamental rights, Directive Principles and economic policy**: A dispute over school funding, healthcare or access to food can place constitutional promises alongside budgetary choices. How should students evaluate the evidence, the institutional competence of a court and the consequences of the remedy they propose?
4. **Fundamental rights and private power**: Using a sports association, private university or digital platform as a starting point, authors may examine how to teach the distinct questions of who qualifies as the State under Article 12, when a writ is available and which rights can bind a private actor.
5. **Secularism, minority rights and constitutional pluralism**: How should a course address a dispute in which a minority educational institution claims autonomy and one of its members claims equal treatment? Contributions might analyse whose perspectives appear in teaching materials and how linguistic or regional sources change the account students encounter.

6. **Liberty, sexuality and criminalization**: Singh's response to the Naz Foundation judgment invites renewed attention to the choice of constitutional remedy. Authors might compare how judgments, litigants' accounts and advocacy materials teach students to understand the effects of criminalisation and the practical consequences of reading down a penal provision.
7. **Reasonableness, reasoned decisions and administrative justice**: What makes an official explanation adequate to the person affected? Contributions might examine how clinics or drafting exercises use scholarship refusals, disciplinary orders or welfare decisions to teach fair procedure, reason-giving and judicial review.

The themes are illustrative. Doctrinal, comparative, historical, empirical and classroom-based research is welcome. A study of a single course, clinic or case is particularly welcome where the author explains the choice of material, the method of inquiry and what other legal educators can learn from the findings.

Preparing and submitting a manuscript

Manuscript and abstract: Submit a complete, anonymised manuscript in .doc/.dcox format. Include an unstructured abstract of maximum 200 words explaining the research purpose, main findings and conclusions, followed by four to five/six specific keywords. Use The Bluebook, 19th edition for footnotes. The final length of the manuscript must not exceed 7000 words including footnotes.

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Last Date of Submission: 31 March, 2027 for the July, 2027 issue and 30 September, 2027 for the January, 2028 issue.

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