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Top lawyers barred for 'criminal contempt'

Abhinav Garg | TNN

New Delhi: The Delhi high court on Thursday barred two high-profile lawyers—former Congress MP R K Anand and ace criminal lawyer I U Khan—from appearing before it and its subordinate courts for four months for committing "criminal contempt" in the BMW hit-and-run case.

Confirming a sting conducted last year jointly by a key witness in the case and a TV channel, a bench comprising Justices Manmohan Sarin and Madan Lokur recommended that the full court demote Anand and Khan by stripping them of their designation as "senior advocate".

Anand, as defence counsel, and Khan, as special public prosecutor,



R K Anand

of a TV sting in which both A and Khan were shown offering money to a key witness in the BMW hit-and-run case to depose in favour of the prime accused Sanjeev Nanda. There was no doubt of collusion between the two senior lawyers, said the HC

were found to have been "somehow or the other more than mixed up" in a bid to influence key witness Sunil Kulkarni to turn hostile and shield Sanjeev Nanda, who is facing trial on the charge of killing six persons in a road accident.

In an immediate fallout of the

verdict, district bar associations across the capital gave a strike call for Friday, alleging the HC had "overstepped its jurisdiction".

Congress spokesperson Jayanti Natarajan said that the party would taken disciplinary action against Anand.



I U Khan

Having checked the veracity of the sting tapes, the bench said: "The entire material leaves a bitter taste in the mouth about the goings-on in the BMW case and there is no manner of doubt whatsoever that there was complicity between Khan and Anand and that Kulkarni was aware of it and was apparently trying to use it to his advantage."

While holding Anand's guilt for committing criminal contempt of court to be an "unshakable truth," HC said he was "a key player in interfering or at least tending to interfere in the due course of a judicial proceeding and the administration of justice."