BOOK REVIEW

Justice R.V. Raveendran, "*Anomalies in Law and Justice",* Eastern Book Company, Lucknow, 2024, Pp. 500, Hardcover: Rs. 1245/-

*Reviewed By Atul Yadav**[1]

In a rapidly globalising world, the concepts of law and justice have become more crucial than ever. They form the bedrock of democratic societies ensuring that individuals and institutions are held accountable, rights are protected, and social order is maintained. The interconnectivity brought about by globalisation ensures that legal systems and judicial practices are no longer insular; they must adapt to international norms, treaties, and human rights standards. In this context, "Anomalies in Law and Justice" by R.V. Raveendran is a seminal work that addresses critical gaps and inconsistencies in the Indian legal system and its judicial process. The book is significant for readers who seek to understand the intricate problems that hinder the administration of justice in India. The book in hand keeps itself apart from other works on the same topic, in terms of its authoritative voice and the practical insights it offers. Unlike theoretical treatises, this book draws from real-life cases and the author's firsthand experiences within the judiciary. Justice Raveendran's candid analysis and the specific examples he provides offer a depth of understanding that is both compelling and instructive. The book does not just identify problems, but also suggests actionable reforms, making it a crucial resource for anyone involved in the legal system.

The book is structured in a clear and logical manner, spanning approximately 500 pages and divided into two parts, each containing five chapters. Each chapter delves into specific aspects of the legal and judicial system, providing a comprehensive overview and detailed analysis. The introduction sets the stage by outlining the importance of addressing anomalies in the legal system and the author's motivations for writing the book. The next chapter deals with challenges to the justice delivery system in India and also offers some practical solutions like promoting ADR mechanisms and highlighting the collaborative role of state, judiciary, the bar and common people in this regard. The third chapter deals with corruption at various levels in judicial organs and how to contain it using multifaceted approaches and strategies including using existing and emerging technologies. It underscores how corruption acts as a barrier to

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University of Delhi

[1] * Student, LL.M., Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Delhi.

accessing justice, especially for marginalised and disadvantaged groups as well as its far reaching negative impact on public trust. The fourth chapter deals with parliamentary democracy and electoral reforms and how they both can be strengthened in India using innovative mechanisms like recall of elected representatives, compulsory voting, prescribing minimum qualification for candidates, education and awareness campaigns, prohibiting candidates with serious criminal history and convictions, etc. The fifth and final chapter of the first part of the book contains some musings on desirable characteristics in leaders and public representatives and how to cultivate them.

The second part of the book is specifically dedicated to judges and lawyers. Chapter one is based on how to become a good judge and contains valuable insights and ethical guidance for new judges. Chapter two contains valuable insights on reasoned decision making, statutory interpretation and judgement writing. Third chapter of this part discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the precedent system and how it can be effectively utilised in justice dispensation. The fourth chapter is dedicated to alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation and conciliation. The last and final chapter deals with certain issues pertaining to arbitration in India and offers some solutions in the form of MED-ARB or mediation-arbitration.

Strengths of the book include author's authoritative insight, practical examples, comprehensive coverage, and actionable recommendations. The author's extensive judicial experience as a Supreme Court Judge provides deep, credible insights. Real-life case studies and examples make the analysis relatable and concrete. The book covers a wide range of issues, providing a holistic view of the anomalies in the legal system. Most importantly, the author offers specific, practical suggestions for reforms. Some weaknesses include the dense legal jargon and most focus only on judicial perspective and little on intersectional or multidisciplinary approach. The use of legal terminology may be challenging for readers without a legal background. While rich in judicial insight, the book could benefit from incorporating more viewpoints from other stakeholders such as public servants, law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and civil society.

Notwithstanding, this book is an invaluable resource that provides a wealth of information and critical analysis beneficial for further academic research and study on issues concerning law and justice. Detailed case studies and real-life examples serve as valuable case studies for legal

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education and research. It also has a great prospect for legal professionals including advocates, judges, and policymakers. Judges and advocates can gain insights into the systemic issues that need addressing for more effective justice delivery. Policymakers can use the book's recommendations to formulate policies that address legal and judicial anomalies. Legal practitioners can enhance their understanding of the systemic issues and contribute to reform efforts.

Overall, this is a significant contribution to the discourse on legal reforms in India. The book's detailed analysis, practical insights, and actionable recommendations make it an essential read for anyone involved in the legal system. The author, with his extensive experience as a Supreme Court Judge of India, brings a unique perspective to the discussion, making this book essential reading for legal scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. While it has its challenges, particularly for non-legal readers, its overall utility in driving meaningful reforms and improving the administration of justice is undeniable. This book is not only a critique but a roadmap for creating a more effective and equitable legal system in India.

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