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# SC dismisses 19 Ayodhya review pleas

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One petition said the verdict had a direct impact on the secular fabric of India

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Arobde, on Thursday dismissed 19 petitions seeking a review of the court's November 9 verdict permitting the construction of a temple on the land in Ayodhya where Babri Masjid stood before it was razed on December 6, 1992, by kar sevaks.

"We have carefully gone through the review petitions and the connected papers filed therewith. We do not find any ground, whatsoever, to entertain the same. The review petitions are, accordingly, dismissed... Applications for listing of review petitions in open court are dismissed," the Bench, which considered the review pleas in an in-chamber ses-



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sion, said. Review petitions are usually examined for merit in the chambers.

If the judges find any reason for a review, they would order open court hearings, during which lawyers from both sides would present their arguments.

### 'Several illegalities'

Among the review petitions is one filed by Maulana Syed Ashhad Rashidi, president of

the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind. He said the judgment rewarded "the several illegalities committed by the Hindu parties, particularly in 1934 [damaging the domes of the Babri Masjid], 1949 [desecrating the Babri Masjid] and 1992 [demolition of the Babri Masjid]".

A petition filed by 40 prominent persons said the verdict had a direct impact on the secular fabric of the

country. They include Irfan Habib, Harsh Mander, Farah Naqvi, Nandini Sundar, Shabnam Hashmi, John Dayal and Jayati Ghosh, among others.

The verdict had declined the Muslims' claim of title over the disputed land but allowed them five acres somewhere else in the area as compensation.

The unanimous judgment was originally delivered by a Bench of then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, Justices S.A. Bobde, D.Y. Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S. Abdul Nazeer. Interestingly, it did not carry the name of the judge who wrote it for the Bench.

Justice Bobde succeeded Justice Gogoi as CJI on the latter's retirement in mid-November and Justice Sappir Khanna replaced Justice Gogoi on the Review Bench.