



भारतीय विधिज्ञ परिषद् BAR COUNCIL OF INDIA

(Statutory Body Constituted under the Advocates Act, 1961)

21, Rouse Avenue Institutional Area, Near Bal Bhawan, New Delhi - 110002

BCID:2275 :2026

Date: 22.04.2026

To

1. The Hon'ble Chairman and Hon'ble Members of the High Powered Election Committees for State Bar Council Elections
2. The Hon'ble Chairman, All State Bar Councils
3. The Petitioners / Intervenors in the concerned proceedings
4. All women candidates who are in the fray in different States in the current election cycle of the respective State Bar Councils; and
5. Other women advocates desirous of placing their submissions before the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee, who are enrolled in State Bar Councils and may be members of various Bar Associations in the State
6. To the Secretary/ Secretaries of All State Bar Councils for information, dissemination and compliance and serial Nos.2, 4 & 5 all above through the Secretary/ies of State Bar Councils

Sub.- Notice for circulation, service and wide dissemination amongst all concerned stakeholders in relation to virtual hearing before the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee on 26.04.2026 at 11 AM & on 27.04.2026 at 5 PM regarding the manner and process of co-option of women advocates in the State Bar Councils.

Sir's/ Ma'am's,

The issue concerning the mode, manner and process of co-option of women advocates in the State Bar Councils is presently under consideration before the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee constituted pursuant to the orders passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

In this regard, attention is invited to the Order of Meeting dated 21.04.2026 of the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee, recording, amongst others, the order dated 13.04.2026 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, wherein it has been observed that *"the petitioners/intervenors, State Bar Councils, Bar Council of India, and the women candidates, who are in the fray in different States, and other women advocates, would*

be the direct stakeholders" whose assistance would be helpful in enabling the Committee to take a transparent and objective decision.

The said order further records that the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee has decided that all stakeholders must first be heard before any conclusion is arrived at, and in this regard notice is required to be issued to all the concerned parties indicated in the order dated 13.04.2026.

The Committee has further fixed the matter for hearing in virtual mode on 26.04.2026 at 11:00 A.M. and on 27.04.2026 at 5:00 P.M.

Accordingly, you are requested to take immediate steps to ensure that the present notice, together with the enclosed Minutes / order, is brought to the knowledge of all concerned stakeholders within the jurisdiction of your State Bar Council, including, in particular, the women candidates who are in the fray in the current election cycle, other women advocates, who are enrolled with you State Bar Council/s and who may be members of various Bar Associations in your respective State, petitioners/intervenors, Bar Associations, and all other persons who may be directly concerned with or affected by the issue under consideration.

The Secretary of State Bar Council/s./Concerned in Charge personnel, shall be under an obligation to ensure that the present notice, together with the enclosed order / Minutes, is duly and expeditiously served, circulated and brought to the knowledge of all concerned stakeholders in the respective State, by all means available at his / her command and disposal, so that an effective opportunity of participation and hearing is afforded to every concerned stakeholder. For the said purpose, the Secretary/ Concerned in Charge personnel in the State Bar Council/s shall be required to ensure wide dissemination through email, WhatsApp, telecommunication and all other available electronic or physical modes; publication on the official website of the State Bar Council, display on the notice board of the State Bar Council, communication to all Bar Associations within the State for display on their notice boards, and through such other modes and channels as may be necessary to secure the widest possible circulation and prompt intimation to all concerned.

The aforesaid exercise shall be undertaken with due urgency and seriousness so that no concerned stakeholder, and particularly no woman candidate in the fray and no woman advocate desirous of participating in the process, is left without notice or without a fair opportunity of being heard.

It is further notified that all concerned stakeholders may send their representations / submissions, together with their suggestions as to the process which shall be adopted for co-option, to the official email address of the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee, namely:-

sec.supervisorycommittee@gmail.com

The subject line of such email shall be strictly mentioned as:
"Representation/Suggestion regarding co-option"

The hearing before the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee shall take place in virtual mode on the following dates and times:-

26.04.2026 at 11:00 A.M.

27.04.2026 at 5:00 P.M.

The link / access details for the virtual hearing for both dates is as follows:-

A. Topic: Hearing before the High Powered Election Supervisory Committee regarding co-option of women in the State Bar Councils on 26.04.2026 at 11 AM
Time: Apr 26, 2026 11:00 AM Mumbai, Kolkata, New Delhi
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89376319295?pwd=sh2SOBNb5H9jAatjDJan4nRa0VLxWg.1>

Meeting ID: 893 7631 9295

Passcode: 179434

B. Topic: Hearing before the High Powered Election Supervisory Committee regarding co-option of women in the State Bar Councils on 27.04.2026 at 5 pm.
Time: Apr 27, 2026 05:00 PM Mumbai, Kolkata, New Delhi
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81875891642?pwd=a4al7jVACtNSgaurZIBH0ptP4xLdD.1>

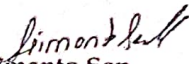
Meeting ID: 818 7589 1642

Passcode: 000673

You are requested to treat the matter as most urgent and to ensure immediate compliance in letter as well as spirit.

A copy of the Order of Meeting dated 21.04.2026 / order of the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee is enclosed herewith for ready reference and necessary action.

This is for your kind information and necessary action


Srinanto Sen
Principal Secretary
Bar Council of India

CC

To Hon'ble Chairperson & Hon'ble Members of the High Powered Supervisory Election Committee

Minutes of Meeting dated 21.04.2026 of the High-Powered Election Supervisory Committee constituted by the Supreme Court order dated 18.11.2025 in W.P (C) No. 1319/2023

Vide order dated 08.12.2025 in W.P(C) No. 581/2024, the Supreme Court had ordered that 30% of the total seats in each State Bar Council shall be represented by women members of the Bar. Out of these 30% seats, 20% were to be filled by election of women candidates, and the remaining 10% seats by way of co-option. However, no method for co-option was prescribed and it was directed that proposals regarding co-option be placed before the Supreme Court of India.

Thereafter, the Bar Council of India framed certain Rules regarding the co-option of women candidates and the same were challenged before the Supreme Court. Consequently, vide order dated 24.02.2026 passed in certain I.As in W.P(C) No.1319/2026, Supreme Court sought this Committee's opinion regarding the Rules framed by the Bar Council of India as regards co-option.

Meanwhile, another Writ Petition [W.P(C) No. 372/2026] was filed before the Supreme Court with the same issue regarding co-option of women candidates in the State Bar Councils. The Supreme Court, vide its order dated 13.04.2026, asked this Committee to pass an appropriate order prescribing the manner in which the exercise of co-option shall take place. The relevant portion of the said order dated 13.04.2026 reads as follows:

“5. We are informed that, meanwhile, the Bar Council of India has notified the Bar Council of India Rules for Co-option of Women Advocates in State Bar Council and Removal of Women-Representation Deficiency for the Current Election Cycle, which, inter alia, provides that the selection of candidates for 10% co-option shall be made by the Bar Council of India.

6. The lack of clarity in the previous orders of this Court as to what ought to be the mode and manner of 10% co-option is the essential cause of action giving rise to the present proceedings.

7. It is urged before us that in various States, like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, there are instances where women candidates have succeeded and won the elections, securing votes even more than their male counterparts. On this premise, it is urged that instead of the Bar Council of India proceeding with co-option, one of the following alternatives be adopted:

(a) the co-option should be from amongst the contesting women candidates who have secured the highest votes, though they could not be elected within the initial 20% representation;

(b) the discretion of co-option should be left to the State Bar Councils; or

(c) the exercise of co-option be done by the State Election Committees.

8. These are all suggestions, and each option has its own merits and demerits. It seems to us that the High-Powered Supervisory Committee headed by Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia is well-equipped to take a final call in this regard. It goes without saying that the petitioners/intervenors, State Bar Councils, Bar Council of India, and the women candidates, who are in the fray in different States, and other women advocates, would be the direct stakeholders whose

assistance to the Supervisory Committee would be helpful in taking a transparent and objective decision.

9. We, therefore, dispose of these writ petitions, at this stage, with liberty to the petitioners/applicants to approach the High-Powered Committee. We request the Supervisory Committee to pass an appropriate order with respect to the manner in which the co-option exercise shall take place. As noted above, the Bar Council of India, the State Bar Councils, and other stakeholders may be heard before passing the order."

The three members of the Supervisory Committee met today to work out the details in the implementation of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 13.04.2026. After the discussion, it has been decided that this Supervisory Committee must first hear all the stakeholders before coming to any conclusion.

Mr. Srimanto Sen, Principal Secretary, Bar Council of India, is hence requested to give notice to all the concerned parties indicated in the order dated 13.04.2026 so that we have before us a view of all the stakeholders and, in particular, the women advocates.

This Supervisory Committee will hear the concerned parties virtually on 26.04.2026 at 11 AM and on 27.04.2026 at 5 PM in virtual mode. The Bar Council of India is requested to make proper arrangements for the virtual hearing.

Meanwhile, all the concerned stakeholders may send their representations/submissions, along with their suggestions as to the process which shall be adopted for co-option. These suggestions shall be sent to the Supervisory Committee on its official email id i.e. sec.supervisorycommittee@gmail.com, with the subject 'Representation/Suggestion regarding co-option'.

New Delhi
21.04.2026



Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia
Former Judge, Supreme Court of India
Chairperson

For and on behalf of the Supervisory Committee