

Digital Transition of ILR (Kerala Series)

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Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series), commonly called as ILR (Ker), is considered as the most authentic law journal published from Kerala.

The essential features and statutory provisions pertaining to ILR, as detailed in the ILR website¹, is as follows;

"The Indian Law Reports have been publishing by various State Governments as per the provisions of the Indian Law Reports Act, 1875. Section 3 of the Indian Law Reports Act, 1875 prescribes that no Court shall be bound to hear, cited or shall receive or treat as an authority binding on it the report of any case decided by any High Court for a State other than a report published under the authority of a State Government.

The Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series) was initially published as Indian Law Reports (Travancore- Cochin Series), under the authority of the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin state. After formation of the State of Kerala, the publication was re-titled as Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series) with effect from January, 1957. The functioning of the Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series) is governed by the Rules relating to the publication of the Indian Law Reports (Kerala).

The Law Reporting Council of Kerala constituted as provided in the Rules is the authority conferred with the power to take decisions regarding the functioning of the

¹Accessible at <https://ilrkerala.gov.in/index.php/content/index/about-us>

Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series). The Council consists of; A Judge of the High Court; The Advocate General and Three members of the Bar. The members of the Law Reporting Council are appointed by the Hon'ble Chief Justice. The Judge of the High Court shall be the Chairman of the Council and a Senior Officer of the High Court, appointed by the Chief Justice shall be Convenor of the Council. The Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series) is published under the authority of the Government of Kerala and the Council has been empowered to publish Indian Law Reports (Kerala Series) under such authority."

Section 84 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 (Presently Section 83 of BSA), states that "The Court shall presume the genuineness of, every book purporting to be printed or published under the authority of the Government of any country, and to contain any of the laws of that country, and of every book purporting to contain reports of decisions of the Courts of such country." To put it pithily, being a publication under the authority of the Government of Kerala, ILR enjoys an unparalleled level of authority when it comes to law journals, which is statutorily recognized.

With the advent of Covid-19 pandemic, the entire globe had taken a sudden plunge into the world of digitalization. Though the venture had begun during pre-Covid times, the movement gained speed/momentum during the pandemic era, where almost every institution relied upon the 'digital mode' to keep up its functioning. Following the footsteps of the said movement, ILR (Kerala Series) launched its online version² on 01-

² Accessible at;
<https://ilrkerala.gov.in/>

01-2024, under the visionary leadership of the 'Law Reporting Council'. A user-friendly interface has been adopted, so as to ensure seamless research for the users. The usual practice from 01-01-2024 was that online version corresponding to the parts of journal published weekly, was being uploaded in a weekly manner.

Thereafter, the Law Reporting Council, deliberated the question as to whether ILR(Ker) could be completely made online, doing away with its physical form, and further making it accessible for everyone, including the general public. After much deliberation, it was decided that ILR (Ker) would go cent percent digital from 01-01-2025 onwards, in completely doing away its physical form, in addition to making it accessible to everyone, especially the general public. Thus, just like E-SCR³ and DigiSCR⁴, ILR(Ker) will also become another free source for judgments (High Court and Supreme Court) with a well-structured head-note pattern. This transition to a paperless format, going completely digital, is a pioneer move by ILR(Ker) amongst the law journals, not just within the State, but within in the whole Country as such.

³Accessible at;

https://judgments.ecourts.gov.in/pdfsearch/?p=pdf_search/index&escr_flag=&app_token=511e531f8cca3a60623a81af180a31d30f83f951461075fccce4bafafab14b3c

⁴Accessible at;

<https://digiscr.sci.gov.in/>

In other words, a comprehensive and efficient research system in the form of a reputed law journal is available at our fingertips, free of cost, which would make access to judgements smoother and prompter.