

Digitalisation of Indian Judiciary

What is the issue?

Though technology can be a game changer, concerns remain regarding its efficiency in providing solutions to the problems of the judicial courts.

What are the major problems in the courts?

- **Massive backlog of cases** - According to the National Judicial Data Grid, the pendency of cases rose sharply by 18.2% between 2019-2020 in case of district courts.
- **Judicial vacancies** - More than 4 out of every 10 posts of High Court judges remain vacant as on August 1, 2021.

What are the initiatives towards digitisation?

- The e-Courts project was conceptualized with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary by ICT enablement of Courts.
- The e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India recently released its draft vision document for [Phase III of the e-Courts project](#).
- The Supreme Court has directed all the courts to extensively use video-conferencing for judicial proceedings in the wake of the pandemic.
- In May 2020, the Supreme Court introduced a new system of e-filing and artificial intelligence-enabled referencing.

What are the challenges?

- Inadequate digital literacy across the country
- Inadequate digital penetration
- Issues of bandwidth and connectivity, particularly in remote and inaccessible regions
- Absence of adequate digital infrastructure
- Concerns regarding cybersecurity
- Lack of trained manpower to maintain e-courts record
- Unfamiliarity to handle cases virtually

How can it be addressed?

- Adequate training of manpower including judges
- Tailoring systems according to the specifications and contexts required
- Upgrading the current infrastructure
- Developing a robust security system that provides secured access to case information

Source: The Hindu

Quick facts

e-Courts Project

- The e-Courts Project was conceptualized on the basis of the “National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary - 2005” submitted by e-Committee, Supreme Court of India
- It is a Pan-India Project, monitored and funded by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India
- Phases I and II had dealt with digitisation of the judiciary - e-filing, tracking cases online, uploading judgments online, etc
- Phase III plans to upgrade the electronic infrastructure of the judiciary.

