

June 2026

This edition of the JSA Employment Newsletter discusses the permissibility, legal position and practical considerations surrounding withdrawal of resignation by an employee under Indian law, including its revocability, employer discretion, and associated risks. The newsletter also provides a brief roundup of some key regulatory and legislative developments in the Indian employment law regime for the month of May 2026, released through amendments, notifications and orders. It also provides latest updates under the labour codes and discusses some recent judicial precedents across employment legislations.

Reconsidering exit; legal implications of withdrawing resignation

In the ordinary course of employment, it is not uncommon for employees to tender their resignation, only to subsequently reassess that decision. Such reconsideration may be prompted by altered external circumstances or a recalibration of individual career objectives. This scenario gives rise to a nuanced legal question under Indian law on whether a resignation, once submitted, acquires immediate finality, or does an employee retain the right to withdraw it prior to its acceptance or the effective last working day. The answer engages important principles of contract, employer–employee relations, and judicial interpretation, making it a subject of both practical and doctrinal significance.

The legal position in India on withdrawal of resignation has been shaped and refined through judicial interpretation. While resignation is ordinarily regarded as a voluntary and unilateral act on the part of the employee, its legal validity is contingent on the stage it has reached in the course of employment. The Supreme Court of India (“**Supreme Court**”) in *Union of India and Ors. vs. Gopal Chandra Misra and Ors.*¹ and *Balram Gupta vs. Union of India and Ors.*² clarified that a resignation does not *ipso facto* terminate the employment relationship upon submission. Rather, it becomes operative from the stipulated effective date, particularly where the resignation is intended to take effect from a future date. Courts have maintained this position in several instances³, including the Delhi High Court in *Arjun Ahluwalia and Ors. vs. Air India Limited*⁴.

In contrast, in *Raj Kumar vs. Union of India*⁵ and *North Zone Cultural Center and Ors. vs. Vedpathi Dinesh Kumar*⁶, the Supreme Court recognised the doctrine of *locus poenitentiae*, holding that an employee retains the right to withdraw the resignation only until such time it is accepted by the employer. Upon acceptance, the right stands extinguished. Accordingly, the prevailing jurisprudence suggests that an employee may ordinarily withdraw a resignation prior to

¹ AIR 1978 SC 694 (February 15, 1978)

² AIR 1987 SC 2354 (September 1, 1987)

³ *Punjab National Bank vs. P.K. Mittal*, AIR 1989 SC 1083 (February 13, 1989); and *Moti Ram vs. Param Dev and Ors.*, AIR 1993 SC 166 (March 5, 1993)

⁴ 2021:DHC:1773 (June 1, 2021)

⁵ AIR 1969 SC 180 (April 18, 1968)

⁶ AIR 2003 SC 2719 (April 17, 2003)

its acceptance or before it becomes effective, provided that the employer has not materially relied upon or acted to its detriment on the basis of such resignation. The overarching principle that emerges is that the right of withdrawal subsists until the resignation crystallises into a final severance of the contractual relationship; however, this right is neither absolute nor unfettered and remains subject to specific facts and circumstances of each case.

It is equally well settled that there exists no automatic obligation on the part of an employer to accept a request for withdrawal of resignation. The Supreme Court, in *Sanjay Jain vs. National Aviation Co. of India Limited*⁷, clarified that where a resignation has been tendered in accordance with applicable service rules such as compliance with prescribed notice period, it may attain effectiveness in its own right therefore, rendering any subsequent contention of non-acceptance by the employer legally untenable. Conversely, permissibility of refusing a withdrawal request is largely contingent on whether the employer has already accepted and materially acted upon the resignation. Such actions may include initiating the process of hiring a replacement, undertaking organisational restructuring, or completing exit formalities.

This exception to the general principle permitting withdrawal of prospective resignation was elaborated by the Supreme Court in *Air India Express Limited and Ors. vs. Gurdarshan Kaur Sandhu*⁸, where the court recognised the employer's right to refuse withdrawal in circumstances where tangible steps had been taken to secure or train a replacement, or where applicable service rules imposed a legal bar on such withdrawal. This judgment underscores a broader principle of equity; that an employer cannot be compelled to reverse course where it has already incurred substantial effort, cost, or operational disruption in reliance upon the employee's resignation.

While organisations may seek to regulate resignation and its withdrawal through internal policies, such provisions cannot operate in derogation of the broader legal framework, which turns on the interplay of acceptance, effective date, and conduct of parties. Accordingly, even where policy language purports to confer finality upon the submission of a resignation, Courts are inclined to scrutinise whether the resignation had, in substance, taken effect or whether the request for withdrawal was made at a stage when the employment relationship continued to subsist. In this context, inconsistent practices or delayed communication on the part of an employer may significantly dilute its position and invite judicial scrutiny.

Against this backdrop, it becomes imperative for employers to adopt a structured, consistent, and well-documented approach to managing resignation and withdrawal scenarios. This includes promptly acknowledging resignations, clearly conveying acceptance, documenting any business decisions undertaken in reliance on the resignation and addressing withdrawal requests made by an employee in a reasoned and timely manner. Where a request for withdrawal is declined, the underlying rationale should be contemporaneously recorded to ensure procedural transparency and legal defensibility.

Withdrawal of resignation by employees under Indian law are not governed by strict legal provisions, but are assessed and adjudicated on the basis of facts surrounding the involved parties such as timing, intent, and the evolving status of employment relationship. A balanced approach, anchored in settled legal principles, supported by meticulous documentation, and responsive to practical business considerations, remains essential to mitigating risk and preserving organisational integrity in such situations.

Labour codes updates

Union Minister launches nationwide annual health check-up initiative for workers under labour codes

On May 7, 2026, the Union Minister of Labour and Employment and Youth Affairs and Sports, launched the '**Nationwide Annual Health Check-Up Initiative**' for all workers aged 40 (forty) years and above, marking a significant milestone in strengthening occupational healthcare and social security coverage for India's workforce. The initiative is part of the wider labour reforms introduced through 4 (four) labour codes notified in November 2025. The launch

⁷ (2019) 14 SCC 492 (November 1, 2018)

⁸ (2019) 17 SCC 129 (August 22, 2019)

was observed simultaneously across 11 (eleven) locations of Employees' State Insurance Corporation ("ESIC") hospitals across the country.

Under Section 6(1) of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 ("**OSH Code**"), read with the central rules made thereunder, employers are required to provide free annual health check-ups to employees who have completed 40 (forty) years of age. Pursuant to this requirement, the initiative to conduct free annual health check-ups has been introduced for workers aged above 40 (forty) years through ESIC's network of hospitals, where treatment and medicines identified during the camps are to be made available through ESIC facilities. The initiative aims at early detection of non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, promotion of preventive healthcare and continuous monitoring of health of workforce through systematic maintenance of workers' health records. Workers engaged in hazardous occupations involving chemicals, toxic substances, or heavy machinery will be required to undergo medical examinations irrespective of age, a provision intended to further bolster workplace safety and reduce occupational health risks. This initiative reflects an effort in operationalising the expanded ESIC coverage provided under the Code on Social Security, 2020 ("**SS Code**") to employees engaged in: (a) establishments with 10 (ten) or more employees, (b) establishments carrying on a hazardous occupation with 1 (one) or more employees; and (c) employees working in establishments with less than 10 (ten) employees (on voluntary registration). The initiative aims towards strengthening occupational health systems and ensuring wider access to healthcare for India's workforce by 2047.

Ministry of Labour and Employment notifies the final central rules under the labour codes

On May 8, 2026, the Ministry of Labour and Employment notified the final central rules under all labour codes i.e. the Code on Wages (Central) Rules, 2026⁹, Industrial Relations (Central) Rules, 2026¹⁰, Social Security (Central) Rules, 2026¹¹, and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (Central) Rules, 2026¹², along with the Model Standing Orders, 2026 which supersedes the earlier Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946.

For a detailed analysis, please refer to [JSA Blog of May 13, 2026](#). Further updates on the fixation of wage ceiling and interest rates etc. under the SS Code will be shared shortly.

Other regulatory and legislative updates

From overlap to order: recalibrating registration obligations between central labour codes and State laws

The Government of Maharashtra, *vide* circular dated April 30, 2026 ("**Circular**") and the Government of Haryana, *vide* notification dated May 4, 2026 ("**Notification**") have clarified that establishments employing more than 10 (ten) and 20 (twenty) employees in respective States, are not required to obtain a separate registration under State-specific Shops and Establishments Statute ("**S&E Acts**"). This applies once such establishments are registered under the OSH Code, upon operationalisation of registration rules thereunder. While the Circular and Notification seek to remove procedural duplication arising from overlapping Central and State regulatory frameworks, other provisions of the S&E Acts are intended to continue to apply to the extent not inconsistent with the OSH Code. The clarification must be read with earlier guidance issued by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, which underscores the principle that, in cases of inconsistency, the more beneficial conditions to employees will prevail. The Circular and Notification reiterate that while duplicative registration requirements may be dispensed with, substantive compliance obligations under applicable labour laws remain unaffected.

⁹ G.S.R. 343(E) (May 8, 2026)

¹⁰ G.S.R. 342(E) (May 8, 2026)

¹¹ G.S.R. 344(E) (May 8, 2026)

¹² G.S.R. 345(E) (May 8, 2026)

For a detailed analysis, please refer to the [JSA Prism of May 6, 2026](#).

Government of Karnataka exempts certain classes of enrolled persons from furnishing returns under Karnataka Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Act, 1976

In exercise of powers conferred under the fourth proviso to Section 10(1) of the Karnataka Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Act, 1976 (“**Karnataka PT Act**”), the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, Government of Karnataka, *vide* a gazette notification¹³ on May 4, 2026, has exempted certain classes of enrolled persons from furnishing returns under the Karnataka PT Act, subject to submission of specified supporting documents for the claim for such exemption, through the *E-Prerana* portal. The exempted classes of persons include senior citizens aged 60 (sixty) years and above, owners of up to 2 (two) transport vehicles other than auto-rickshaws, holders of permits of 2 (two) or fewer taxis or 3 (three) wheeler goods or passenger vehicle, individuals engaged in any profession, trades, callings and employment who are physically challenged with a total permanent disability of not less than 40% of both upper and lower extremity deformities, amongst others. While most of the exempted classes listed in the notification are required to furnish supporting documents on a one-time basis only, certain classes of persons are required to furnish supporting documents annually.

EPFO issues revised procedure for handling compliance-related complaints or grievances

The Central Analysis and Intelligence Unit (“**CAIU**”) of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (“**EPFO**”) issued a circular dated May 6, 2026¹⁴, outlining a revised and uniform procedure for handling complaints and grievances pertaining to compliance matters under the SS Code. Under the revised framework, regional offices are required to designate the circle officer of the Compliance Division as nodal officer and the RPFC-I/II (OIC) as review officer, while zonal offices must designate an officer of the rank of RPFC-I as zonal nodal officer. Complaints relating to non-compliance, non-coverage, or non-enrolment under the SS Code are to be registered on the CAIU portal and examined within defined timelines—including initial verification within 5 (five) days, communication to the employer with a 7 (seven) day response window, and escalation to the zonal office for inspection approval where corrective action is not taken. The circular also clarifies that all inspections must be conducted strictly in accordance with the inspection scheme to be notified under the SS Code, and that cases involving vigilance-related allegations against EPFO officials are to be handled by the respective disciplinary authorities in accordance with applicable guidelines.

Central Government notifies 1% cess under the SS Code

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, *vide* notification dated May 8, 2026¹⁵, has specified the rate of cess leviable on building and other construction work at 1% of the cost of construction incurred by an employer, in exercise of powers under Section 100(1) of the SS Code. The notification takes effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette. This notification supersedes the earlier notification (S.O. 2899) dated September 26, 1996, thereby transitioning the cess framework from the erstwhile Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act, 1996 to the consolidated regime under the SS Code. The rate of cess remains unchanged at 1% and it continues to be levied on the cost of construction incurred by the employer (now, specifically on cost incurred on building or other construction work), consistent with the position under the earlier cess framework.

¹³ No. PT/CR./09/2025-26

¹⁴ CAIU/011/V-1(27)2026/Circulars/E-1273909/703

¹⁵ S.O. 2322(E)

Government of Haryana notifies increased rate of contribution under the Punjab Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1965

The Haryana Labour Welfare Board, Government of Haryana, *vide* notification¹⁶ dated May 8, 2026, has revised the monthly contribution limit payable by employees and employers to the Punjab Labour Welfare Fund (“**Punjab LWF**”), applicable to all industrial and commercial establishments covered under the Punjab Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1965. With effect from January 1, 2026, every employee is required to contribute every month an amount equal to 0.2% of their salary or wages or any remuneration to the Punjab LWF, subject to a revised limit of INR 35 (Indian Rupees thirty-five) per month, increased from the earlier limit of INR 34 (Indian Rupees thirty-four) per month. Every employer will be required to contribute twice the amount contributed by the respective employee every month to the Punjab LWF.

Central Government operationalises mandatory rest interval requirement under the OSH Code

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, on May 13, 2026¹⁷, operationalised the provision under clause (b) of sub-section (1) of Section 25 of the OSH Code, stipulating that no worker will be required or permitted to work continuously for more than 5 (five) hours without a rest interval of at least 30 (thirty) minutes. The notification has come into effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette. Notably, this provision will be relevant for establishments for which the appropriate Government is the Central Government.

Government of Maharashtra sets up inspection procedure for compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

The Government of Maharashtra, *vide* circular¹⁸ dated May 14, 2026, has established a formal inspection framework under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (“**POSH Act**”), empowering a wide range of officials, including District Collectors, officers and employees of the Women and Child Development Commissionerate, Divisional Deputy Commissioners, District Women and Child Development Officers, Superintendents appointed by the Government in institutions (including NGOs) amongst others, to inspect government, semi-government and private establishments, and corporations across the State of Maharashtra and verify compliance with the POSH Act. The circular draws its authority from Section 25 of the POSH Act, which empowers the appropriate Government to call for information from establishments and to authorise inspections. It further mandates that such inspections be conducted in accordance with a prescribed checklist, and that only a single designated officer or team undertake the inspection of any establishment, thereby ensuring procedural consistency and avoiding duplication.

The inspection checklist covers the following measures to be assessed by relevant officers for determining compliance under the POSH Act:

1. adoption and dissemination of a prevention of sexual harassment (POSH) policy, including to interns and contractual staff, and covering remote/work-from-home arrangements;
2. availability of the POSH policy and SHe-Box portal link on the establishment’s website and social media,
3. constitution of an Internal Committee (“**IC**”) under the POSH Act with at least 4 (four) members (at least 50% women, chaired by a senior woman employee, and including an external NGO member);
4. availability of multiple complaint channels, and acknowledgment of complaints within 7 (seven) days;

¹⁶ HLWB/REV/2026/3436

¹⁷ S.O. 2517(E)

¹⁸ 2026/P.No.11/Ka.15

5. maintenance of confidentiality throughout the inquiry;
6. provision of interim relief to complainants;
7. protection of complainants and witnesses from retaliation;
8. completion of inquiry within 90 (ninety) days and action by the employer on IC report within 60 (sixty) days,
9. secure record-keeping, regular awareness programmes and training for IC members;
10. submission of annual reports by the IC to the employer and District Officer;
11. inclusion of POSH compliance details in the employer's annual filings; and
12. registration and updating of IC details on the SHe-Box portal.

Where deficiencies are found, penal action will be initiated against the concerned establishment on the recommendation of the inspecting officer, in accordance with Section 26 of the POSH Act.

For a detailed analysis, please refer to the [JSA Prism of May 26, 2026](#).

Case law ratios

Supreme Court rules that employees cannot be punished for charges which were not framed in the show cause notice

On May 6, 2026, the Supreme Court, in *Dr. Nigam Prakash Narain vs. National Medical Commission and Ors.*¹⁹, held that employees cannot be punished for charges entirely distinct from that which was framed in the show cause notice. The case arose out of disciplinary proceedings initiated by the Medical Council of India (“MCI”), regarding allegations of professional misconduct against the appellant for his alleged assumption of professional duties at 2 (two) different medical colleges in an academic year.

The appellant had appeared for inspections with both medical colleges in the span of 5 (five) months and pursuant to the inspection in Patna Medical College, he was asked to appear before the ‘ethics committee’ and justify his appearance on the rolls of 2 (two) medical colleges in an academic year. The appellant clarified that he had resigned from the earlier institution before joining the Patna Medical College and was abroad on the date of inspection at the Patna Medical College, however the declaration form signed by him had omitted this prior engagement. The ethics committee initially exonerated him while taking into account his resignation, but later, upon reconsideration, found him guilty of non-disclosure and imposed a penalty of removal from the Indian Medical Register for 3 (three) months, which was ultimately upheld by the Patna High Court.

Before the Supreme Court, the appellant challenged this decision on the grounds of violation of natural justice, arguing that the final finding of misconduct (based on non-disclosure) was different from the original charge that was framed against him in the show cause notice and was arrived at without affording him an opportunity to respond to the new charges.

The Supreme Court accepted this contention, holding that punishing a practitioner on a new or altered charge without issuing a fresh show cause notice amounts to a breach of natural justice. According to the Supreme Court, the appellant had successfully defended the first charge of veracity of the declaration forms as well as his alleged dual employment at 2 (two) medical colleges, but the ethics committee had then framed new charges and held him guilty of such charges without following the principles of natural justice. The Supreme Court therein held that the ethics committee could not have imposed the punishment without issuing a fresh show cause notice and/or without granting a fair and reasonable opportunity to respond to the new/alternative charge under consideration. At the same time, the Supreme Court noted that the appellant had indeed made a mis-declaration, which could not be fully justified and therefore constituted misconduct. In balancing procedural infirmities with the admitted lapse and considering the passage of

¹⁹ 2026 INSC 453 (May 6, 2026)

nearly a decade since the incident, the Supreme Court exercised its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India to modify the penalty from removal from the register to a censure or warning for the appellant.

Bombay High Court rules that employee claims for PF cannot be rejected owing to lapses on part of employer

On April 18, 2026²⁰, the Bombay High Court (“**Bombay HC**”), in *Durga Srinivas Kallakuri vs. Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation and Ors.*²¹, while addressing the processing of claims for higher pension under the Employees’ Pension Scheme, 1995 (“**EPS Scheme**”) pursuant to the Supreme Court’s decision in *Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation and Ors. vs. Sunil Kumar B*²², opined on the question of whether employees may be subject to losses on account of employer’s procedural non-compliances.

The petitioners, all retired employees with long and continuous service with various employers, had applied in 2023 to the EPFO for pension on higher wages by exercising the joint option made available following the Supreme Court directions in *Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation and Ors. vs. Sunil Kumar B*. Despite submitting application forms, contribution details, employee provident fund account statements, and employer-certified records, their claims were rejected by the EPFO in 2025 on grounds that certain documents - particularly Forms 3A, 6A, challans and proof of joint option from earlier periods had not been produced by their employers. Aggrieved, the petitioners approached the Bombay HC challenging the rejection of their claims.

The petitioners contended that the statutory obligation to maintain and furnish foundational records such as Form 6A and contribution statements lies with the employer and EPFO, and that employees cannot be penalised for non-production of documents which are not within their purview. They argued that sufficient material such as employee provident fund account statements, Form 3A details and certified joint option forms, was already on record to establish their entitlement. The EPFO, on the other hand, argued that the production of complete documentation and proof of contributions on higher wages were mandatory as per the Supreme Court directions and EPFO circulars, and that in the absence of such material, eligibility of employees could not be determined.

The Bombay HC reconciled these positions and held that while compliance with statutory conditions is necessary, the approach to verification must be pragmatic and cannot be reduced to rigid insistence on specific documentation. It held that an employee cannot be denied pensionary benefits under a socio-beneficial security scheme solely due to the employer’s failure to furnish records or deficiencies in historical documentation, especially for pre-digital periods. It further clarified that EPFO must adopt a holistic and evidence-based approach, examining all available material - including internal records, EPF contribution history, Form 3A, account statements, and employer communications - rather than mechanically rejecting claims for want of specific documents such as Form 6A. The Bombay HC further held that EPFO is under a duty to actively verify its own records and undertake independent inquiries where necessary. Accordingly, the impugned rejection orders were set aside, and the matters were remanded for fresh consideration.

Kerala High Court opines that IC can take cognisance of sexual harassment complaint against director of institution

On May 19, 2026, the Kerala High Court (“**Kerala HC**”) addressed the scope of jurisdiction of the IC under the POSH Act in *Prof. (Dr.) J. Sundaesan Pillai vs. Internal Complaints Committee and Ors.*²³ The case arose from a complaint of sexual harassment filed in November 2024 by a woman employee against the appellant, who was serving as director of the Integrated Rural Technology Centre (“**IRTC**”). The IC issued notice to the appellant to appear before it; however, he challenged the proceedings on the ground that, as ‘employer’ or head of the institution, any complaint against him should be placed before the Local Committee (“**LC**”) under Section 6 of the POSH Act. The dingle judge dismissed his

²⁰ The copy of the judgment was publicly made available on May 11, 2026

²¹ W.P. No. 4826 of 2026 (April 18, 2026)

²² 2022 INSC 1171 (November 4, 2022)

²³ W.A. No. 534 of 2026 (May 19, 2026)

writ petition, leading to the present appeal.

Before the division bench, the appellant contended that, given his role as director and overall manager of the institution, he fell within the statutory definition of 'employer', and therefore the IC lacked jurisdiction to inquire into the complaint. The respondents, including the institution and State authorities, argued that the director functioned under the control and supervision of the executive committee and general body of the organisation and was therefore an 'employee' under the POSH Act. They further contended that the IC had only initiated preliminary proceedings and that the appellant could raise all objections before the IC itself.

The Kerala HC held that the determination of IC versus LC jurisdiction depends on whether the accused falls within the definition of 'employee' or 'employer' under the POSH Act. On examining the governing documents of the institution, the Kerala HC determined that the director operated under the authority of the general body and executive committee, which retained ultimate control over administration and management. It held that since the director was appointed by the general body and executive committee and he operated under the control and supervision of the same, he would qualify as an 'employee' and not the 'employer', for purposes of the POSH Act. The Kerala HC reaffirmed that where the complaint is against an employee, the IC has jurisdiction to conduct the inquiry, and the LC's jurisdiction is attracted only where the complaint is against the employer or where no IC exists. Finding no error in the single judge's reasoning, the Kerala HC dismissed the appeal.

Employment Practice

JSA has a team of experienced employment law specialists who work with clients from a wide range of sectors, to tackle local and cross-border, contentious and non-contentious employment law issues. Our key areas of advice include (a) advising on boardroom disputes including issues with directors, both executive and non-executive; (b) providing support for business restructuring and turnaround transactions, addressing employment and labour aspects of a deal, to minimize associated risks and ensure legal compliance; (c) providing transaction support with reference to employment law aspects of all corporate finance transactions, including the transfer of undertakings, transfer of accumulated employee benefits of outgoing employees to a new employer, redundancies, and dismissals; (d) advising on compliance and investigations, including creating compliance programs and policy, compliance evaluation assessment, procedure development and providing support for conducting internal investigations into alleged wrongful conduct; (e) designing, documenting, reviewing, and operating all types of employee benefit plans and arrangements, including incentive, bonus and severance programs; and (f) advising on international employment issues, including immigration, residency, social security benefits, taxation issues, Indian laws applicable to spouses and children of expatriates, and other legal requirements that arise when sending employees to India and recruiting from India, including body shopping situations. JSA also has significant experience in assisting employers to ensure that they provide focused and proactive counselling to comply with the obligations placed on employees under the prevention of sexual harassment regime in India. We advise and assist clients in cases involving sexual harassment at the workplace, intra-office consensual relationships, including drafting of prevention of sexual harassment (POSH) policies, participating in POSH proceedings, conducting training for employees as well as Internal Complaints Committee members, and acting as external members of POSH Committees.

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19 Practices and
40 Ranked Lawyers



8 Ranked Practices,
22 Ranked Lawyers



15 Practices and
20 Ranked Lawyers



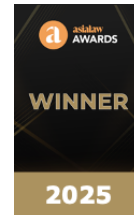
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