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Why is the India Justice Report 2025 important

1. Context and Background

- The **fourth edition** of the **India Justice Report (IJR)** was released in **April 2025**.
- First launched in **2019** with the support of **Tata Trusts**, the 2025 edition was prepared in collaboration with:
 - **DAKSH**
 - **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative**
 - **Common Cause**
 - **Centre for Social Justice**
 - **Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy**
 - **TISS-Prayas**
- The IJR assesses states' ability to deliver justice based on **five structural filters**:
 - **Human resources**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Budgets**
 - **Workload**
 - **Diversity**
- It evaluates **five key institutions**:
 - **Police**
 - **Prisons**
 - **Judiciary**
 - **Legal aid**
 - **Human Rights Commissions**



2. Police System – Gaps and Challenges

- The **police-to-population ratio** stands at **155 per 1,00,000 people**, lower than the sanctioned norm of 197.
- **Bihar** reflects the crisis, with only **81 police per lakh population**.
- There is a **concentration of police services in urban areas**, while **rural police stations have declined** from 2017 to 2023.
- These imbalances contribute to **slow investigations, poor case registration**, and compromised **public safety**.

3. Judiciary – Pendency and Overload

- **Pending cases** rose by **20%**, crossing the **5 crore mark** nationally.
- **Vacancy rate** in courts remains high:
 - **33% in High Courts**
 - **21% in District Courts**
- **District judges** now handle an **average caseload of 2,200 cases** each.
- The **Case Clearance Rate (CCR)** is at **94%**, but backlog still rises due to inflow exceeding disposals.
- **Shortage of courtrooms and infrastructure** further worsens access to speedy justice.

4. Prisons – Overcrowding and Undertrial Detention

- **Average overcrowding rate** in prisons is **131%**, with some jails exceeding **400% capacity**.
- **76% of prisoners** are **undertrials**, awaiting trial—many without proven guilt.
- **1 in 4 undertrials** has been in jail for **1 to 3 years**, reflecting a **denial of speedy trial**.
- **Daily spend per inmate** is just **₹121**, indicating inadequate focus on prisoner welfare, reform, and rehabilitation.
- The **Model Prisons & Correctional Services Act, 2023**, remains far from full implementation.
- The report references recommendations of the **Amitava Roy Committee on Prison Reforms**.

5. Legal Aid – Underserved and Underutilised

- Legal aid is **underfunded**, and **human resources are unevenly deployed** across states.



- **Community-based legal aid**, like **village legal services clinics**, is severely limited—**1 clinic for every 163 villages**.
- Legal aid infrastructure includes:
 - **41,553 empanelled lawyers**
 - **43,050 paralegal volunteers**
- Despite the workforce, delivery remains weak due to lack of **monitoring, training, and funding usage**.

6. Forensics and Human Rights Commissions

- **Forensic science infrastructure** is under severe strain:
 - **Chronic underfunding**
 - **Outdated equipment**
 - **Acute shortage of skilled experts**
- **State Human Rights Commissions** face:
 - Persistent **vacancies**, especially in **senior posts**
 - Lack of **effective grievance redressal** and **complaint disposal systems**

7. Positive Developments Noted in IJR 2025

- **Women's representation** in district judiciary has improved to **38%**.
- **CCTV coverage** has expanded—**83% of police stations** now have **at least one CCTV camera**, improving accountability.
- There has been **increased budget allocation** for structural reforms in justice institutions.

8. Overall Rankings – Large and Mid-sized States

State	IJR 2025 Rank	IJR 2022 Rank
Karnataka	1	1
Andhra Pradesh	2	5
Telangana	3	3
Kerala	4	6
Uttar Pradesh	17	18
West Bengal	18	17



9. Rule of Law Index 2024 – India's Global Standing

- Released by the **World Justice Project (WJP)**; measures adherence to rule of law principles globally.
- India ranked **79 out of 142 countries** overall.
- The index measures **8 key factors**:
 1. Constraints on government powers
 2. Absence of corruption
 3. Open government
 4. Fundamental rights
 5. Order and security
 6. Regulatory enforcement
 7. Civil justice
 8. Criminal justice

10. India's Performance on Specific Rule of Law Index Factors

- **Criminal Justice**: India ranked **89th**
 - Reflects **delays in investigation, slow trials, prison overcrowding, and limited legal aid access.**
- **Civil Justice**: India ranked **111th**
 - Indicates issues in **affordability, delays, accessibility, and independence** of the system.
 - Also flags lack of **effective alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms.**

Conclusion

- The **India Justice Report 2025** and **Rule of Law Index 2024** expose deep structural challenges in India's justice delivery system.
- While progress in **women's representation** and **technology upgrades** is visible, **understaffing, underfunding, and overcrowding** remain major obstacles.
- **Strategic investment, systemic reform, and greater transparency** are essential for building a just, equitable, and efficient justice system in India.



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