



**NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY**

**ASSAM**

# **5<sup>th</sup> VOX ANATOLIS**

**MOOT COURT COMPETITION**

**2026**

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# **MOOT PROPOSITION**



**Moot Court Committee**

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**STATEMENT OF AGREED FACTS**

1. The Republic of Indravana is a country located on the continent of Afria. It gained independence from the Great Sassenac after 200 years of colonial rule in 1947 and became a republic in 1950. The capital of Indravana is Riverdale, which houses key constitutional institutions, including the Parliament and the Supreme Court of Indravana. The country is divided into 28 States.
2. The States of Pragyam and Lumira are neighbouring constituent states of the Republic of Indravana, situated in the northeastern region of the country, an area historically characterised by ecological fragility, ethnic diversity, and layered systems of governance. Pragyam is largely composed of the fertile alluvial plains of the River Thalen, which support extensive agriculture and constitute the primary source of livelihood for a significant portion of Pragyam's population. Pragyam has, since the colonial period, been administered through settled systems of revenue districts, codified land records, and centralised bureaucratic control. Lumira, in contrast, is predominantly hilly and forested, with a dispersed population consisting largely of indigenous communities, particularly the Lumos tribe, whose social organisation, land relations, and governance structures are rooted in custom, collective use, and village-level institutions rather than individual land titles or cadastral surveys.
3. The boundary between Pragyam and Lumira has never been clearly demarcated on the ground through a single, authoritative legal instrument. Its origins lie in colonial administrative arrangements framed in the early twentieth century, primarily for purposes of revenue collection, forest supervision, and policing rather than for the precise drawing of political boundaries between self-governing units. These arrangements, while sufficient for imperial administration, left behind a legacy of ambiguity that continued to shape inter-State relations after independence.
4. Before the Sassenac rule, there was no fixed boundary between present-day Pragyam and Lumira. The Lumos and other Lumarian tribes organised into chieftainships, with authority based on custom rather than territory. Land use was communal and fluid due to shifting cultivation, and political control did not depend on surveyed borders. In contrast, the Pragyam plains had more settled administration under local rulers. Interaction between hills and plains occurred through trade, raids, and tribute, but not through clearly demarcated frontiers.
5. Colonial interest in the Lumira emerged in the early nineteenth century, not to govern them but to secure the plains. Repeated raids on tea plantations and Sassenac subjects in Pragyam compelled

military intervention, leading to Lumira becoming a district under the state of Pragyam. Even after military subjugation, the colonial masters preferred minimal administration of the hills, treating them as a buffer rather than an integrated territory. The goal remained the protection of revenue-generating plains, not territorial consolidation.

6. This approach crystallised in the Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873, which introduced the Inner Line Permit ('ILP') system. In 1875, a boundary was notified, delineating the Lumira district from the rest of the state. It was a regulatory device meant to restrict movement, prevent conflict, and protect tribal societies from external interference. While local chiefs were informally consulted, the line was drawn for administrative convenience, not to define ownership of land.
7. In 1904, a notification issued by the then provincial administration delineated the limits of an area of roughly 500 sq. km in Rivapur Valley on the boundary of Lumira. According to the notification and the accompanying maps and revenue records prepared at the time, a tract of land now commonly referred to as the Rinlai–Tharun Corridor fell within the district that, as per the notification, became part of the State of Lumira. The corridor is traversed by the river Thalen, which originates in the hills of Lumira and flows into Pragyam. Lumira continues to rely heavily on these documents, asserting that they constitute the most authoritative contemporaneous evidence of territorial jurisdiction available in the absence of later parliamentary intervention.
8. In 1933, however, the colonial government initiated a comprehensive Survey of Indravana Cartographic Exercise aimed at standardising district boundaries across the province for purposes of census operations, policing, forest administration, and administrative clarity. This exercise resulted in the drawing of a revised boundary, which departed in several stretches from the earlier 1875 regulatory line and disregarded the forest-administrative arrangements reflected in the 1904 notification. The revised boundary followed topographical features such as ridgelines and watersheds and was incorporated into official maps, district records, and governance practices. As a result, the 'corridor' did not form part of the revised Lumira district map. No formal consultation was undertaken with the indigenous leadership or customary authorities of Lumira during this exercise, as the demarcation was treated as an internal administrative adjustment within the same province. The 1933 boundary thereafter became the operative reference for civil administration, policing, and forest jurisdiction, effectively subsuming earlier regulatory and forest-management instruments without expressly repealing them.



9. Pragyam disputes the conclusiveness and legal effect of the 1904 notification. It relies instead on an administrative circular issued in 1933, which reorganised policing and forest supervision in the hill tracts adjoining the plains. According to Pragyam, the circular reflected administrative recognition of the practical and long-standing control exercised by hill communities south of the Rinlai Ridge and acknowledged customary governance structures that regulated land use, settlement, and dispute resolution in the area now forming part of the disputed corridor. Pragyam contests this interpretation and maintains that the 1933 circular was issued solely for internal administrative convenience within the colonial apparatus. It asserts that the circular neither purported to redraw district boundaries nor had the legal effect of transferring territorial jurisdiction, and that treating such an instrument as determinative of modern State boundaries would elevate administrative expediency over constitutional structure.
10. At the time of independence, the territories administered by both Pragyam and Lumira were absorbed into the Republic of Indravana. In the years that followed, both States were formally constituted under parliamentary enactments reorganising the northeastern region. While the First Schedule to the Constitution broadly described the territories of each State by reference to existing districts and administrative units, it did not specify a precise boundary between Pragyam and Lumira at the local level or resolve inconsistencies between competing historical records.
11. Parliament did not subsequently enact any legislation under Articles 3 or 4 of the Constitution to conclusively settle or redraw the boundary between the two States. As a result, the post-independence constitutional order inherited the ambiguities of the colonial past, leaving their resolution to political negotiation, administrative practice, and, ultimately, constitutional adjudication.
12. In modern Lumira state, the Inner Line Permit System still operates by virtue of constitutional saving provisions. The stated objectives of the permit regime are to regulate the entry and residence of non-residents in designated areas, to protect the cultural and demographic interests of indigenous communities, and to maintain public order in what has historically been treated as a sensitive frontier region. Over time, the administration of the Inner Line Permit system has become closely intertwined with Lumira's conception of autonomy, identity, and internal security.
13. Meanwhile, for several decades after independence, the Rinlai–Tharun Corridor remained sparsely populated and heavily forested. State presence in the region was limited and largely symbolic.

Communities from both States accessed forest produce, grazing land, and shifting cultivation areas with minimal interference, guided more by custom and mutual accommodation than by formal law.

14. In practice, officials of both States exercised overlapping and sometimes informal authority in the corridor. Pragyam conducted occasional revenue surveys and forest inspections, particularly in areas it regarded as reserve forests. Lumira's village councils, on the other hand, regulated customary land use, issued permissions for habitation and cultivation, and resolved local disputes. This arrangement, though legally ambiguous and never formally endorsed, allowed for relative peace and coexistence for many years.
15. From the early 2000s onwards, the character of the region began to change. Improved road connectivity, population growth, and increasing economic activity brought the corridor into sharper administrative focus. Pragyam began extending its forest conservation regime into the area, issuing notifications under its forest laws declaring certain tracts to be protected forests and imposing restrictions on construction, cultivation, and settlement.
16. Lumira objected to these measures, asserting that the forest notifications were being enforced in disputed territory without consultation and disproportionately affected Lumiran villagers whose livelihoods depended on access to land and forest resources. Lumira alleged that the selective enforcement of forest laws amounted to arbitrary State action and failed to take account of customary land rights.
17. During the same period, Lumira strengthened its village councils, formalised customary land-use certificates, and expanded civic infrastructure, including schools, health centres, and local roads, in villages located within the corridor. These actions were justified by Lumira as necessary for the welfare and dignity of its residents, but were viewed by Pragyam as unilateral assertions of administrative control.
18. From around 2010 onwards, Lumira increasingly insisted that officials, contractors, and residents from Pragyam entering the disputed corridor obtain Inner Line Permits. Pragyam objected strongly to this practice, arguing that requiring permits for its officials and residents amounted to an assertion of territorial sovereignty and imposed unreasonable restrictions on inter-state movement and governance.
19. Between 2016 and 2020, formal correspondence between the two State governments intensified. Pragyam complained that its forest guards, revenue officials, and police personnel were being stopped, delayed, or turned back for lack of permits, even when acting pursuant to lawful orders. Lumira

responded that the permit regime was applied uniformly and was necessary to prevent demographic pressure, unauthorised settlement, and breakdown of public order in a sensitive border region.

20. Furthermore, the growing population and development in both states led to competing claims over the water of Thalen. In the absence of any water-sharing mechanism between the two States, the State of Pragyam, in 2017, formally invoked the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956, and requested the Union Government to constitute a tribunal for adjudication of the dispute.. These requests were accompanied by representations highlighting adverse downstream impacts, disruption of irrigation cycles, and increasing inter-State tensions.
21. During this period of institutional inaction, in 2018, the State of Lumira proceeded to undertake the unilateral construction of the Thalen Multipurpose Project, a storage and regulation dam located upstream within its territorial limits. The project was initiated through executive approval of the State Government and was justified as a measure for regional development, flood control, and drinking water security.
22. In 2020, following sporadic incidents of property damage, road blockades, and growing public unrest due to border dispute, coupled with river-water sharing, the Union of Indravana, acting through its Ministry of Home Affairs, convened a series of meetings between the two States in an attempt to soothe the troubled situation.
23. A recorded understanding was reached in November 2020 that both States would maintain a strict status quo in the disputed corridor. They agreed to refrain from new construction, eviction drives, deployment of armed police forces, and establishment of new administrative posts pending further negotiations. The understanding was intended as a temporary confidence-building measure rather than a final settlement.
24. The understanding did not expressly address the continued operation of the Inner Line Permit system in the disputed area. This omission led to divergent interpretations. Pragyam treated the status quo as freezing all restrictive measures, while Lumira maintained that statutory permit requirements could not be suspended without express legal authority.
25. In the years that followed, tensions persisted beneath the surface. Pragyam alleged that Lumira continued to enforce Inner Line Permit requirements in the corridor, thereby restricting access by Pragyam officials and residents and altering ground realities. Lumira responded that suspending the



permit regime would undermine statutory protections afforded to indigenous communities and expose the region to instability.

26. In late 2023, Pragyam issued fresh notices under its forest and land laws declaring certain roadside structures in the Rinlai–Tharun Corridor to be unauthorised, citing concerns relating to public safety, environmental degradation, and obstruction of a key arterial road linking the area to Lumira’s interior districts.
27. Lumira protested these notices, asserting that Pragyam had no authority to issue them in disputed territory and that the notices ignored customary land rights and village-level governance. Protests followed in several border villages, accompanied by sporadic road blockades and heightened public anxiety.
28. In February 2025, Pragyam announced a joint administrative and police operation to remove what it described as unauthorised structures obstructing the arterial road. Lumira objected, stating that the operation violated the status quo understanding and that Pragyam personnel had entered areas subject to the Inner Line Permit regime without authorisation.
29. Armed police contingents from both States were deployed in proximity to the Rinlai Ridge. On 18 February 2025, a confrontation occurred between the two contingents. The precise sequence of events remains contested, but it is undisputed that firearms were discharged.
30. The confrontation resulted in the death of ten police personnel from Pragyam, serious injuries to officers from both States, and damage to civilian vehicles and public infrastructure. Competing FIRs were registered by police stations in both States, raising complex questions regarding territorial jurisdiction, legality of cross-border policing, and accountability for the use of force.
31. The incident triggered widespread unrest across the region. Protestors blocked the national highway connecting Pragyam’s Rivapur Valley to Lumira’s capital, disrupting the supply of fuel, food, and medical essentials for several days. Civil society organisations expressed concern that civilians were being caught between competing assertions of authority and that restrictions on movement were affecting their right to life and livelihood.
32. In March 2025, citing its constitutional duty to protect States against internal disturbance and to ensure the free movement of essential goods, the Union of Indravana deployed Central Armed Police Forces along the national highway and at key junctions near the disputed corridor. The Union issued

written directions advising both States to withdraw armed personnel, restore traffic, and comply with the status quo.

33. Pragyam welcomed the deployment and argued that decisive Union action was necessary to prevent further loss of life and breakdown of administration. Lumira objected, asserting that the deployment was carried out without its consent and interfered with its statutory authority, including the administration of the Inner Line Permit system.
34. In the backdrop of recurring tensions, sporadic incidents of violence, and administrative uncertainty in the Rinlai–Tharun Corridor, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs in June 2025 undertook a review of security and governance arrangements in the region. Pursuant to this review, the Ministry issued an executive clarification stating that the Inner Line Permit regime applicable to the State of Lumira would continue to govern all customary and historically recognised routes of entry into the State, including routes traversing areas affected by unresolved inter-State boundary claims. The clarification emphasised that the measure was intended to ensure regulated movement, prevent unauthorised entry, and facilitate administrative coordination in sensitive border regions, without expressing any view on the merits of the competing territorial claims.
35. Following the issuance of the clarification, the authorities of the State of Lumira commenced enforcement of permit requirements for persons seeking entry into the State through such routes, including the establishment of verification points and coordination mechanisms with central agencies. The enforcement of the permit regime resulted in increased scrutiny of movement along the corridor and affected the transit of officials, residents, traders, and service providers who had traditionally accessed Lumira through the region.
36. In an attempt to resolve the issue, the Chief Ministers of both states wrote letters to the President, the Prime Minister and the Speakers of both houses of the Parliament, to resolve this contentious issue of border dispute and Inter-State River Water sharing. In February 2026, in the absence of any concrete measure from the Union, the State of Pragyam instituted an original suit before the Supreme Constitutional Court of Indravana under Article 131 of the Constitution. Pragyam contends that the border dispute has ceased to be a mere historical disagreement and has matured into a present and continuing constitutional crisis affecting governance, internal security, and the federal balance. The issue has devolved into competing claims of authority by both States that have resulted in contradictory executive orders, parallel revenue assessments, and uncertainty among residents as to the applicable law.



Furthermore, the repeated deployments of central armed police forces and ad hoc political negotiations had failed to restore a durable constitutional order, thereby necessitating judicial intervention at the highest level.

37. It further contended that the prolonged failure of the Union Government to constitute a tribunal under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956 has created a constitutional vacuum, enabling unilateral State action with irreversible consequences. It is argued that Lumira's upstream construction of the Thalen Multipurpose Project, undertaken in the absence of statutory adjudication or agreed interim arrangements, materially altered the flow of an inter-State river. Such inaction, it is contended, undermines cooperative federalism and disturbs the constitutional balance between States.
38. The State of Lumira objected to the maintainability of the suit, arguing that the dispute, in essence, concerned inter-State boundary adjustment, a matter falling exclusively within Parliament's power under Article 3. Lumira contends that any judicial directions concerning administration or control in the Rinlai–Tharun Corridor would indirectly determine territorial rights and thus intrude into Parliament's exclusive constitutional domain. Lumira maintains that the Supreme Court's original jurisdiction under Article 131 cannot be invoked to address disputes that Parliament alone is empowered to resolve, particularly when legislative and political processes remain ongoing.
39. Lumira further argued that in the absence of a constituted tribunal or statutory restraint, it retained administrative competence to undertake development projects within its territorial limits. It is argued that the Thalen Multipurpose Project does not finally determine water entitlements and remains subject to future adjudication. Lumira maintains that the Union's decision not to immediately constitute a tribunal reflects institutional discretion rather than constitutional failure. It is further contended that judicial intervention at this stage would amount to indirect adjudication of an inter-State water dispute.
40. The Supreme Court of Indravana admitted the suit and issued interim directions requiring both States to maintain the status quo, withdraw armed contingents from the immediate vicinity of the disputed corridor, permit continued deployment of central forces along national highways, and ensure that civilians are not denied access to essential services. The matter is now listed for final adjudication.

The matter is listed for final hearing before the **Supreme Court of Indravana** on March 15th,  
2026

The laws of the Republic of **Indravana** shall be construed *mutatis mutandis* in accordance with  
the laws of the **Republic of India**.

No law other than the Constitution and the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956, may be  
invoked.

Participants are required to prepare and advance arguments on behalf of both sides

**NOTE:** Teams may frame any other issue(s) and/or sub-issue(s), in addition to those expressly  
arising from the proposition, based on their interpretation and understanding of the facts.

*The Moot Proposition is based on the draft prepared by **Mr. Harsh Amrit**. Any attempt to contact the author  
shall lead to the disqualification of the team.*

*The Moot Proposition is a work of fiction and has no corresponding similarity with any real-life event, person,  
group, or incident; any such similarity is merely coincidental.*