

CASE IN FOCUS



Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India



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The Case & The Question



• The Puttaswamy (2017) decision recognised privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21.

• But its impact on biometric data, Aadhaar, and digital identity continues to shape India's cyber-law landscape.



Biometric Data —Why It Matters Legally?



The Supreme Court held that:

- Privacy is intrinsic to human dignity
- Includes bodily integrity, informational privacy, and decisional autonomy
- Any data collection must satisfy legality, necessity, proportionality.





Aadhaar Judgment (2018)

In Puttaswamy (Aadhaar), the Court:

- ➔ Upheld Aadhaar for subsidies/welfare
- ➔ Restricted private sector use
- ➔ Emphasised minimal, purpose-bound biometric collection



The Proportionality Test & Biometrics



Any biometric data collection must meet the following:

- Legality – backed by valid law
- Legitimate Aim – e.g., welfare delivery
- Necessity – no less-intrusive alternative
- Proportionality – balance between rights & state interest
- Safeguards – security, retention limits, oversight



Legal Legacy - From Puttaswamy to DPDP Act



DPDP Act strengthens the
privacy framework by
requiring:

- Valid consent for processing biometrics
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Protection against unlawful data sharing
- Duty of Data Fiduciaries to ensure security

READ BLOG



Want a deeper
legal analysis
of biometrics,
privacy, and
the DPDP Act?



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