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CASE LAWS

ADMINISTRATIVE

Supreme Court sets 3-month limit for High Courts to deliver reserved judgments to avoid delay

Pila Pahan @ Peela Pahan and Others vs. State of Jharkhand and Another, Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0583/2026; 2026 INSC 604)

The Supreme Court has issued binding guidelines to High Courts to prevent delays in delivering reserved judgments. A bench directed that **judgments in reserved matters should generally be pronounced within three months**. It further ordered that bail decisions must be pronounced on the same day, and if reserved, they should be delivered and uploaded by the next day. The Court also said that if a reserved judgment is not delivered within four months, parties may approach the Chief Justice to transfer the case to another bench.

ARBITRATION

Supreme Court: Arbitration award made during pending civil case without court permission cannot be enforced.

Ashok and Ors. vs. Padam Chand and Ors., Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0584/2026; 2026 INSC 591)

The Supreme Court has held that an arbitral award obtained under the Arbitration Act, 1940 during the pendency of a civil suit cannot be used to dismiss or settle the suit **if the arbitration proceedings were initiated without the court's permission**. The case arose after an arbitral award was secured while the appellant's civil suit was still pending, leading the trial court to dismiss the suit on the ground that the dispute had been resolved. The Court clarified that such an award cannot legally affect ongoing civil proceedings when the arbitration was commenced without prior leave of the court.

Kerala High Court: Partition suit under Section 17 CPC can be filed where any part of property is located across jurisdictions

P.V. Surendran vs. Kavitha Rajendran and Ors., Dated: 25.05.2026 (MANU/KE/1097/2026; 2026:KER:35893)

The Kerala High Court has ruled that when immovable properties involved in a partition dispute are situated within the jurisdiction of different courts, the **suit can be filed in any one court where any portion of the property is located**. The Division Bench clarified that while Section 16 CPC generally requires partition suits to be filed where the property is situated, Section 17 CPC provides an exception for properties spread across multiple jurisdictions. The Court observed that even the presence of one item, or a part of any item of the property within a court's territorial limits, is sufficient to confer jurisdiction on that court, thereby allowing a consolidated trial of the dispute.

Supreme Court: High Courts have constitutional power to order police investigations into fraud or irregularities in estate administration

Bai Avabai Hormusji Tata Trust vs. Shernaz Faroukh Lawyer & Ors., Dated: 25.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0526/2026; 2026 INSC 540)

The Supreme Court has held that **High Courts acting as probate courts have the authority to order police investigations if they detect irregularities or fraud in the administration of a deceased person's estate**. The Court observed that while probate courts primarily examine the validity of wills, they cannot remain passive when there are signs of mismanagement, concealment of assets, or misuse of estate funds. Upholding a Bombay High Court order, the bench noted that courts have a duty to protect estates under their supervision and may use their constitutional powers to investigate alleged fraud and safeguard the property of the deceased.

Supreme Court: Adult sex workers cannot be forcibly rescued or detained against their consent

Prajwala vs. Union of India & Ors., Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0603/2026; 2026 INSC 609)

The Supreme Court has ruled that adult sex workers **cannot be forced into rehabilitation or detention against their will**. The Court emphasized that they cannot be treated as passive subjects of rescue and that their autonomy must be respected. Rejecting the blanket approach under Section 17 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, it held that **rehabilitation orders directly affect a person's life, liberty, and future**, the Court held that authorities cannot make such decisions without considering the wishes of the individual concerned.

Delhi High Court: Participation in protests cannot be ground to deny bail in Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) case

Wahidur Rahman vs. Directorate of Enforcement, Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/DE/4169/2026; 2026:DHC:4856)

The Delhi High Court has held that **merely participating in protest activities cannot be used as a ground to deny bail in a money laundering case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**. The Court made the observation while granting bail to an accused linked to alleged activities of the banned organisation Popular Front of India (PFI) and its political wing Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI). The Court noted that bail decisions must primarily focus on the financial allegations in the case, rather than conduct related to protests.

Gujarat High Court: Lalita Kumari ruling does not permit direct High Court petition for FIR in custodial death cases under Article 226

Tofik Shaikh s/o Jahiruddin Gyasuddin Shaikh vs. State of Gujarat & Ors., Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/GJ/1535/2026; 2026:GUJHC:33459)

The Gujarat High Court has held that the principle laid down in Lalita Kumari v. Government of Uttar Pradesh regarding registration of FIR does not mean that families in custodial death cases can directly approach the High Court seeking FIR registration. Dismissing the petition, the Court observed that the proper course is to first use the statutory remedies available under criminal law when police fail to register an FIR. It further clarified that writ jurisdiction cannot be treated as the first option in such matters, and parties must follow the prescribed legal procedure before approaching constitutional courts.

Delhi High Court: Courts must exercise heightened vigilance in bail cases involving suspicious deaths of young brides

Ayodhya Devi alias Jyoti vs. State Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Dated: 25.05.2026 (MANU/DE/4068/2026; 2026:DHC: 4705)

The Delhi High Court has observed that **courts must exercise "heightened vigilance" while considering bail in cases where young brides die under suspicious circumstances** within a short span of marriage. The Court made the observation while denying bail to a mother-in-law accused in a dowry death case involving a minor couple. The Court also noted that both the deceased and her husband were minors at the time of marriage, and the prosecution alleged persistent harassment over a dowry demand of ₹3 lakh by the husband and his family.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Supreme Court: Casinos must pay Goods and Services Tax (GST) on total bets placed, not just on money retained after payouts

Directorate General of Goods and Services Tax Intelligence (HQs) & Ors. vs. Gameskraft Technologies Private Limited & Ors., Dated: 27.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0589/2026; 2026 INSC 595)

The Supreme Court has rejected the casino industry's argument that **Goods and Services Tax (GST) should be levied only on Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR), or the amount retained after paying winnings to players.** The Court held that GST is a tax on the taxable supply and not on the profits earned by the supplier. It observed that the taxable event occurs the moment a player places a bet and is allowed to participate in a game involving an uncertain outcome. Therefore, casinos cannot calculate GST liability based on their net revenue after adjusting winnings against losses, as such a method is inconsistent with the structure and purpose of the GST regime.

ELECTION

Supreme Court: Election Commission can verify citizenship for voter lists, but cannot make the final decision on citizenship

Association for Democratic Reforms & Ors. vs. Election Commission of India & Ors., Dated: 27.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0560/2026; 2026 INSC 564)

The Supreme Court has held that the **Election Commission of India can conduct a limited inquiry into a person's citizenship to determine eligibility for inclusion in the electoral roll.** Upholding the Special Intensive Revision of voter lists in Bihar, the Court said this power arises from the Commission's constitutional duty to maintain accurate electoral rolls. The Court also clarified that such scrutiny is only for electoral purposes and does not amount to a final or legally binding determination of citizenship under the law.

INSOLVENCY

Supreme Court: Successful resolution applicant cannot renegotiate terms after Committee of Creditors (CoC) approves resolution plan

Sanjay Dave vs. Andhra Bank Ltd. & Ors., Dated: 27.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0574/2026; 2026 INSC 580)

The Supreme Court has held that once a resolution plan is approved by the Committee of Creditors (CoC), the **successful resolution applicant cannot seek to renegotiate or avoid its obligations by raising objections to terms that were already discussed and accepted during the insolvency process.** Upholding the decisions of the NCLT and NCLAT, the Court observed that the applicant had delayed implementation of the approved plan by disputing the conditions of the Letter of Intent. The Court emphasized that such conduct defeats the objective of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, which is designed to ensure a swift and time-bound resolution process.

MUNICIPAL TAX

Supreme Court: All MIDC units entitled to property tax exemption until services are transferred to Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation

Small Scale Entrepreneurs Association & Ors. vs. The State of Maharashtra & Ors., Dated: 27.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0566/2026; 2026 INSC 570)

The Supreme Court has ruled that industries located in the Trans Thane Creek (TTC) Industrial Area are **exempt from paying property tax to the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation as long as the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) continues to provide essential civic services such as roads, water supply, drainage, street lighting, and sewerage.** The Court clarified that this exemption applies only during the period when these services are provided by MIDC. Once the responsibility for these facilities is transferred to the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation, the exemption ends and the industries become liable to pay property tax to the municipal body.

PROPERTY

Supreme Court: Land or compensation claim cannot be rejected merely because claimant is a sanyasi

Satya Narayan Shukla vs. The State of Uttar Pradesh & Ors., Dated: 26.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0579/2026; 2026 INSC 583)

The Supreme Court has held that a person's claim for **land or monetary compensation cannot be denied only on the ground that he describes himself as a sanyasi.** The Court made the observation while dismissing a prolonged litigation from Uttar Pradesh involving a claim for compensation and land allotment after a road was constructed over the petitioner's property. A bench clarified that even though sanyas is considered the final stage of life in the Hindu tradition involving renunciation of worldly attachments, such spiritual status does not take away a person's legal right to seek compensation or property claims. The Court emphasized that legal entitlements cannot be brushed aside based on religious or personal identity alone.

SERVICE

Kerala High Court: Denial of disability pension to army personnel based on unreasoned medical opinion not sustainable; reasons must be properly recorded

Balamurali Krishna M. vs. Union of India & Ors., Dated: 29.05.2026 (MANU/KE/1098/2026; 2026:KER:37038)

The Kerala High Court has held that **denial of disability pension to an ex-army personnel cannot be sustained if it is based on a medical opinion that is not supported by proper or detailed reasoning.** The Court made the observation while hearing a challenge to an order of the Armed Forces Tribunal that had rejected the petitioner's claim for disability pension. The Division Bench ruled that such denial cannot stand when the medical opinion lacks full reasoning, stating that decisions affecting pension rights must be properly justified.

Rajasthan High Court: Doctors cannot claim non-practicing allowance while still doing private practice

State of Rajasthan & Anr. vs. Dr. Dinesh Kumar Sharma & Ors., Dated: 26.05.2026 (MANU/RH/0529/2026; 2026:RJ-JP:21986)

The Rajasthan High Court set aside an order directing pay parity for medical officers who had not opted for Non-Practicing Allowance (NPA). The Court held that NPA is meant **only for doctors who surrender private practice, and those who continue private practice are not eligible for it**. It further observed that the service rules clearly create two separate categories of doctors, and they cannot be treated as similarly situated for pay fixation or benefits.

Supreme Court: Central government must consider state's views before rejecting All India Services officer's voluntary retirement request

Abdur Rahman vs. Union of India & Ors., Dated: 26.05.2026 (MANU/SC/0551/2026; 2026 INSC 550)

The Supreme Court has held that **while voluntary retirement of All India Services officers requires approval from the Central Government**, the Centre cannot reject such a request without first considering the views and recommendation of the concerned State Government. Setting aside the decisions of the Bombay High Court and the Central Administrative Tribunal, the Court found that the Centre had rejected a Maharashtra cadre IPS officer's VRS application without adequately considering the State Government's recommendation, rendering the decision unsustainable.

Gauhati High Court: Employer best suited to decide candidate eligibility; courts will not normally interfere unless decision is arbitrary or illegal

Rezzaqul Hussain vs. The State of Assam & 6 Ors., Dated: 25.05.2026 (MANU/GH/0495/2026; GAHC010205702023)

The Gauhati High Court has observed that the assessment of a **candidate's eligibility and suitability for a post primarily lies with the employer, and courts should not ordinarily substitute their own view unless the recruitment process is arbitrary, illegal, or contrary to the prescribed criteria**. The Court held that employers are best placed to evaluate whether a candidate meets the requirements of a post based on the nature of work, and judicial interference is limited where recruitment rules and advertisement conditions are properly followed.



CIVIL

27.05.2026 The **Supreme Court** sought responses from the Union Government and the Enforcement Directorate on a plea filed by a Jaypee homebuyer seeking a court-monitored probe into the alleged diversion of thousands of crores collected from buyers in the Jaypee Wishtown project in Noida.

CONSUMER

29.05.2026 The **Chandigarh State Consumer Commission** ordered an airline to pay Rs 50,000 in compensation and refund ticket fares after passengers were stranded at an international airport when their flight departed earlier than scheduled without timely notice. The Commission said informing passengers of schedule changes is a basic duty of airlines.

CRIMINAL

25.05.2026 The **Supreme Court** has granted bail to an undertrial prisoner jailed for nine years, holding that prolonged incarceration violates Article 21 of the Constitution and reiterating that an undertrial cannot be kept in custody for an indefinite period without conclusion of trial.

EDUCATION

26.05.2026 The **Supreme Court** has expressed anguish over the cancellation of NEET-UG 2026 due to a paper leak, noting that despite its 2024 directions, the NTA has not learned lessons. It issued notice on pleas to replace the NTA and sought a status report on steps taken per the High-Powered Committee's recommendations.

The **Supreme Court** has stayed a Delhi High Court order passed last year which held that law students cannot be barred from appearing in examinations solely on the ground of insufficient attendance.

ENVIRONMENT

29.05.2026 The **Supreme Court** has issued a series of strict directives to restore the ecologically sensitive landscape and enforce stronger compliance with forest and wildlife conservation laws

FAMILY

25.05.2026 The **Central Bureau of Investigation** will take over the probe into the Twisha Sharma death case, while the **Supreme Court** has urged the media to refrain from publishing statements related to the matter.

LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL

25.05.2026 The **Supreme Court** issued notice to the Centre on a PIL seeking stricter curbs on child labour in entertainment and hospitality-related establishments, including dance bars, orchestras, spas, salons, over concerns of child exploitation.

MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

26.05.2026 Abhijit Dipke, founder of Cockroach Janata Party, has moved the **Delhi High Court** challenging the blocking of the party's X account. The movement emerged after an oral remark by the CJI likening unemployed youth engaging in online activism to "cockroaches."

PROPERTY

26.05.2026 The **Delhi High Court** has refused interim relief against the Centre's eviction order directing Delhi Gymkhana Club to vacate its Lutyens' Delhi premises by June 5, after the Solicitor General assured that any eviction would be peaceful and carried out in accordance with law after prior notice.



NOTIFICATION UPDATES

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

**Notification No. : DOR.GOV.REC.No.83/18.10.015/2026-2027, Dated:25.05.2026,
MANU/RMIC/0200/2026**

The Reserve Bank of India has amended governance directions for rural co-operative banks, extending the **maximum continuous tenure of directors from eight to ten years**, with a mandatory three-year cooling-off period before reappointment. This aims to prevent directors from circumventing tenure limits by briefly resigning and being re-elected.

**Press Release No.: 2026-2027/326, Dated: 25.05.2026,
MANU/RPRL/0304/2026**

The Reserve Bank of India has issued final Amendment Directions introducing a **cooling-off period** for directors of Urban and Rural Co-operative Banks after a **continuous tenure of ten years**, following stakeholder feedback on the draft proposals.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS

**Notification No. : GSR406(E), Dated: 25.05.2026,
MANU/PETR/0010/2026**

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued the **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Amendment Order, 2026** to amend the 2000 LPG Control Order with the objective of preventing dual usage of subsidized domestic LPG and Piped Natural Gas (PNG).

**Press Information Bureau, Dated: 25.05.2026,
MANU/PIBU/0705/2026**

The Indian government has amended the LPG control order to allow **consumers with Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections to either terminate their LPG connection** or obtain a transfer voucher for future restoration in non-PNG areas. This amendment offers flexibility and convenience, especially for those who may move to areas without PNG infrastructure.

MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

**Notification No.: SO2625(E), Dated: 26.05.2026,
MANU/DCAF/0016/2026**

The Central Government has announced the **enforcement** of specific provisions of the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Act, 2026**, effective from May 26, 2026.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

**Notification No.: 2627(E), Dated: 25.05.2026,
MANU/SJEM/0003/2026**

The Central Government, exercising powers under Section 99(1) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, amended the Schedule relating to **"locomotor disability"** by revising the definition of an **"acid attack victim."** The amended provision broadens the definition to include persons suffering external or internal disfigurement caused by acid or similar corrosive substances due to violent assault, self-infliction, or accidents. The amendment takes effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

**Notification No. : GSR405(E), Dated: 25.05.2026,
MANU/NSPR/0005/2026**

The **National Sports Governance (National Sports Tribunal) Rules, 2026** establish a dedicated **National Sports Tribunal** for speedy, independent, and cost-effective resolution of sports-related disputes. The Rules provide for the appointment, tenure, powers, salaries, and service conditions of the Tribunal's Chairperson and Members, and introduce a digital system for filing cases, virtual hearings, and publication of orders, reducing dependence on civil courts.

INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

**Notification No. 20/06/2026-4IB-1, Date: 26.05.2026,
MANU/SNHR/0098/2026**

The Government of Haryana has notified the **'Make in Haryana Industrial Policy, 2026'**, replacing the earlier **Haryana Enterprises & Employment Policy, 2020**. The new policy will remain in force for **five years** from the date of its notification or until a new policy/amendment is introduced, whichever occurs earlier.



AUSTRALIA

Energy & Natural Resources

Queensland Land Court recommends withholding approval for coal mine expansion over climate concerns

The Queensland Land Court has recommended that a proposed extension of the Ensham coal mine should not receive approval unless the project proponents can demonstrate substantial progress in reducing and managing **greenhouse gas emissions**. In *Re Sungela Pty Ltd & Anor [2025] QLC 5*, the Court found that the additional emissions generated by the project could adversely affect the **right to life** and the **right of children to protection** under the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Queensland)*. While objections relating to biodiversity and water resources were not considered sufficient to justify refusal, the Court placed significant weight on the long-term impacts of **climate change**.

Civil

Federal Court confirms freezing orders can extend to assets held through discretionary trusts

The Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia has clarified that courts may freeze assets held within discretionary trusts where a debtor effectively controls the trust and stands to benefit from its assets. In *Filippini v Keystone Asset Management Limited (Receivers and Managers Appointed) (In Liquidation) [2026] FCAFC 71*, the Court upheld orders freezing multiple properties and luxury vehicles held through trust structures. The judgment strengthens the position of creditors seeking recovery against individuals who may attempt to shield assets through **discretionary trust arrangements**.

Tax

New South Wales Supreme Court limits tax debt recovery measures against companies in administration

The Supreme Court of New South Wales has delivered an important decision affecting the Australian Taxation Office's ability to recover outstanding tax liabilities from companies undergoing voluntary administration. The dispute arose after a garnishee notice directed a financing provider to divert part of a company's funding to satisfy tax debts. Administrators argued that the arrangement undermined their ability to continue trading and preserve value during the administration process. The Court examined the operation of **Section 440B of the Corporations Act 2001**, which restricts the enforcement of certain rights while a company is under administration. The ruling provides greater clarity on the balance between **tax enforcement powers** and the protections afforded to distressed companies. The decision may influence future restructuring strategies and tax recovery proceedings across Australia.

CANADA

Energy & Natural Resources

Ontario introduces new framework to identify major energy projects and large electricity users

Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator has launched a new process aimed at identifying and planning for major energy projects expected to place significant demands on the provincial electricity network. The initiative forms part of Ontario's broader energy strategy, which anticipates substantial growth in electricity consumption through 2050. Under the new framework, **developers of projects requiring at least 10 megawatts of electricity may voluntarily submit proposals for assessment.** Authorities will consult with government agencies, utilities, municipalities and Indigenous communities to evaluate project viability and future infrastructure requirements. The process is particularly relevant for **data centres**, which are expected to become increasingly significant consumers of electricity.

CHINA

Patent

China launches comprehensive 2026 intellectual property development strategy

China's National Intellectual Property Administration has formally released the **2026 Plan for Building an Intellectual Property Powerhouse**, setting out an extensive programme of reforms aimed at strengthening the country's intellectual property ecosystem. The plan contains 106 separate initiatives spanning legislative reform, enforcement mechanisms, commercialization policies, and international cooperation. Key proposals include amendments to the **Trade Mark Law**, copyright regulations and rules governing customs-related intellectual property protection. The plan also focuses heavily on emerging technologies, including **artificial intelligence, blockchain, big data** and data-related intellectual property rights

HONG KONG

Capital Market

Hong Kong regulators outline key requirements for covered call exchange traded funds

Hong Kong's regulatory authorities have provided detailed guidance for fund managers seeking to launch **covered call exchange traded funds** in the jurisdiction. These investment products are designed to generate income through options strategies but also involve additional risks that require enhanced regulatory oversight. Regulators have emphasised the importance of transparent disclosure regarding **derivative exposure**, potential limitations on investment returns and the risks associated with distributions funded from capital. Fund managers will be expected to clearly explain how covered call strategies may provide income while simultaneously limiting gains during rising market conditions.

SINGAPORE

Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution

SIAC Consent Award Ruling Clarifies When Indemnifiers Become Liable

The Supreme Court of India has clarified the circumstances in which an indemnifier becomes liable under an indemnity provision contained in a consent award. In ***VPS Healthcare Private Limited and Another v. Prabhat Kumar Srivastava and Another***, the Court held that an indemnity obligation can arise immediately once the indemnity holder incurs an **absolute financial liability**, including a court-ordered payment or deposit. The Court rejected the argument that payment obligations could be postponed until the conclusion of all appellate proceedings. In doing so, it overturned a decision of the Delhi High Court concerning the enforcement of a consent award issued by the **Singapore International Arbitration Centre**.

Construction

Singapore High Court clarifies limits of adjudication review under payment legislation

The Singapore High Court has resolved a long-standing dispute concerning the scope of adjudication reviews under the *Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act 2004*. The case arose from a payment dispute connected to construction works at Changi Airport and focused on whether review adjudicators may reconsider an entire adjudication determination or only those issues specifically raised in a review application. The Court clarified the powers available to review panels and provided much-needed certainty regarding the operation of the adjudication review process. The ruling is expected to significantly influence future **construction payment disputes** and adjudication proceedings in Singapore.

SOUTH KOREA

Trademark

Supreme Court reinforces strict standard for trademark non-use defence

The Supreme Court of Korea has reaffirmed that the defence of **"justifiable reasons"** for trademark non-use remains **available only in limited and exceptional circumstances**. In two separate decisions delivered on the same day, the Court confirmed that internal business difficulties, concerns regarding potential infringement claims and financial distress do not automatically excuse a failure to use a registered trademark. The rulings interpret *Article 119(1)3 of the Trademark Act* strictly and maintain the long-standing judicial approach that only genuine external obstacles may justify non-use.

USA

Banking

Federal Reserve proposes specialised payment accounts for payment-focused institutions

The Federal Reserve Board has proposed the creation of a new category of restricted accounts designed specifically for institutions focused on payment processing activities. These proposed **Payment Accounts** would permit direct access to certain Federal Reserve payment and settlement services without granting the broader privileges associated with traditional master accounts. Account holders would be prohibited from earning interest, obtaining discount window loans or operating with daylight overdrafts, requiring them to maintain fully funded positions. The proposal seeks to address requests from payment-focused entities seeking direct access to the Federal Reserve's infrastructure while limiting systemic risk.

Capital Market

Securities and Exchange Commission proposes major overhaul of public company reporting framework

The United States Securities and Exchange Commission has proposed sweeping reforms to the regulatory framework governing public company reporting obligations. The proposal would significantly simplify the existing filer classification system by effectively dividing issuers into **Large Accelerated Filers** and **Non-Accelerated Filers**. Companies falling within the latter category would gain access to a range of scaled disclosure accommodations currently reserved for smaller reporting companies and emerging growth companies. Proposed benefits include reduced executive compensation disclosure requirements, relief from certain auditor attestation obligations and extended filing deadlines. According to the Commission, the reforms are intended to make public markets more attractive to smaller businesses while reducing regulatory complexity.

Commodity Futures Trading Commission introduces clearer pathway for enforcement declinations

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission's Division of Enforcement has introduced a revised cooperation framework designed to encourage voluntary disclosure of misconduct. Under the new policy, organizations that promptly **self-report**, provide comprehensive cooperation, undertake appropriate remediation and make necessary restitution may qualify for a declination of enforcement action. The framework replaces previous guidance that treated declinations as exceptional outcomes and instead establishes a clearer process for obtaining regulatory credit. Authorities have also indicated that cooperation may be recognized even where information has already reached regulators through other sources.

Employment And Labor

National Labor Relations Board General Counsel seeks revival of employer captive audience meetings

The General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board has called for the reversal of recent decisions that restricted employers from conducting mandatory workplace meetings during union organizing campaigns. These meetings, commonly referred to as **captive audience meetings**, have historically been used by employers to communicate their views regarding unionization. The General Counsel argues that recent rulings departed from decades of established precedent and improperly limited employer speech. If the earlier position is restored, employers could regain greater flexibility in communicating with employees during union campaigns, including requiring attendance at meetings addressing union representation.

Environment & Climate Change

Environmental Protection Agency eases restrictions under hydrofluorocarbon transition programme

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has finalized amendments to regulations governing the transition away from **hydrofluorocarbons**, which are widely used in refrigeration and air-conditioning systems. The Agency concluded that extending compliance timelines and relaxing certain restrictions would help address rising costs faced by businesses, particularly in the supermarket sector. Officials estimate that the revised framework could generate substantial savings while continuing efforts to reduce the environmental impact of refrigerants with high global warming potential. The Agency has also proposed additional amendments relating to refrigeration equipment used in transportation. The changes form part of the broader implementation of the *American Innovation and Manufacturing Act of 2020*. Industry participants are expected to benefit from greater flexibility during the transition to alternative technologies.

Environmental Protection Agency proposes rollback of several drinking water standards for PFAS chemicals

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has proposed significant changes to its regulation of **perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances**, commonly known as PFAS chemicals. The proposal would remove drinking water standards applicable to several PFAS compounds while extending compliance deadlines for others. According to the Agency, procedural concerns were identified in the manner in which certain standards were originally introduced under the *Safe Drinking Water Act*. Public water systems meeting specific criteria could receive additional time to comply with standards governing **perfluorooctanoic acid** and **perfluorooctane sulfonic acid**.

Healthcare

California court case could reshape management services organisation structures in healthcare sector

A closely watched case before the California Court of Appeal may have far-reaching implications for management services organizations and their relationships with professional corporations. The dispute centers on whether contractual rights allowing the replacement of physician owners are inconsistent with California's prohibition on the **corporate practice of medicine**. The case has attracted attention from both the California Attorney General and the California Medical Association due to its potential impact on healthcare investment structures. If the court adopts a restrictive interpretation, many existing management arrangements could face substantial legal and operational challenges.

Immigration

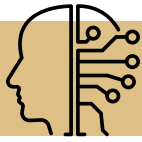
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services issues new guidance on adjustment of status applications

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services has issued a policy memorandum emphasizing that **adjustment of status** remains a discretionary immigration benefit rather than an automatic pathway to permanent residence. The guidance applies immediately to both pending and future applications and highlights the agency's view that adjustment should be regarded as an extraordinary form of relief. While existing legislation has long recognized the discretionary nature of the process, the memorandum places renewed emphasis on this principle and may affect how future applications are assessed. Immigration practitioners have noted that the guidance represents a notable shift in policy emphasis rather than a change in the underlying law.

Information Technology and Data Protection

Growing focus on artificial intelligence protection as celebrities expand trademark strategies

The increasing sophistication of **artificial intelligence-generated content** has prompted renewed efforts by public figures to protect their identity rights through intellectual property laws. Recent trademark filings seeking protection for voice characteristics and personal likenesses have highlighted concerns regarding unauthorized digital reproductions. These developments coincide with ongoing discussions surrounding the proposed **Nurture Originals, Foster Art and Keep Entertainment Safe Act**, commonly known as the NO FAKES Act, which seeks to strengthen protections against artificial intelligence-based misuse of an individual's identity. Legal experts believe that trademark law may increasingly serve as a complementary mechanism to traditional publicity rights, particularly where state-level protections vary.



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