

■ CASE TITLE: M. Siddiq (D) Thr. Lrs. v. Mahant Suresh Das & Ors. COURT: Supreme Court of India BENCH: CJI Ranjan Gogoi, S.A. Bobde, D.Y. Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan, S. Abdul Nazeer DATE OF JUDGMENT: 9 November 2019 CITATION: (2020) 1 SCC 1

SUBJECT: Title suit over disputed land at Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) claimed as the birthplace of Lord Ram and site of Babri Masjid.

FACTS OF THE CASE: - The dispute concerns 2.77 acres of land in Ayodhya, where the Babri Masjid stood until it was demolished on 6 December 1992. - Hindus claim the land as the birthplace (Janmabhoomi) of Lord Ram. - Muslims claim the land as the site of the Babri Masjid, built by Mir Baqi in 1528 during the reign of Babur. - Multiple suits were filed in the 1950s claiming ownership and right to worship. - The Allahabad High Court (2010) divided the land equally among three parties — Ram Lalla Virajman, Nirmohi Akhara, and the Sunni Waqf Board.

ISSUES BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT: 1. Who holds the title and ownership of the disputed land? 2. Was the Babri Masjid constructed on the site of a demolished temple? 3. Whether the demolition of the mosque affects the legal claim of the Muslim community? 4. What should be the remedy and equitable distribution of the disputed land?

JUDGMENT SUMMARY: - The Supreme Court unanimously awarded the entire 2.77 acres of disputed land to Ram Lalla Virajman (Hindu side) for the construction of a temple. - The court directed the government to allot 5 acres of land to the Sunni Waqf Board at an alternate location in Ayodhya for building a mosque. - The bench recognized that the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 was illegal, but held that the Hindu parties established a stronger claim based on historical and archaeological evidence. - The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) report indicated that a non-Islamic structure existed beneath the demolished mosque. - The judgment emphasized constitutional secularism and peaceful resolution of religious conflicts.

PRECEDENTS AND REFERENCES: 1. Ismail Faruqui v. Union of India (1994) 6 SCC 360 2. Commissioner, Hindu Religious Endowments v. Sri Lakshmindra Thirtha Swamiji AIR 1954 SC 282 3. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973) 4 SCC 225

FINAL ORDER: - The Central Government to form a Trust to construct and manage the Ram Temple. - 5 acres of land to be granted to Muslims for building a mosque. - All pending suits disposed of.