

UK, India decide to build dispute bridges

By Paawana Poonacha
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Bangalore: World's leading alternative dispute resolution provider, UK-based ADR Chambers (ARDCUK), hit the Indian shores in January to forge a tie-up with the Indian Institute of Arbitration and Mediation (IIAM), a city-based non-profit organisation.

The Anglo-Indian co-operation in dispute resolution is said to greatly benefit business communities which have business relationships outside India.

The agreement gains importance as the country is yet to have adequately tapped a parallel legal system for institutional mediation and arbitration. The agreement was signed by IIAM president Anil Xavier and ADR Chambers director Harry Hodgkin in presence of former chief justice of India, Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah, who is on the IIAM advisory board.

Hodgkin said India and the UK still have a very strong legal relationship. But India has never adequately explored the frontiers of alternative dispute resolution through out-of-court settlements. "The need for effective and speedy dispute resolution is imperative for a well-established and re-

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High costs, long delays, aggravations, hostility and the loss of privacy involved in frequenting a traditional court are a few reasons why more people with disputes are turning towards mediation and arbitration to settle disputes. "Further, in international disputes, award in arbitration has got better binding effect than domestic court judgments. What's more, such awards are recognised and executed in almost all countries," he said.

A barrister and mediator, Hodgins is a committee member of the Civil Mediation Council and member of the UK's department of Constitutional Affairs. ARDCUK administers mediation and arbitration of over 500 clients worldwide every year.