
BALANCING FORM AND FAIRNESS: JUSTICE V.R. KRISHNA IYER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO EVIDENCE ADMISSIBILITY

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ABSTRACT

The admissibility of evidence is a cornerstone of judicial fairness, yet its application often faces challenges due to procedural rigidity and evolving legal complexities. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's judgments demonstrate a transformative approach to evidence law, striking a balance between strict statutory adherence and flexibility in upholding substantive justice. His emphasis on natural justice, protection of marginalised groups, and ensuring fair trial standards underscores the need to analyse his interpretations. This research paper examines Justice Iyer's landmark rulings to explore how his progressive insights on the admissibility of evidence have shaped judicial precedents, addressing gaps in procedural technicalities while reinforcing fairness in legal proceedings.

Introduction

The judiciary plays a pivotal role in shaping evidence law by interpreting statutory provisions, setting precedents, and ensuring justice through fair trial procedures. Courts clarify ambiguous legal principles, expand the scope of admissibility, and balance procedural technicalities with substantive justice. Notable judgments, particularly by visionary judges like Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, have enriched evidence law by emphasizing natural justice, safeguarding individual rights, and ensuring fair trial standards. Judicial activism has significantly contributed to evolving evidence law to meet contemporary legal challenges.

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer (1915-2014) was a distinguished judge known for his unique judicial qualities, often regarded as the conscience keeper of justice in India. Serving nearly eight years on the Supreme Court Bench, he gave multiple notable landmark judgements. He was appointed as Judge of the Supreme Court of India in 1973. He played an important role in an era of judicial activism, public interest litigation, affirmative action through courts and a wide-ranging exercise of judicial review for which the Indian judiciary is hailed throughout the world today. He earned fame and recognition for his fair judgments, for his way of penning down the verdicts and for his mastery over the English language. He was a thinker ahead of his time and wrote some landmark judgments.¹ The landmark judgements given by him include: *Mumbai Kamgar Sabha, Bombay v. M/S Abdulbhai Faizullabhai & Ors*²; *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India*³; *Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration*⁴; *C.B. Muthamma v. Union of India*⁵ and *Municipal Council, Ratlam v. Shri Vardichand & Ors*.⁶

Further, by his unique, compassionate judicial philosophy fused legal wisdom with moral clarity he championed the rights of the poor and marginalized, leaving a lasting impact on the Indian justice system. A prolific writer, Justice Iyer authored numerous books, articles, and delivered esteemed lectures. He, in his article "*Who will judge the judges?*" published in *The Hindu*, urged Parliament to introduce *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) in the judiciary, warning against judicial absolutism. A resolution by Fali S. Nariman and senior advocates praised Justice Iyer's transformative impact, acknowledging his vitality, versatility,

¹ V.R. KRISHNA IYER, *Ministry of Law & Justice*, MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE (March 3, 2026), <https://lawmin.gov.in/sites/default/files/2015-02-02%20>.

² *Mumbai Kamgar Sabha v. Abdulbhai Faizullabhai*, A.I.R. 1976 S.C. 1455 (India).

³ *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India*, A.I.R. 1978 S.C. 597 (India).

⁴ *Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration*, A.I.R. 1980 S.C. 1579 (India).

⁵ *C.B. Muthamma v. Union of India*, A.I.R. 1979 S.C. 1868 (India).

⁶ *Municipal Council, Ratlam v. Vardichand*, A.I.R. 1980 S.C. 1622 (India).

and profound influence as a humane judge. This reflects Justice Iyer's revolutionary stance on judicial accountability and his enduring legacy of reform. His distinctive writing style reflected his deep knowledge and exceptional command of language, solidifying his status as one of India's greatest jurists. Nonetheless, as Harish Salve quotes in his article '*Justice V R Krishna Iyer: Man who rescued Supreme Court from supreme shame*', quoted Professor Upendra Baxi, noting that "the Supreme Court of India was Krishnaiyerised to become the Supreme Court for Indians." Similarly, Dushyant Dave, in a full court reference, hailed Justice Iyer as "one of the greatest sons of India," describing him as "a legend, a phenomenon, a one-man army against injustices and upholder of all just causes and above all a great humanist."⁷

Concept of Admission of Evidence in Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam

- Meaning of "admission" of evidence as defined in Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023:

An admission is defined as a statement, whether spoken, written, or in electronic form, that indicates an inference about a fact in issue or a relevant fact. It must be made by specific persons and under certain conditions as outlined in the law.⁸

- "Types of evidence admissible" as per Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023:

1. In civil cases, an admission is not considered relevant if made under an express condition that it shall not be presented as evidence, or in circumstances where the Court can infer that the parties mutually agreed that such evidence should not be provided.⁹
2. No confession made to a police officer shall be admissible against an accused. Additionally, a confession made in police custody is inadmissible unless made before a Magistrate. However, facts discovered through such information may be proved if distinctly related to the discovery.¹⁰
3. Proof of documents by primary evidence states that it must be proved using primary

⁷ TARIQ KHAN, *Remembering the People's Judge: The Judicial Philosophy of Justice Krishna Iyer*, BAR AND BENCH (March 3, 2026), <https://www.barandbench.com/columns/remembering-the-peoples-judge-the-judicial-philosophy-of-justice-krishna-iyer>.

⁸ Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, § 15, No. 47, Acts of Parliament, 2023 (India).

⁹ *id.* at § 21.

¹⁰ *id.* at § 23.

evidence, except in the cases specified hereinafter.¹¹

4. The situations where secondary evidence concerning documents is admissible. Such evidence may be provided when¹²:

(a) The original document is in the possession or power of the person against whom it is to be proved; a person beyond the Court's reach or jurisdiction; or a person legally bound to produce it, and they fail to produce it after notice under Section 64 of *Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023*¹³.

(b) The existence, condition, or content of the original is admitted in writing by the opposing party or their representative.

(c) The original has been destroyed, lost, or is otherwise unavailable without the party's fault or neglect.

(d) The original is not easily movable.

(e) The original is a public document as defined in Section 74.

(f) The original is a document for which a certified copy is legally admissible.

(g) The original comprises numerous records, and only the overall result is needed.

5. No evidence shall be dismissed to be admissible solely on the grounds of it being in an electronic or digital record.¹⁴ Further, the contents of the electronic records may be proved in accordance to¹⁵, any information in an electronic record that is printed on paper, stored, recorded, or copied in optical, magnetic media, semiconductor memory, or any electronic form (referred to as the computer output) shall be treated as a document if the conditions in this section are fulfilled. Such information shall be admissible in proceedings without requiring additional proof or the original document, as evidence of its contents or any fact

¹¹ *id. at* § 59.

¹² *id. at* § 60.

¹³ *id. at* § 64.

¹⁴ *id. at* § 61.

¹⁵ *id. at* § 62.

stated therein, where direct evidence would be acceptable.¹⁶

- “Principles governing admissibility of evidence” under Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023:

1. No person is allowed to present evidence obtained from unpublished official records concerning the affairs of the State, unless permitted by the head of the department concerned. The authority may either grant or deny such permission at their discretion.¹⁷ Further, public officers cannot be forced to disclose confidential communications made to them if they believe such disclosure would harm public interest.¹⁸ Even Magistrates, police officers, and revenue officers cannot be compelled to reveal when they received information regarding the commission of offences, including revenue-related crimes.¹⁹

2. There is protection offered to professional communications between an advocate and their client, barring the advocate from disclosing such communications or related documents without the client’s consent. However, this protection does not apply if the communication was made to further an illegal act or if the advocate observes facts indicating that a crime or fraud has occurred since their service began. This obligation continues even after the advocate’s professional engagement ends.²⁰

It also upholds confidentiality in privileged relationships which is shared between the husband and wife.

3. The admissibility of an evidence also depends on the discretion of the Judge if it is deemed relevant to them as per the facts of the case.²¹

4. The evidence must be direct and not based on hearsay, ensuring reliability and fairness in judicial proceedings²² (exceptions are of dying declaration²³ or entries in official records²⁴

¹⁶ *id. at* § 63.

¹⁷ *id. at* § 129.

¹⁸ *id. at* § 130.

¹⁹ *id. at* § 131.

²⁰ *id. at* § 132.

²¹ *id. at* § 141.

²² *id. at* § 55.

²³ *id. at* § 26.

²⁴ *id. at* § 129.

- **Relevance of Facts v/s Admissibility of Evidence:**

Relevancy refers to the connection between a fact and the matter in issue. Evidence is considered relevant if it has a logical tendency to prove or disprove a fact in question. Facts that are the occasion, cause, or effect of facts in issue or relevant facts are deemed relevant.²⁵ Relevance is a question of logic, if a fact makes the existence or non-existence of a material fact more probable, it is relevant.

Whereas, admissibility determines whether relevant evidence can legally be presented in court. Even if a fact is relevant, it may be excluded if it violates rules of evidence, such as hearsay, privilege, or unlawfully obtained evidence.

Judicial Interpretation on Admission of Evidence by Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer

1. Suba Singh v. Mahendra Singh And Ors.²⁶

Facts:

The dispute revolved around property rights and conflicting claims concerning inheritance. The appellant, Suba Singh, filed a suit for partition, claiming to be the son of Rambhajan, who was the predeceased son of Jagram, the property owner. The core dispute revolved around whether Suba Singh was indeed son of Rambhajan. Suba Singh had previously obtained a favourable decision in mutation proceedings before the consolidation authorities under the U.P. Consolidation of Holdings Act, 1953²⁷.

The appellant claimed ownership based on oral evidence, while the respondents presented documentary proof to substantiate their position. The trial court and appellate court relied heavily on the admissibility of evidence to determine the rightful owner. However, the civil courts, ultimately the High Court, ruled against him.

Issues:

The primary issue before the court was whether oral evidence presented by the appellant was admissible and sufficient to override the documentary evidence submitted by the respondents.

²⁵ *id. at* § 5.

²⁶ Suba Singh v. Mahendra Singh, A.I.R. 1974 S.C. 1657 (India).

²⁷ The U.P. Consolidation of Holdings Act, 1953, No. 5, Acts of Parliament, 1953 (India).

The case also examined the interpretation of statutory provisions governing the admissibility of evidence and their application in property disputes.

Judgement:

"3. It is well settled that oral evidence as to the nature of possession is generally speaking of little value and it is always unsafe to base a decision solely on it when there is documentary evidence available on the point. The oral evidence led by the plaintiff is of a very weak character and cannot prevail against the documentary evidence produced by the defendants. Oral evidence as to the nature of possession is generally of little value and it is always unsafe to base a decision upon it when there is documentary evidence available."

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, while delivering the judgment, emphasized the significance of balancing oral and documentary evidence. He underscored that documentary evidence, when credible and unchallenged, carries greater probative value under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. He stressed that oral evidence must meet strict scrutiny, particularly when it contradicts established records. The Court held that the appellant's oral evidence failed to meet the necessary threshold to displace the respondents' documentary proof, ultimately ruling in favour of the respondents.

2. Bishwanath Prasad And Others v. Dwarka Prasad (Dead) And Others²⁸

Facts:

A claim for partition was brought in this property-related issue.

The property that the first defendant (first respondent in this case) claimed was solely his was the source of the dispute. After taking into account the case's facts and circumstances, the trial court determined that the property belonged solely to the first respondent.

The admissions made by the first plaintiff, the eighth defendant, and the plaintiff's father served as the foundation for the ruling. The written statement submitted in the title litigation between them contained few similar disclosures. The plaintiffs claimed ownership based on certain documents and admissions made in earlier proceedings. The defendant contended that these

²⁸ Bishwanath Prasad v. Dwarka Prasad (Dead) A.I.R 1974 S.C. 597 (India).

documents were not admissible as evidence, arguing that they lacked sufficient legal standing.

The High Court maintained the Trial Court's ruling that the first respondent was the sole owner of the land. Further, a civil appeal was filed in the Supreme Court under Article 133 of the Constitution of India, 1950.²⁹

Issue:

The primary legal issue before the court was whether the documents in question, including prior admissions and statements made in earlier proceedings, were admissible as evidence under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. The case also examined the role of documentary evidence in property disputes and the conditions under which such evidence can be deemed reliable.

Judgement:

“(8-10) "There is no merit even in the contention that because these three statements-Exs. G, G2 and H-had not been put to the first plaintiff when he was in the witness box or to the eighth defendant although he had discreetly kept away from giving evidence, they cannot be used against him. Counsel drew our attention to s. 145 of the Indian Evidence Act. There is a cardinal distinction between a party who is the author of a prior statement and a witness who is examined and is sought to be discredited by use of his prior statement. In the former case an admission by a party is substantive evidence if it fulfill the requirements of s. 21 of the Evidence Act; in the latter case a prior statement is used to discredit the credibility of the witness and does not become substantive evidence. In the former there is no necessary requirement of the statement containing the admission having to be put to the party because it is evidence proprio vigore: in the latter case the Court cannot be invited to disbelieve a witness on the strength of a prior contradictory statement unless it has been put to him, as required by s. 145 of the Evidence Act. This distinction has been clearly brought out in the ruling in *Bharat Singh v. Bhagirathi*(1). This Court disposed of a similar argument with the following observations: 'Admissions are substantive evidence by themselves, in view of ss. 17 and 21 of the Indian Evidence Act, though they are not conclusive proof of the matters admitted. We are of opinion that the admissions duly proved are admissible evidence irrespective of whether the party making them appeared in the witness box or not and whether that party when appeared as witness was confronted with those statements in case it made a statement contrary to those

²⁹ INDIA CONST. art. 133.

admissions. The purpose of contradicting the witness under s. 145 of the Evidence Act is very much different from the purpose of proving the admission. Admission is substantive evidence of the fact admitted while a previous statement used to contradict a witness does not become substantive evidence and merely serves the purpose of throwing doubt on the veracity of the witness. What weight is to be attached to an admission made by a party is a matter different from its use as admissible evidence."

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, delivering the judgment, emphasized the significance of ensuring that evidentiary standards are met in property disputes. The Court upheld the admissibility of certain documents on the grounds that they fell within admissions relevant and admissible³⁰, statement by person who cannot be called as witness³¹ and cross-examination as to previous statements in writing³².

Justice Iyer underlined that while admissions are valuable pieces of evidence, they must be evaluated with caution, particularly when they form the primary basis for a claim.

3. *P. N. Kaushal Etc v. Union Of India*³³

Facts:

The petitioners, who were licensed liquor vendors in Punjab, challenged the constitutionality of certain provisions of the Punjab Excise Act, 1914, and the Liquor Licence (Second Amendment) Rules. Specifically, they contested Section 59(f)(v) of the Act³⁴ and Rule 37³⁵, which regulated the days and hours of liquor sales, particularly the mandated closure of shops on Tuesdays and Fridays. The core of their argument was that these provisions gave excessive and unguided power to the authorities, infringing on their right to trade. The petitioner further argued that restrictions on alcohol trade and licensing procedures violated their rights under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution³⁶, which ensures the right to practice any profession or carry on any occupation, trade, or business.

³⁰ Indian Evidence Act, 1872, No. 1, Acts of Parliament, 1872, § 21 (India).

³¹ *id. at* § 32.

³² *id. at* § 145.

³³ P.N. Kaushal v. Union of India A.I.R. 1978 S.C. 1457.

³⁴ Punjab Excise Act, 1914, No. 1, Acts of Parliament, 1914, § 59 (India).

³⁵ Liquor Licence (Second Amendment) Rules, 2023, No. 2, Acts of Parliament, 2023, rule 37 (India).

³⁶ INDIA CONST. art. 19(1)(g).

Issues:

Whether evidence collected and presented in the case, particularly regarding alcohol sale and licensing, was admissible in court.

Judgement:

“2) Even if section 59 and Rule 37 were upheld in toto that does not preclude any affected party from challenging a particular executive act pursuant thereto on the ground that such an act is arbitrary, malafide or unrelated to the purposes and the guidelines available in the statute. To illustrate, if the Financial Commissioner or the Excise Commissioner as the case may be declares that all liquor shops shall be opened on his birthday or shall remain closed on his Friend's death anniversary, the executive order will be invalid. The law may be good, but the executive action may be corrupt and then it cannot be sustained. [145G-H]

(4) The liquor trade is instinct with injury to individual and community and has serious side effects recognised everywhere in every age. Not to control alcohol business is to abdicate the right to rule for the good of the people. Not to canalize the age and sex of the consumers and servers, the hours of sale and cash-and-carry basis, the punctuation and pause in days, to produce partially the 'dry' habit it to fail functionally as a welfare state. The whole scheme of the statute proclaims its purpose of control in time and space and otherwise. Section 58 vests in government the power for more serious restrictions and laying down of principles. Details and lesser constraints have been left to the rule-making power of the Financial Commissioner. The complex of provisions is purpose-oriented, considerably reinforced by Article 47. Old statutes get invigorated by the Paramount Parchment. Interpretation of the text of preconstitution enactments can legitimately be infused with the concerns and commitments of the Constitution as an imperative exercise. It is impossible 'to maintain that no guidelines are found in the Act. [147D-F] (d) There is enough guideline in the scheme and provisions of the Punjab Excise Act to govern the exercise of the power under sections 58 and 59. [158E].

Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer, delivering the judgment, upheld the constitutional validity of the Punjab Excise Act, 1914. He emphasised that regulating the sale and consumption of alcohol was within the state's right to ensure public health and social well-being. Justice Iyer reasoned that the trade in intoxicants was inherently harmful and could not claim the same degree of protection under Article 19(1)(g) as other legitimate professions.

Regarding the admissibility of evidence, Justice Iyer stressed that procedural safeguards were essential. He referred to established evidentiary standards under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, particularly sections dealing with the relevance of evidence in public interest matters. The judgment reinforced that evidence obtained through lawful means, particularly under regulatory frameworks like the Punjab Excise Act, was admissible if it served a larger societal interest.

4. *Mumbai Kamgar Sabha, Bombay v. M/S Abdulbhai Faizullahai & Ors*³⁷

Facts:

It is a landmark judgment concerning the rights of workmen and the interpretation of labour laws, particularly with regard to the definition of "industry." The Mumbai Kamgar Sabha, a trade union, raised an industrial dispute concerning the termination of certain workmen employed by M/S Abdulbhai Faizullahai & Ors. A preliminary objection was raised by the employer that their establishment did not constitute an "industry" as defined under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.³⁸ The employer's business involved the purchase and sale of waste paper, and they argued that their activity was not an "industry" because it lacked organized cooperation between employer and employee.

The dispute centered on the admissibility of certain documentary evidence presented by the union to establish the workers' entitlement to bonuses. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer presided over the case, emphasizing the interpretation of labour laws and the fair treatment of workers.

Issues:

- a) Whether the documentary evidence submitted by the union, though not strictly complying with procedural technicalities, could still be considered valid and relevant.
- b) Whether adherence to strict evidentiary rules should override substantive justice in labour disputes.

Judgement:

"596H: Technically the union cannot be the appellant, the workmen being the real parties. There

³⁷ Mumbai Kamgar Sabha, Bombay v. Abdulbhai Faizullahai A.I.R 1976 S.C. 1455 (India).

³⁸ Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, No. 14, Acts of Parliament, 1947 (India).

is a terminological lapse in the cause title, but a reading of the petition, the description of the parties, the grounds urged and grievances aired, show that the battle was between the workers and the employers and the Union represented the workers. The substance of the matter being obvious, formal defects fade away.

597B-D: Procedural prescriptions are handmaids, not mistresses of justice and failure of fair play is the spirit in which Courts must view processual deviances. Public interest is promoted by a spacious construction of locus standi in our socio-economic circumstances, conceptual latitudinarianism permits taking liberties with individualisation of the right to invoke the higher courts where the remedy is shared by a considerable number, particularly when they are weaker.

597G: In industrial law collective bargaining, union representation at conciliations, arbitrations, adjudications and appellate and other proceedings is a welcome development and an enlightened advance in industrial life. 598D: The appeal is, therefore, an appeal by the workmen compendiously projected and impleaded through the union."

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, in his judgment, emphasized the principles of social justice and worker welfare. He ruled that labour laws, being welfare-oriented, should not be interpreted rigidly in a manner that denies workers their rightful claims. The Court held that procedural technicalities should not obstruct substantive justice, particularly when dealing with vulnerable sections such as labourers. Justice Krishna Iyer highlighted that evidence, even if not strictly conforming to technical norms, should be admissible if it serves the ends of justice.

5. *Harshad Singh @ Baba Pahalvan Singh v. State Of Gujarat*³⁹

Facts:

Harshad Singh, also known as Baba Pahalvan Singh, was convicted of murder and other related offenses, he was convicted for a serious criminal offence based on certain oral and documentary evidence. The case of prosecution heavily relied on the testimony of certain witnesses. The defence challenged the credibility of these witnesses, arguing that their testimonies were inconsistent and unreliable, given procedural inconsistencies during their collection. The case looked into the weight of evidence given by eye witnesses.

³⁹ Harshad Singh @ Baba Pahalvan Singh v. State of Gujarat A.I.R. 1977 S.C. 710 (India).

Issues:

- a) Whether evidence collected in breach of procedural norms under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973⁴⁰ and Indian Evidence Act, 1872 could still be deemed admissible.
- b) Whether the accused's statements, obtained under questionable circumstances, could be considered credible and relied upon for conviction.
- c) The extent to which procedural safeguards must be balanced against the need to ensure justice is served.

Judgement:

“pp. 627A-C Judgment of the Court was delivered by KRISHNA IYER, J. Judicial sumitry, when the subject of dispute is re-appraisal of evidence even on the sophisticated ground of misappreciation, has to submit itself to certain self-restraining rules of processual symmetry. The trial Court directly sees the witnesses testify and tests their veracity in the raw. The appellate Court, enjoying co-extensive power of examination, exercises it circumspectly, looks for errors of probative appraisal, oversight or omission in the record and makes a better judgment on the totality of materials in the light of established rules of criminal jurisprudence. As the case ascends higher, forensic review is more rarefied. Such being the restrictive approach, the Supreme Court cannot be persuaded, without stultifying the system of our judicature, to go over the ground of reading the evidence and interpreting it anew so as to uphold that which appeals to it among possible alternative views. If there is perversity, miscarriage of justice, shocking misreading or gross-misapplication of the rules, procedural and substantive, we interfere without hesitation. Of course, other exceptional circumstances also may invoke our review jurisdiction. These prefatory observations have become necessary since, usually appellants, hopefully slurring over these jurisdictional limitations, argue the whole way before us as if the entire evidence is at large for de novo 'examination. Such a procedure has been attempted in the present case and, for reasons just mentioned, we are disinclined to rip open the depositions to re-discover whether the evidence is reliable or not. Only if there is perversity, miscarriage of justice, shocking misreading or gross-misapplication

⁴⁰ Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, No. 2, Acts of Parliament, 1974 (India).

of the rules, procedural and substantive, or other exceptional circumstances, the review jurisdiction of the Supreme Court may be invoked."

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, in his judgment, emphasized that the law of evidence must not become an instrument of injustice. He underscored that while procedural irregularities must not be encouraged, evidence that substantially reveals the truth and serves justice should not be excluded solely on technical grounds. The Court acknowledged the importance of ensuring fairness in criminal trials but maintained that the ultimate goal of the judicial process is to uncover the truth.

Justice Krishna Iyer ruled that the evidence in question, despite some procedural lapses, was admissible as it was credible, material to the case, and not fabricated. He stressed that the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides enough scope for judicial discretion in admitting evidence if it satisfies the test of reliability and relevance.

Conclusion

Justice Iyer consistently emphasized the guiding principle that the ultimate purpose of the 'rule of law' is to uphold the 'rule of life.' He believed the law must descend from its lofty pedestal to address ground realities, aligning with the evolving needs and aspirations of society. Despite his brief tenure in the Supreme Court, Justice Iyer left a profound and enduring impact on the public.⁴¹

Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's judgments in the mentioned cases reflect a consistent yet nuanced interpretation of the principles governing the admissibility of evidence. While his rulings align with foundational principles under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, they also reveal his commitment to balancing procedural technicalities with substantive justice.

Across these judgments, Justice Krishna Iyer maintained a firm reliance on the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, yet demonstrated flexibility when procedural rigidity threatened substantive justice. While *Suba Singh v. Mahendra Singh And Ors*⁴² and *Bishwanath Prasad And Others v. Dwarka Prasad (Dead) And Others*⁴³ emphasize strict adherence to evidentiary standards in

⁴¹ V.R. KRISHNA IYER, *Ministry of Law & Justice*, MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE (March 3, 2026), <https://lawmin.gov.in/sites/default/files/2015-02-02%20>.

⁴² *Suba Singh v. Mahendra Singh* A.I.R. 1974 S.C. 1657 (India).

⁴³ *Bishwanath Prasad v. Dwarka Prasad (Dead)* A.I.R. 1974 S.C. 117 (India).

property disputes, *P. N. Kaushal Etc v. Union Of India*⁴⁴, *Mumbai Kamgar Sabha Kamgar Sabha, Bombay v. M/S Abdulbhai Faizullabhai & Ors*⁴⁵, and *Harshad Singh @ Baba Pahalvan Singh v. State Of Gujarat*⁴⁶ reflect his recognition that evidence serving public welfare and justice should not be excluded on technical grounds alone. In labour and criminal matters, Justice Iyer leaned towards ensuring fairness and protecting vulnerable groups, demonstrating his commitment to a justice-centric interpretation of evidence law.

⁴⁴ P.N. Kaushal v. Union of India A.I.R. 1978 S.C. 1457 (India).

⁴⁵ Mumbai Kamgar Sabha, Bombay v. Abdulbhai Faizullabhai A.I.R. 1976 S.C. 1455 (India).

⁴⁶ Harshad Singh @ Baba Pahalvan Singh v. State of Gujarat A.I.R. 1977 S.C. 710 (India).

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10. *Harshad Singh @ Baba Pahalvan Singh v. State of Gujarat* [1977] AIR 710 (SC)