GENERAL COUNSELS' ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (GCAI)

28 August 2026 | Singapore

India–Singapore Legal Bridge: Enabling Growth, Investment and Effective Dispute Resolution in a Changing Global Economy

Singapore — The General Counsels' Association of India (GCAI) convened a landmark India–Singapore legal dialogue on 28 August 2026, on the sidelines of Singapore Convention Week, bringing together senior judges, government leaders, diplomats, general counsel, advocates, arbitral and mediation experts, and business leaders from India and Singapore. The dialogue focused on strengthening the legal ecosystem supporting trade, investment and cross-border dispute resolution between the two countries and the wider ASEAN region.



A Strategic Legal Bridge for a Growing Economic Partnership:

The event highlighted the strong economic and institutional foundations of the India–Singapore relationship and the opportunity to deepen the legal architecture that supports it. Hon'ble Justice Manmohan, Supreme Court of India; Attorney General for India R. Venkataramani; Deputy High Commissioner of India in Singapore Sudhi Choudhary; and Jimmy Yim SC, Chairman, Drew & Napier, were among the distinguished leaders who contributed to the dialogue.

Justice Manmohan described the India–Singapore Legal Bridge as resting on two strong pillars: the economic foundation created through the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement and continuing high-level engagement, and a common legislative foundation arising from shared common-law traditions, UNCITRAL Model Law-based arbitration frameworks and adherence to the New York Convention. He emphasised India's growing credibility as a seat of arbitration, the need for greater opportunities for Indian legal talent on international arbitral tribunals, and innovative mechanisms such as judicial networking and mirror orders for cross-border disputes.

Deputy High Commissioner Sudhi Choudhary described bilateral relations as entering an increasingly productive phase and highlighted the deepening engagement between the two countries across manufacturing, connectivity, digitalisation, healthcare, skills and sustainability. She also referred to the existing institutional framework for cooperation in law and dispute resolution and expressed the hope that the Legal Bridge would generate practical ideas to strengthen bilateral ties.

> "Attorney General for India R. Venkataramani emphasised collaboration in dispute resolution over jurisdictional competition and recognised Singapore's innovative contribution to the field.

Call for Bold Legal Reform and Greater Institutional Cooperation:
Attorney General for India R. Venkataramani called for bold and forward-looking legal frameworks rather than incremental reform. He noted that technological innovation and new forms of investment require a fundamental rethink of legal structures and suggested that the Legal Bridge could explore concepts such as global common-good cooperation legislation and extending the idea of 'one-window clearance' towards 'one-window legal clearance'. He also emphasised collaboration in dispute resolution over jurisdictional competition and recognised Singapore's innovative contribution to the field.

Dr. Sanjeev Gemawat, Co-Founder, GCAI, described India and Singapore as 'extraordinarily natural partners', with India contributing scale, talent and manufacturing capacity, and Singapore contributing capital, connectivity and institutional credibility. He stressed that legal certainty and credible institutions are fundamental to investment decisions and that dispute-resolution clauses should be viewed as 'commercial infrastructure'. He articulated GCAI's objective of building a trusted India–Singapore legal and business corridor and making law an enabler of commerce.

Dr. Akhil Prasad, Country Counsel India at Boeing and Co-Founder, GCAI, highlighted the need to strengthen the role of general counsel, facilitate greater professional opportunities and invest in the next generation of lawyers. He outlined GCAI's Nyaya Nirmaan initiative for structured dialogue on legal reform and its YUKTI initiative for developing practical capabilities among young lawyers.

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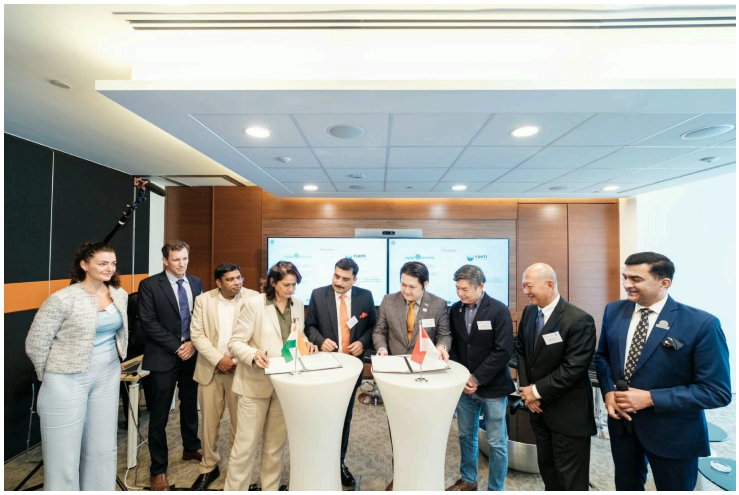


GCAI–SCCA Memorandum of Understanding:
A key outcome of the event was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between GCAI and the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA), creating a platform for closer cooperation between the in-house legal communities of India and Singapore.
The partnership envisages knowledge exchange, professional development and cross-border immersion programmes for students and young lawyers, with exposure to in-house practice, legal technology, artificial intelligence, negotiation, forensic investigations and other areas relevant to modern corporate legal practice. The initiative is intended to strengthen legal talent and create practical bridges between the two jurisdictions as India–Singapore–ASEAN economic integration expands.

> "Dr. Akhil Prasad, Co-Founder, GCAI, highlighted the need to invest in the next generation of lawyers.

Expert Deliberations: From Investment to Enforcement
The first expert session, moderated by Kunal Vajani, examined economic partnership, investment flows and the future legal ecosystem. Dr. Pinky Anand, Looi Teck Keong, Alexander Fenner and Frauke Nitschke discussed investment flows, mediation, AI governance and dispute resolution. The discussion emphasised practical business-level follow-through on bilateral initiatives, joint protocols for cross-border proceedings and award enforcement, and careful adoption of AI with appropriate human oversight and confidentiality safeguards.

The second session, moderated by Jimmy Yim SC, focused on what businesses need from cross-border dispute resolution — from contract drafting to enforcement. Leading practitioners and dispute-resolution specialists considered the complementary roles of litigation, mediation and arbitration, the importance of selecting the seat and governing law with enforcement in mind, and the value of institutional



arbitration and mediation. The discussion also highlighted administrative efficiency, advocacy skills, in-house experience and contract implementation knowledge as important components of India's ambition to emerge as a global dispute-resolution hub.

Takeaways and Areas for Further Action

The dialogue identified a broad agenda for sustained India–Singapore legal cooperation. GCAI believes the following areas merit continued institutional and stakeholder engagement:

•Develop practical India–Singapore protocols for cross-border evidence and witness examination, court cooperation and enforcement of arbitral awards.

•Strengthen institutional mediation and arbitration pathways, including greater use of early-stage mediation with appropriate arbitration or litigation fallbacks.

•Promote greater participation and opportunities for Indian legal professionals in international arbitration and cross-border dispute resolution.

•Create structured platforms for general counsel and business leaders to identify regulatory and legal bottlenecks affecting cross-border investment and trade.

•Explore forward-looking legal frameworks for technology, AI governance, new investment models and emerging forms of commerce, while maintaining appropriate human oversight.

• Build sustained legal-talent pipelines through GCAI–SCCA cross-border immersion, mentoring and internship programmes, with greater exposure to in-house and international practice.

•Translate bilateral political and economic understandings into practical, business-facing legal mechanisms that reduce friction, improve certainty and support investment.

•Continue the India–Singapore Legal Bridge as an institutional dialogue, with participation from government, judiciary, regulators, businesses, general counsel, lawyers, arbitral institutions and academia.

GCAI views the Singapore dialogue as an important first step in building a deeper legal and professional bridge between India and Singapore. The objective is not merely to exchange views, but to convert shared legal foundations and economic interests into practical cooperation that makes the region more predictable, efficient and conducive to trade, investment and dispute resolution.

About GCAI

The General Counsels' Association of India (GCAI) is a platform focused on strengthening the voice, capabilities and institutional role of general counsel and in-house legal professionals, while contributing to constructive dialogue on legal and regulatory reform, dispute resolution and the development of future-ready legal talent.

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- Jimmy Yim SC, Chairman, Drew and Napier

Resource Centre

https://youtu.be/76A0UaTD5xc?si=m2Hx9vF1v4dmGQYW
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DREW & NAPIER


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SESSION II:
Cross-Border Dispute Resolution: What Businesses Really Need
Moderator
Panellists




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SINGAPORE CONVENTION WEEK
SGLAW 200
SESSION II:
Mr Jimmy Yim, SC
Chairman, Drew & Napier
Panellist