

National Mission of Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms

The Union Cabinet of India, on June 23, 2011, approved the proposal for a National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms in the country. The Ministry of Law approached the government for initiating this mission with an aim to increase access to justice by reducing delays and arrears in the system.

Another objective with which the National mission was approved was that it would enhance accountability through structural changes and set performance standards, also, providing for fast track courts to clear the backlog in the judicial system. For detailed information about the [Indian Judiciary](#), visit the linked article.

About Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms Mission

Justice, be it, Social, Economic or Political is the spirit of the Indian Constitution. However, there is a delay in delivering speedy justice due to certain drawbacks and inefficiencies in the system. With the National Mission, the law ministry aims at tackling these issues and making the system more effective and efficient.

What is the objective of the National Mission?

1. Increasing access by reducing delay and arrears in the system
2. Enhancing accountability through structural changes and setting performance standards and capacities

Discussed below is the vision and objectives of the mission introduced to enhance the judicial system by delivering quick and quality justice to the citizens and reinforcing their trust in law and their rights:

- **Setting up of Advisory Council for National Mission -**
 - For regular updates and to manage progress under the mission, an Advisory council was set up under the National Mission
 - The Chairperson of this Council is the Union Minister of Law and Justice
 - There are 13 other members of the Council, and the Secretary, Department of Justice as the Convenor
- **Creation of National Arrears Grid -**
 - This grid analyses the exact number of arrears in each court and oversee the reduction of such arrears; increase efficiency and optimal utilisation of infrastructure
 - The national Arrears Grid maps the location and manning of each court along with their arrears and the facilities provided to the Presiding Officer
 - For proper management of data and statistics, computer experts, statisticians and software designers will be appointed for uniform data
- **Identification of Bottlenecks -**

- Prioritisation will be worked out. Cases of senior citizens, terminally ill people, pretrial and juvenile prisoners, women victims of violence were be given priority
- Retired judges and eminent lawyers will be appointed as ad-hoc judges for fast track trial
- Special courtroom, additional buildings and other infrastructure may be provided
- **Adoption of Innovative Measures for Expeditious Disposal -**
 - The Presiding Officers will be provided with laptops with relevant software installed and cases related to a traffic violation and bailable offences can be dealt with through video conferencing
- **Effective Utilization of Judicial System and existing Infrastructure -**
 - The initial step would be to utilise the present facilities and infrastructure wisely
 - Dividing shifts between the judges and increasing the working hours

Centrally Sponsored Schemes for Judicial Development - 5 Year Plan [2021-2026]

Since the **CSS for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary and Gram Nyayalayas Scheme** will now be running in Mission mode under the National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms, the Ministry of Law aims to amplify the development process.

Given below are the set targets to be achieved during this five-year plan:

- **Construction 4000 residential units** for judicial officers of District and Subordinate Courts
- Construction of:
 - **3800 court halls**
 - **1450 lawyer halls**
 - **1450 toilets complexes**
 - **3800 digital computer rooms**
- Recurring and Non-Recurring grants to be provided for a period of 5 years to support the Gram Nyayalayas
- Operationalisation of Gram Nyayalayas in implementing states with an expenditure of Rs.50 crore
- **In order to monitor the initiatives** being taken up under the mission, the following steps have been taken by the Ministry of Law:
 - An **online monitoring system**, wherein, the progress on construction of amenities and infrastructure will be managed
 - **Nyaya Vikas-2.0** web portal and mobile application for monitoring the financial and physical progress
 - **Gram Nyayalayas Portal** to register the state-wise progress

Need for Judicial Development in India

- As per the official data, many courts in India still function on rented premises and do not have the basic amenities available
- There is a lack of residential accommodation for Judicial Officers

- The unadvanced and old methodology of conducting trials and lack of innovation and technology

To overcome all of the above-mentioned challenges, it is important that the government and other authorities work for the development of this sector as the [Indian Constitution](#) ensures justice to be provided to one and all.

The Way Forward

The **ratio of Judges and Advocates to the number of pending cases in the country is vastly imbalanced** and resulting in the delay in providing justice. It has, therefore, become a necessity to work for the advancement and digitalisation of the judiciary.

With the [Digital India](#) campaign making its marks in various fields, the law sector must also adapt trials through video conferencing in minor and bailable cases. Steps must be taken to provide the existing courts with computer systems and update them with the related technologies.

The data which is registered in files can be moved to online portals with proper cybersecurity measures being implemented. To objectify and make the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Judicial Development a success, the concerned authorities must stringently implement the five-year plan proposed.