

Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary, Initiatives, Impact

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An efficient judiciary is essential for rule of law, protection of rights and public confidence, but high judicial pendency and procedural delays continue to make timely justice a challenge. At the same time, dependence on physical files, in-person procedures and fragmented information systems can add to the time and cost of litigation.

The **Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary** is a response to these structural challenges. It involves shifting from traditional, paper-based and physically dependent processes towards a digital, paperless, integrated and citizen-centric justice system.

Major Digital Initiatives under the Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary

The **Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary** is being carried out through the e-Courts Mission and a wider digital ecosystem covering court processes, records, case information, criminal justice institutions, citizen services and emerging technologies.

e-Courts Mission Mode Project

The e-Courts Mission Mode Project, launched in 2007, is the backbone of judicial digitalisation.

- **Phase I** focused on basic computerisation, **Phase II** expanded citizen-centric services, while **Phase III** (2023–27) aims to create digital, paperless and intelligent courts through digitisation, virtual hearings, interoperability, AI and analytics.
- **Impact:** Shifts courts from paper-based and physically dependent processes towards faster, more accessible and citizen-centric justice delivery.

National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)

The **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)** is a public online repository containing information on pending and disposed cases, their stages, categories and reasons for delay.

- **Impact:** It enables citizens, judges and court administrators to monitor judicial performance and pendency.

e-Filing and e-Payments

e-Filing allows petitions, applications and other documents to be submitted electronically, while e-Payments enable online payment of court fees and fines. The system also provides e-signatures, portfolio management, case dashboards and other filing facilities; more than 1.25 crore cases have been filed through e-Filing.

- **Impact:** Reduces physical visits, paperwork, travel and transaction costs involved in approaching courts.

Digitisation of Court Records

Under Phase III, crores of legacy court records are being digitised and made searchable, with the larger vision of creating paperless courts. More than 753 crore pages of old court records have already been digitised.

- **Impact:** Makes judicial records easier and faster to retrieve, preserves old records and reduces delays caused by physical files.

e-Courts Services Portal, Mobile App and JustIS

The e-Courts Services Portal, mobile application and JustIS app provide access to case status, cause lists, orders, judgments and other court-related information, including through multilingual services.

- **Impact:** Gives citizens direct access to judicial information from anywhere and reduces dependence on repeated court visits or intermediaries.

e-Sewa Kendras

e-Sewa Kendras provide assisted access to digital judicial services, including e-Filing, case status, certified copies, e-Payments, digital signatures, virtual hearings and legal-aid services. They also facilitate services such as e-Mulakat appointments for jail visits.

- **Impact:** Bridges the digital divide by helping citizens who lack digital literacy or access to technology use judicial services.

Virtual Courts and Video Conferencing

Virtual Courts enable selected matters, particularly traffic challans, to be resolved online, while video conferencing allows litigants, lawyers, witnesses, prisoners and other stakeholders to participate remotely.

- More than 4.18 crore remote hearings have been conducted, while 31 Virtual Courts have been established.
- **Impact:** Removes geographical barriers and reduces the time, travel and cost involved in participating in court proceedings.

Livestreaming of Court Proceedings

Court proceedings are increasingly being made available to the public through livestreaming, which is operational in 11 High Courts.

- **Impact:** Improves transparency and public access to judicial proceedings and strengthens public confidence in the justice system.

NSTEP and e-Summons

The National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) enables electronic generation, transmission and GPS-based tracking of summons and other judicial processes, while e-Summons facilitates their electronic delivery and execution.

- **Impact:** Makes the service of summons faster and more traceable, reducing procedural delays that can hold up cases.

Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)

The Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) digitally connects police, prosecution, courts, prisons and forensic institutions, allowing them to share case information quickly.

- **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS):** Digitises FIRs and police investigation records.
- **Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO):** Monitors sexual-offence investigations to ensure timely completion.
- **e-Sakshya:** Digitally records and manages evidence.
- **Medico-Legal Examination and Postmortem Reporting (MedLEaPR):** Digitises medical and post-mortem reports.
- **e-Forensic:** Enables digital sharing of forensic reports.
- **e-Prosecution:** Improves coordination between police and prosecutors.
- **e-Prison:** Provides digital prisoner and prison-related information.

- **National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS):** Enables quick fingerprint-based identification.
- **Nyaya Shruti:** Enables witnesses to provide testimony virtually.

Impact: Creates a connected investigation-prosecution-trial chain, reducing information gaps and procedural delays and enabling faster criminal justice delivery.

AI and Machine Learning

AI and Machine Learning (ML) are the next phase of the Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary under e-Courts Phase III, supporting legal research, case management, transcription, translation and e-Filing.

- **LegRAA:** Assists judges in legal research and document analysis.
- **Digital Courts 2.1:** Provides a single-window, paperless platform for case management.
- **ASR-SHRUTI & PANINI:** Support voice-to-text and translation for orders and judgments.
- **eSCR:** Translates Supreme Court judgments into 18 Indian languages; over 83,000 judgments had been translated by March 2025.
- **AI-based e-Filing:** An IIT Madras-developed tool identifies filing defects and extracts case data, helping reduce procedural delays.
- **AI-based transcription:** Converts oral arguments in Constitutional Bench cases into text, improving documentation and accessibility.

Multilingual Digital Justice

Through eSCR and language-technology initiatives, Supreme Court judgments are being translated into 18 Indian languages, while PANINI supports translation and multilingual judicial services.

- **Impact:** Reduces language barriers and enables more citizens to understand judgments and judicial reasoning.

AI-based e-Filing Assistance

An AI tool developed with IIT Madras can identify defects in e-filed petitions and extract relevant case data and metadata, with integration into e-Filing and case-management systems.

- **Impact:** Identifies filing defects at an early stage, reducing avoidable procedural delays and improving the efficiency of case processing.

S3WAAS for Court Websites

The Secure, Scalable and Sugamya Website as a Service (S3WAAS) platform is being used to modernise and standardise court websites; 734 court websites have been migrated to the platform.

Impact: Provides citizens with more uniform, accessible and user-friendly digital access to court information and services.

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

The transformation is supported by expansion of ICT infrastructure, including additional hardware for courts, Software Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) connectivity and reliable digital infrastructure. 1,626 court complexes have also been equipped with solar facilities to support uninterrupted digital operations.

Impact: Strengthens the technological foundation needed to ensure that digital judicial services remain reliable and available.

Training and Digital Capacity Building

Digital transformation is accompanied by training of judges, lawyers and other judicial stakeholders; the PIB reports 2,372 training programmes to build digital capacity.

Impact: Ensures that technological infrastructure translates into effective use of digital judicial services rather than remaining merely a technical upgrade.

Impact of the Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary

The Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary is shifting justice delivery from a paper-based, physically dependent system towards a more accessible, transparent, efficient and citizen-centric system.

- **Wider access to justice:** e-Filing, virtual hearings and online services reduce geographical and physical barriers to courts.
- **Lower cost of litigation:** Digital filing, e-Payments and remote hearings reduce travel, paperwork and procedural costs.
- **Faster justice delivery:** Digitised records, e-Summons, NSTEP and AI-assisted processes reduce avoidable procedural delays.
- **Greater transparency:** NJDG, online case-status services and livestreaming make judicial processes more visible and accountable.
- **Better judicial administration:** Real-time data helps courts monitor pendency, workload and delays, enabling data-driven management.
- **Integrated criminal justice:** ICJS connects police, prosecution, courts, prisons and forensic institutions, reducing information gaps.
- **Inclusive justice:** e-Sewa Kendras bridge the digital divide, while multilingual technology reduces language barriers.
- **Improved judicial efficiency:** AI-assisted research, transcription, translation and document analysis reduce repetitive work and support judges in judicial functions.
- **Resilient justice delivery:** Digital records, video conferencing and stronger ICT infrastructure help courts function even when physical access is disrupted.

Overall, digital transformation is moving India from merely providing “access to courts” towards ensuring more effective “access to justice” by reducing barriers of distance, cost, information and procedural delay.

Challenges of the Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary

- **Digital divide:** Unequal access to internet, devices and digital literacy can exclude rural and vulnerable litigants.
- **Infrastructure gaps:** Poor connectivity, unreliable power supply and inadequate hardware can disrupt digital court services.
- **Cybersecurity risks:** Digitised case records, personal data and electronic evidence are vulnerable to cyberattacks and data breaches.
- **Privacy concerns:** Wider digital access to judicial information must be balanced with protection of sensitive personal and case-related data.
- **AI-related risks:** Algorithmic bias, inaccurate outputs and lack of transparency can affect the fairness and reliability of AI-assisted processes.
- **Interoperability issues:** Different digital systems across courts, police, prosecution, prisons and forensic agencies may not always exchange information seamlessly.
- **Skill deficit:** Judges, lawyers and court staff need continuous training to effectively use rapidly evolving digital technologies.
- **Technical disruptions:** Network failures, software glitches and inadequate technical support can interrupt hearings and delay proceedings.
- **Risk of digital exclusion:** Excessive dependence on online processes may disadvantage people who need physical assistance or face language and accessibility barriers.
- **Judicial independence:** Technology and AI must remain supportive tools and should not influence or replace the independent application of judicial mind.

Way Forward

- **Bridge the digital divide:** Expand connectivity and e-Sewa Kendras to ensure digitally disadvantaged citizens are not excluded from justice.
- **Adopt a hybrid model:** Retain physical and assisted services so that digitalisation does not create new barriers for vulnerable litigants.
- **Strengthen cybersecurity:** Use encryption, access controls and regular audits to protect sensitive case records and digital evidence.
- **Ensure responsible AI:** Keep human oversight and test AI for bias and accuracy to improve efficiency without compromising judicial independence and fairness.
- **Improve interoperability:** Adopt common standards across courts, police, prosecution and prisons to reduce information gaps and procedural delays.
- **Build digital capacity:** Train judges, lawyers and court staff to ensure effective use of digital platforms and AI tools.
- **Make platforms citizen-friendly:** Use simple, multilingual and accessible interfaces to reduce dependence on intermediaries.
- **Use judicial data better:** Apply data analytics to identify bottlenecks and pendency to improve case management and resource allocation.

Overall, the focus should shift from merely digitising courts to redesigning judicial processes around citizens, using technology to reduce delay, cost and exclusion while protecting constitutional values.

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