



ILS LAW COLLEGE, PUNE

1st Inter-College

Management Fest

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

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ORDER FOR DISORDER PROBLEM STATEMENT

1. The District Court of Pravaraapur had long been known for its staggering pendency and sluggish functioning, but the simmering discontent finally erupted into a full-blown institutional crisis after an incident that shook the conscience of the entire state. On 22 September 2025, a seventy-year-old litigant named **Harish Varde** jumped from the third floor of the court building. He had come to attend yet another hearing in his civil dispute that had been pending for more than twenty-one years and had passed through multiple judges without meaningful progress. The suicide note found in his pocket revealed that he was deeply frustrated. Although the post-mortem confirmed that his death was caused by a massive cardiac arrest, the media swiftly portrayed the incident as the tragic consequence of judicial delays. Within hours, news channels and social media platforms were filled with images of the frail elderly man who had spent decades in pursuit of justice that never arrived. Public perception quickly transformed the incident into a symbol of the systemic collapse of the district judiciary.

2. The High Court, confronted with unprecedented outrage, took *suo motu* cognizance of the situation. A special supervisory bench was constituted, and a **Court Manager**—a trained professional in judicial administration—was urgently appointed to examine the circumstances and prepare a comprehensive reform strategy. Upon arrival, the Court Manager found that the district had an astonishing backlog of **over three lakh pending cases**, with more than **fifty thousand older than twenty years**, and nearly **fourteen thousand cases** in which judgments had been reserved for several months without pronouncement. The registry could provide no reliable explanation for the stagnation. Case files were stacked in dusty rooms where records were frequently misplaced, and listing practices appeared arbitrary, inconsistent, and susceptible to manipulation.

3. As the Court Manager attempted to meet with the judicial officers, he encountered an immediate and uncomfortable resistance. Many judges questioned the legitimacy of his role, arguing that “administrative tracking” of their performance threatened judicial independence. Some refused to share information, others postponed meetings indefinitely, and a few openly told the registry

staff that the Court Manager’s “interference” was neither welcomed nor required. Rumours circulated quietly among clerks and orderlies that certain judges were known to delay pronouncing judgments because litigants or intermediaries might approach them, and that delayed decisions created space for improper influence. These allegations were whispered in corridors and canteens, never formally recorded, but widely believed.

4. The behaviour of the Bar compounded the problem. The District Bar Association had split into three major rival factions, each aligned with different political groups. Their internal disputes frequently spilled into the courtroom corridors, affecting day-to-day functioning. Senior lawyers exerted disproportionate influence, often insisting on adjournments, sometimes for the most trivial reasons, which the courts tended to grant. Junior lawyers rarely had the courage to oppose unnecessary delays, as their professional progress depended on remaining in the good graces of senior practitioners. The Court Manager observed case after case being adjourned due to the absence of counsel, unavailability of documents, or pleas of “lack of preparation,” contributing significantly to the rising pendency.
5. The work culture of the court itself struggled under deep-rooted inefficiencies. Court sessions often began late, breaks extended far beyond scheduled times, and many judicial officers concluded their day earlier than expected. Several courts operated at a fraction of their capacity simply because of time lost in non-judicial activities, procedural confusion, or impromptu pauses. Staff vacancy hovered at nearly thirty per cent, and those who were present lacked adequate training. No skill-building programme had been conducted in years, and several employees appeared unfamiliar even with the basic functions of the outdated case-management software installed a decade earlier. The technology infrastructure was practically collapsing—nonfunctional computers, unreliable servers, and an e-filing system that existed merely in name.
6. Meanwhile, public anger intensified. The death of Harish Varde became a rallying point for allegations of corruption, apathy, and systemic failure. Litigant associations staged marches demanding accountability. Media coverage grew increasingly aggressive, with primetime debates branding the judiciary as “paralysed.” Political parties saw an opportunity and began organizing large protests at the court gates, preventing the regular functioning of judicial work. For eleven consecutive days, courtrooms remained inaccessible as protestors blocked the

entrances, insisting that the judiciary announce concrete steps to ensure faster, transparent, and efficient justice delivery.

7. Amid this turmoil, the High Court reaffirmed its direction: the newly appointed Court Manager must **diagnose the institutional failures of the District Court of Pravarapur and propose an actionable, ethically sound, and feasible strategy for reform**. The Court Manager was given a deadline of forty-five days to submit a comprehensive report addressing not only the massive pendency and delays but also the behavioural, structural, technological, administrative, and political dimensions of the crisis. He was expected to restore coordination among judges, discipline within the Bar, integrity in administrative processes, and confidence among the public. Additionally, he had to negotiate with political groups, reassure the High Court, and bring the court's day-to-day functioning back to normal—all while working with limited funds and widespread institutional resistance.

8. This situation now forms the problem before you. Acting as the Court Manager, you must prepare a **detailed strategy plan** capable of addressing each layer of dysfunction—judicial, administrative, technological, behavioural, ethical, and political—to revive the District Court of Pravarapur and restore public trust in the justice system.