

Sr. No.	Recommendation	Response (Yes/No/NA)	Supporting Materials
331	Mandate pre-trial discovery for cases in commercial matters	Yes	
<p>After the coming into force of the Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts Act 2015, Order XI of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 has been amended for making stringent provisions similar to the pre-trial discovery of cases like submission of list of documents, declaration on oath that no documents relevant to the suit are left out, submission of interrogatories by plaintiff and mandatory requirement to answer them by affidavit, inspection of documents of either party within 30 days, disclosure and inspection of electronic documents/records on the strength of production of printouts thereof etc. These provisions are being followed in the Commercial Courts in Gujarat State before the actual trial of the suit begins and the suit is ready to be heard.</p>			

“ORDER XI

DISCLOSURE, DISCOVERY AND INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS IN SUITS BEFORE THE COMMERCIAL DIVISION
OF A HIGH COURT OR A COMMERCIAL COURT

1. (1) Plaintiff shall file a list of all documents and photocopies of all documents, in its power, possession, control or custody, pertaining to the suit, along with the plaint, including:—

- (a) documents referred to and relied on by the plaintiff in the plaint;
- (b) documents relating to any matter in question in the proceedings, in the power, possession, control or custody of the plaintiff, as on the date of filing the plaint, irrespective of whether the same is in support of or adverse to the plaintiff's case;
- (c) nothing in this Rule shall apply to documents produced by plaintiffs and relevant only—
 - (i) for the cross-examination of the defendant's witnesses, or
 - (ii) in answer to any case set up by the defendant subsequent to the filing of the plaint, or
 - (iii) handed over to a witness merely to refresh his memory.

(2) The list of documents filed with the plaint shall specify whether the documents in the power, possession, control or custody of the plaintiff are originals, office copies or photocopies and the list shall also set out in brief, details of parties to each document, mode of execution, issuance or receipt and line of custody of each document.

(3) The plaint shall contain a declaration on oath from the plaintiff that all documents in the power, possession, control or custody of the plaintiff, pertaining to the facts and circumstances of the proceedings initiated by him have been disclosed and copies thereof annexed with the plaint, and that the plaintiff does not have any other documents in its power, possession, control or custody.

Explanation.—A declaration on oath under this sub-rule shall be contained in the Statement of Truth as set out in the Appendix.

(4) In case of urgent filings, the plaintiff may seek leave to rely on additional documents, as part of the above declaration on oath and subject to grant of such leave by Court, the plaintiff shall file such additional documents in Court, within thirty days of filing the suit, along with a declaration on oath that the plaintiff has produced all documents in its power, possession, control or custody, pertaining to the facts and circumstances of the proceedings initiated by the plaintiff and that the plaintiff does not have any other documents, in its power, possession, control or custody.

(5) The plaintiff shall not be allowed to rely on documents, which were in the plaintiff's power, possession, control or custody and not disclosed along with plaint or within the extended period set out above, save and except by leave of Court and such leave shall be granted only upon the plaintiff establishing reasonable cause for non-disclosure along with the plaint.

(6) The plaint shall set out details of documents, which the plaintiff believes to be in the power, possession, control or custody of the defendant and which the plaintiff wishes to rely upon and seek leave for production thereof by the said defendant.

(7) The defendant shall file a list of all documents and photocopies of all documents, in its power, possession, control or custody, pertaining to the suit, along with the written statement or with its counterclaim if any, including—

- (a) the documents referred to and relied on by the defendant in the written statement;
- (b) the documents relating to any matter in question in the proceeding in the power, possession, control or custody of the defendant, irrespective of whether the same is in support of or adverse to the defendant's defence;

(c) nothing in this Rule shall apply to documents produced by the defendants and relevant only—

- (i) for the cross-examination of the plaintiff's witnesses,
- (ii) in answer to any case set up by the plaintiff subsequent to the filing of the plaint, or
- (iii) handed over to a witness merely to refresh his memory.

(8) The list of documents filed with the written statement or counterclaim shall specify whether the documents, in the power, possession, control or custody of the defendant, are originals, office copies or photocopies and the list shall also set out in brief, details of parties to each document being produced by the defendant, mode of execution, issuance or receipt and line of custody of each document.

(9) The written statement or counterclaim shall contain a declaration on oath made by the deponent that all documents in the power, possession, control or custody of the defendant, save and except for those set out in sub-rule (7) (c) (iii) pertaining to the facts and circumstances of the proceedings initiated by the plaintiff or in the counterclaim, have been disclosed and copies thereof annexed with the written statement or counterclaim and that the defendant does not have in its power, possession, control or custody, any other documents.

(10) Save and except for sub-rule (7) (c) (iii), defendant shall not be allowed to rely on documents, which were in the defendant's power, possession, control or custody and not disclosed along with the written statement or counterclaim, save and except by leave of Court and such leave shall be granted only upon the defendant establishing reasonable cause for non-disclosure along with the written statement or counterclaim.

(11) The written statement or counterclaim shall set out details of documents in the power, possession, control or custody of the plaintiff, which the defendant wishes to rely upon and which have not been disclosed with the plaint, and call upon the plaintiff to produce the same.