

Dr. Ashwani Kumar

Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Author, Thinker & Speaker
Former Additional Solicitor General of India,
Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha),
Union Minister for Law & Justice
Envoy of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Japan

Birth: October 26, 1952, New Delhi, India

Citizenship: Indian

Address: C-9, Friends Colony (East), New Delhi-110065

Education: Jawaharlal Nehru University (M. Phil - 1976)
Faculty of Law, Delhi University (LL.B -1975)
St. Stephen's College, Delhi (B.A (History Hons.) 1972)

Awards:

- Awarded the “ Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Acheivers Award” by the Punjab Government on November 10, 2019, on the occasion of 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
- Conferred with the “*Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun*”,(one of the highest civilian honours of Japan)by His Imperial Majesty, The Emperor of Japan in Tokyo, May 9, 2017.
- Honoris Causa in Law, Punjab University, 2005.

Parliamentary Engagements:

- Chairman, *Standing Committee on Science, Technology, Environment and Forests*, Parliament of India, 2015-2016.
- Member, *General Purposes Committee* of Rajya Sabha,2015
- Member, *Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Defence*, January 2015.
- Member, National Literacy Mission,2014
- Member, “*shadow cabinet*” on matters related to the ministries of Defence, Home and Law and Justice, by the Congress President in November 2014.
- Member, *Parliamentary Standing Committee-Defence*, Parliament of

India, 2013

- Member, *Public Accounts Committee*, Parliament of India, 2013
- Chairman of the Select Committee of Rajya Sabha for "*The Prevention of Torture Bill*", 2010.
- Member of Standing Committee on External Affairs in 2009

Professional Appointments:

- Appointed as *Additional Solicitor General of India*, Supreme Court of India, 1990
- Designated *Senior Advocate*, Supreme Court of India, 1986

Ministerial Positions:

- Cabinet Minister for Law & Justice, 2012-2013
- Minister of State for Planning, 2011-2013
- Minister of State for Science and Technology, 2011-2013
- Minister of State for Earth Sciences, 2011-2013
- Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs in 2011
- Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, 2006-2009

Party Positions Held (AICC):

- National Spokesperson, Indian National Congress (INC)
- Chairman, Vichar Vibhag, All India Congress Committee (AICC)

Diplomatic Engagements:

- Prime Minister's *Special Envoy for Japan* in the rank of a Cabinet Minister, 2013
- Nominated to represent India at the *United Nations General Assembly Session*, New York City, 2013.
- Member, *Indian Ministerial delegation for the 3rd Indo-US Strategic Dialogue and the 1st Indo-Japan Economic Dialogue*, New Delhi, 2012.
- Led Parliamentary Delegation to Hungary and Russia, 2011-12.
- Represented Government of India at *World Economic Forum, Davos & Dalian*, 2011
- Accompanying Minister to the *President of India Smt. Pratibha Devisingh*

Patil on her State Visit to Vietnam and Indonesia in 2008, to Spain and Poland in 2009.

- Accompanying Minister to *Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Prime Minister Gordon Brown of UK, and King Albert II of Belgium*, during their State visits to India. He also had ministerial engagements with Late President Simon Perez of Israel and President Mbeki of South Africa, 2006-2009.
- Founder President, *the Indo-French Parliamentary Friendship Group* constituted by the Speaker of Lok Sabha, 2003.

Visiting Appointments:

- Visiting Professor, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, 2018-19
- Associate Tenant" *with the Doughty Street Chambers in London*, 2017.
- Member, Governing Board, STS Forum, Japan.
- Distinguished Fellow, Global Federation of Competitiveness Council, Washington, 2017
- Visiting Fellow, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, 2004.

Speaking Assignments:

- Chaired a session on “Global Governance of Information” at the 17th Annual Meeting (Virtual) on 5th October, 2020 hosted by STS Forum, Kyoto/Japan.
- Speaker at the “ 5th STS India-Japan Workshop”, New Delhi, February, 2020
- Invited to deliver a lecture at the University of Kyoto (Japan) on ‘*Japan – India Entente: Promise of Stability, Peace and prosperity in Asia and the World*’, October 2019.
- Guest Lecture, ‘*Constitutional Rights, Judicial Review and Parliamentary Democracy*’, National Law School of India University, February 2019.
- Guest Lecture, “*Refugee Rights in India*”, National Law School of India University, December 2018.
- Speaker, ‘*The Plight of Rohingyas*’, Migration and Asylum Trust, The India International Centre, December 2018.
- Speech delivered , ‘*State of the Nation*’, World Policy Conference, Marrakech,

Morocco, November, 2017

- Keynote speaker, “*India-US-Japan Tri lateral initiative*” US India Business Council Washington, 2016
- Addressed students at the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, October, 2016.
- Addressed students on “*Judicial Activism in India and its Potential Impact on Society*”, John Hopkins SAIS, Washington, October, 2016.
- Speaker, “*Seminar on the Advancement of Constitutional Rights and Public Interest Litigation in India*”, the Oxford Human Rights Hub, October, 2016.
- Delivered a Public Lecture, “*UK –India Engagement: Partnership for the Future*”, Universities of Birmingham & Nottingham,
- Speaker, IFRI, World Policy Conference, “*Ethics, Technology and Government Business Relations*”, Doha, November 2016
- Speaker, “*Citizenry & Faith*”, the Annual “Entretiens de Royaumont” conference, Paris, December.
- Addressed the Chevening Gurukul scholars, The King’s College, London, October, 2016
- Delivered a lecture, Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University, July 2016
- Speaker, Plenary Session at the Horasis Conference, Cascais/Portugal, July 2016
- Delivered a Lecture on “*The Expansion of Constitutional freedoms in India - The Irish Interface and Future Challenges*”, The Long Room Hub, Trinity College, Dublin, May, 2016.
- Speaker, *the Aix Le Cercle des economists in Aix-en-Provence*, France, 2013
- Keynote Speaker, “*India’s Growth Story: Challenges and Response*”, Harvard Club, New York, June, 2012.
- Delivered a Lecture on “*India’s Quest for Global Leadership in Science, Technology and Innovation*” and on “*the case for Indo-US collaboration in the frontier areas of Science*”, MIT, Cambridge, June 2012.
- Keynote Speaker, *8th Annual Meeting of the Science and Technology Forum (STS)*, Kyoto, Japan, 2011

WEBINARS:

- Delivered a Memorial lecture on “Leadership in New World” on the occasion of

21st Death Anniversary of Pt. Mohan Lal hosted by GGSDS College, Chandigarh.

- In Conversation with Mr. Karan Thapar on "*India's 23-Year-Old Failure to Ratify UN Convention Against Torture is Shameful*", hosted by The Wire, 2nd July, 2020
- In Panel discussion with Justice Deepak Gupta, Former Judge, Supreme Court and Ms. Sunetra Choudhary, National Editor, Political Affairs - Hindustan Times on "*Custodial Deaths - Need for an Anti-Torture Law*", hosted by LiveLaw, 3rd July, 2020
- In conversation with Barrister Ms. Camilla ter Harr on "*Defining challenges of the present ;towards a better world*", 10th June, 2020
- In panel discussion with Justice R. C Lahoti, Former Chief Justice of India and Ms. Madhu Teotia, Sr. Advocate on "*Constitutional rights of citizens during the outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic*", hosted by Adv. Rubinder Ghumman, 8th June, 2020
- Lecture on "*Citizens' Right to Dignity*", hosted by Vidhii Partners, 27th May, 2020.

Publications:

BOOKS:

- *Book of Wisdom*, Solar Print Process, 2022
- *Ehsas-O-Izhar: An Anthology of Urdu Poetry*, Nyogi Books, Vol. II 2022
- *Human Dignity – A Purpose in Perpetuity*, LexisNexis, 2020
- *Ehsas-O-Izhar: An Anthology of Urdu Poetry*, Nyogi Books, 2018
- *Hope in a Challenged Democracy: An Indian Narrative*, Wisdom Tree; 2017
- *Law, Ideas and Ideology in Politics: Perspectives of an Activist*, HarAnand Publications; 2003.

BOOKS UNDER PUBLICATION INCLUDE:

- *A Democracy in Retreat: Revisiting the Ends of Power*

RECENT INTERVIEWS/MEDIA STATEMENTS:

- Dr. Ashwani Kumar addressed a letter to Hon'ble the CJI & companion Justices of the Supreme Court requesting to take suo-motu notice in the matter of handling of Covid-19 patients and dealing with dead bodies consistent with Right to Dignity. Please see; Indian Express- <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/ex-law-minister-ashwani-kumar-writes-to-cji-act-against-ill-treatment-of-covid-19-victims-6453375/>,

LiveLaw- <https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/former-law-minister-sr-adv-ashwani-kumar-writes-to-cji-to-take-suo-moto-action-against-reported-incidents-of-manhandling-of-covid-patients-dead-bodies-read-letter-158113>,

NDTV -<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/covid-19-patients-treated-worse-than-animals-supreme-court-pulls-up-delhi-government-asks-it-to-explain-fall-in-coronavirus-testing-2245111>,

The Hindu - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/supreme-court-urged-to-protect-patients-right-to-dignified-death-burial/article31799742.ece>

- **Supreme Court issues Notice to Center on Public Interest Litigation filed by Dr. Ashwani Kumar for protection and recognizing Rights of Elderly population.**

Please See;

The Tribune- <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/nation/sc-notice-to-centre-on-pil-for-old-age-homes-219502>

LiveLaw - <https://www.livelaw.in/rights-of-elderly-persons-must-be-recognised-and-implemented-sc-issues-directives/?infinitemscroll=1>

Bar&Bench - <https://www.barandbench.com/news/former-law-minister-bats-elderly-ashwini-kumar-files-pil-adequate-old-age-homes-country>

ARTICLES:

- *“India @ 75: Promises to keep”, The Tribune, 23rd August 2022*
- *“Farewell, Abe San”, The Asian Age, 12th July 2022 Deccan Chronicle, 12th July 2022*
- *“Leadership of a Democracy in Decline”, The Wire, 28th May 2022*
- *“Act of Judicial Statesmanship”, Indian Express, 18th May 2022*
- *“The Will of the Age”, Indian Express, 24th March, 2022*
- *“Ukraine War: The Test of Civilisation”, The Tribune, 1st March 2022; The Asian Age, The Deccan Chronicle, 2nd March 2022; LiveLaw, 3rd March 2022, Dainik Jagran, 4th March 2022*
- *“A Question of Justice”, The Indian Express, 12th January 2022*
- *“People Versus Power”, The Tribune, 6th January 2022*
- *“Rescuing a Democracy in Retreat”, The Wire, 7th October 2021*
- *“An Agenda for Governance”, The Tribune on 28th September 2021, Dainik Jagran, 2nd October 2021, and Punjabi Tribune, 5th October 2021*
- *“Reclaiming the Nation’s Moral Centre”, The Tribune on 25th August 2021, Dainik Jagran on 27th August 2021, and Punjabi Tribune 31st August 2021*
- *“A Fine Judicial Moment”, Indian Express on 15th June 2021*
- *“Grief, the Burden of Being”, The Wire on 2nd May 2021, Live Law on 7th May 2021, and Economic and Political Weekly, 8th May 2021*

- *“Lest We Forget”, The Indian Express on 1st February 2021, Live Law on 31st January 2021*
- *“Mind The Gap”, The Outlook – Print Edition on 18th January 2021, The Asian Age and Deccan Chronicle on 9th January 2021*
- *“Beyond Binaries”, The Tribune on 29th December 2021, The Wire, The National Herald on 8th December 2020, and Punjabi Tribune on 31st December 2020*
- *“Right to Dignity: The Institutional Deficit”, The Tribune on 23rd October 2020, Live Law on 27th October 2020, Lokmat, The Asian Age, Deccan Chronicle on 28th October 2020*
- *“A Question of Leadership”, The Wire on 30th September 2020, The Hindu on 21st August 2020, Lokmat Times, Lokmat Samachar on 19th August 2020, Navjeevan on 16th August 2020, Punjabi Tribune on 13th August 2020*
- *“A Moment of National Awakening”, LiveLaw on 23rd September 2020, Lokmat Times, Lokmat Samachar, The Tribune on 23rd September 2020, and the National Herald on 27th September 2020*
- *“A Politics of National Renewal”, The Hindu on 18th June 2020*
- *“The Court’s Remit”, The Tribune on 13th June 2020, Punjabi Tribune on 9th June 2020*
- *“No Return to Politics as Usual”, The Indian Express on 20th April 2020*
- *“Coronavirus, the Humbling of Man by Nature”, The Tribune on 1st March 2020, Lokmat Times on 31st March 2020.*
- *“Understated and Compassionate”, The National Herald on 9th December 2021 and Lokmat Times on 9th December 2021*
- *“Shinzo’s Resignation an Act of Humility, Dignity”, The Tribune on 5th September 2020 and Dainik Jagran, Punjabi Tribune on 11th September 2020.*
- *“What should leadership look like in a new world”, The Wire, 30th September, 2020*
- *“Farm Bills: Abuse of legislative due process vitiates the law”, LiveLaw, 23rd September 2020.
Also see; The Tribune, Jagbani, Punjab Kesari, Lokmat, Lokmat Times, Lokmat Samachar, Dainik Tribune, Punjabi Tribune, Navjeevan, National Herald.*
- *“Shinzo’s resignation, an act of humility”, The Tribune, 5th September, 2020
Also See: Dainik Tribune, Navjeevan, Punjabi Tribune*

- *"The leaders we need in today's world", The Hindu, 21st August 2020.*
Also See; Lokmat Times 19th August 2020, Lokmat Samachar, 19th August 2020, Navjeevan, 16th August 2020 and The Punjab Tribune, 13th August 2020.
- *"Hope for the Homeless: The Case of Rohingyas"*
National Law School of India University Law Review, 31 NLSIR Rev. (2019)
- *"A Politics of national renewal", The Tribune, 8th July 2020*
- *"Court needs to uphold the rights of citizens", The Tribune, 13th June, 2020*
Also see; Punjabi Tribune, 9th June, 2020
- *"लोगों को रोटी और छत के लिए समझौता ना करना पड़े", पंजाब केसरी, 26 मई 2020*
- *"कहाँ तुम चले गए, 'परछाड़ियाँ' रह गईं", पंजाब केसरी, 2 मई 2020*
- *"No return to politics as usual", Indian Express dated 20th April, 2020.*
- *"Coronavirus, the humbling of man by Nature", The Tribune, 1st April, 2020*
Also see; Dainik Jagran, Punjabi Tribune, The Ajit
- *"A test of true leadership", Lokmat Times dated, 1st April, 2020; Also see; Lokmat Editions*
- *"Striking a Balance" Indian Express dated 25th November 2019*
- *"The Constitutional legitimacy of Abrogating Article 370" Economic & Political Weekly Vol 54, Issue no.38. For Summarized version see; "Kashmir, beyond legalities: Modi govt needs to recognize essential dignity of its people", The Indian Express, 10th September, 2019; Also see: "Winning over Kashmiri's a Litmus Test for the Govt", The Tribune and Dainik Jagran, 14th August, 2019; The Asian Age and Deccan Chronicle, 15th August 2019.*
- *"Modi's Audacity of Hope: Can he win over J&K", Asian Age and Deccan Chronicles, 15th August, 2019*
- *"Custodial Torture not yet a specific criminal offence", The Tribune, 26th June, 2019*
- *"Constitutional Rights, Judicial Review and Parliamentary Democracy", Economic & Political Weekly, Vol. 54, Issue No.14, 13th April, 2019*
- *"This Election, we must reject the onslaughts on freedom", The Indian Express, 28th March, 2019*
- *"The Essence of the next mandate", The Hindu, 28th January, 2019*
- *'Inequities have Strained our Democratic Polity', The Tribune, 3rd December 2018, Also See: The Ajit, Ajit Samachar, 4th December 2018;*
- *"Bench as Beacon", The Indian Express, 29th November 2018; Also see: Dainik Jagran, 28th November 2018*
- *"Let Us Come Together to fulfill the Dreams of Mahatma Gandhi." Lokmat Times, 2nd October 2018; Also See: Jagbani, Punjab Kesari, Navodaya Times,*

Lokmat Main and Lokmat Hindi.

- “Protecting the Dissenters”, *The Hindu*, 3rd September; Also See: *Dainik Jagran, The Ajit and The Indian Express 2018*
- “A Tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee”, *Punjabi Kesari*, 21st August 2018
- “Dear Prime Minister, We Must Enact” - An Open Letter to the Prime Minister regarding Custodial Torture ; *The Indian Express*, 14th March 2018; Also See: *Punjab Kesari and Jagbani*
- “Evidence vs Perception” *The Indian Express; The Ajit*, 6th January 2018; Also See: *Dainik Jagran*, 26th December 2017
- “Standing up for Human Rights”, *The Hindu*, 8th January 2018
- 'The Moment of Promise' *The Telegraph (Kolkata)*, 8th December 2017; Also See: *the Asian Age, Dainik Jagran, Punjab Kesari*
- "The lesson from Doklam-Peace is the dividend of power", *Hindustan Times*, 16th September, 2017
- "The resilience of our liberalism: on the right to privacy" , *The Hindu*, 12th September, 2017
- "Searching for an equilibrium" *The Hindu*, 2nd December, 2016
- "Theresa May's Visit an Opportunity to Redefine Indo-UK Relationship After Brexit", *The Wire*, 6th November, 2016
- "Let us Aim for an Age Irrelevant Society", *The Hindustan Times*, 3rd September 2015
- "Dignity for All", *The Tribune*, 17th August 2015
- "Privacy, A Non-Negotiable Right," *The Hindu*, 10th August 2015
- "Lack of vision for Punjab", *The Tribune*, April 4, 2015; Also See: *the Jagbani and Punjab Kesri (Jalandhar)* on March 31, 2015
- "Failing the fairness test", *The Indian Express*, 20 March, 2015; Also See: *the Jagbani and the Punjab Kesri (Jalandhar)* on April 1, 2015