

INDIA JUSTICE REPORT



Ranking States on the Capacity of
Police, Judiciary, Prisons and Legal Aid

National Factsheet

India Justice Report: Ranking States on the Capacity of Police, Judiciary, Prisons and Legal Aid

Published in April 2025

The **India Justice Report** is a first of its kind national periodic reporting that ranks the capacity of states to deliver justice.

Through the filters of human resources, infrastructure, budgets, workload and diversity it assesses the capacity of 4 core pillars of the justice system to deliver to mandate: police, prisons, judiciary, legal aid and Human Rights Commissions. Importantly, by comparing data over a five-year period, the IJR assesses efforts governments make year on year to improve the administration of justice. This trend analysis helps discern each state's **intention** to improve the delivery of justice and match it with the needs on the ground. To its assessment of police, prisons, legal aid, judiciary, and state human rights commissions, this edition of the IJR draws attention to forensics, mediation, and disabilities.

By bringing previously siloed data all in one place the IJR provides policy makers with an easy but comprehensive tool. On the one hand having the data all in one place, provides a jumping off point on which to base holistic policy frameworks while on the other hand, the itemisation of the data into budgets, human resources, infrastructure, workload and diversity helps to pinpoint low hanging fruit which, if tackled early on can set up a chain reaction reformative of the whole.

The findings of the report are important for donors, civil society and the business community as well because it provides important stakeholders within influential circles with objective data around which to fashion their own recommendations. It allows for participatory dialogues between governments and active citizens of disparate ideologies to be underpinned by objective facts rather than premised in opinion. This enhances the chances for reforms through consensus building.

After all, justice is the business of us all.

For more information, please visit
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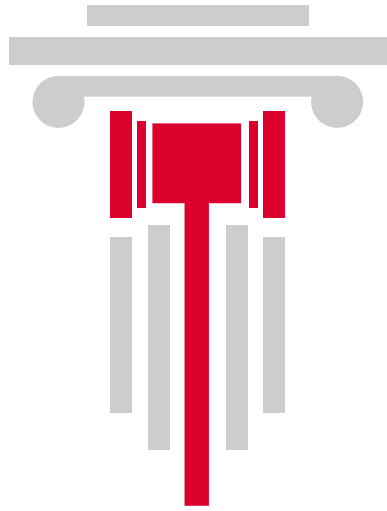


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India Justice

Report | 2025

Ranking States

on the Capacity of Police,
Judiciary, Prisons and Legal Aid

Foreword

Justice delivery requires both integrity and time bound resolution of disputes so that the faith of the litigant is maintained in the judicial institution. In an age of technology, it cannot be expected that litigants will wait for years and decades. Inordinate delay results in citizens taking law into their own hands.

The justice system, like any other institution requires an independent assessment. The India Justice Report has been performing the task of an independent auditor of the justice delivery system. The Report lays bare a stark and undeniable truth that our justice delivery system is still far from fulfilling its mandate. The authenticity of the report is that in arriving at its conclusion it relies on evidence based entirely on the Government's own data to confront us with the uncomfortable reality that the promise of equal justice from the law is still aspirational.

The data presented in the report seeks to raise a fundamental question for those interested with the stewardship of our justice system — how do we break the cycle of stagnation and initiate a virtuous cycle of improvement?

We must recognise that the core thesis that emerges is not a critique of the people within the system, but rather a lament for the system itself, which for too long has been denied the inherent capacities required to function independently of the efforts of those who serve within.

Too often, these individuals find themselves battling the very structures they are meant to uphold. True institutional strength cannot rely on the fleeting brilliance or momentary innovations of individuals but must ensure it maximises the skills and talents of ordinary folks and incentivises them to contribute their all into a robust framework that transcends personal contribution. A well-functioning justice system prioritises resilience, predictability, and fairness, ensuring routine efficiency over extraordinary heroism. It cannot depend on sheer force of will, but must be designed for sustained, consistent performance, transcending personal contributions.

A truly effective justice system must also be anchored in a clear, independent vision and a set of unwavering values. These principles, drawn from our Constitution, must permeate every aspect of the system, informing the training and orientation of all who enter its ranks. Beyond vision, the system must possess well-defined structures and processes, ensuring routine, predictability, accessibility, accountability, transparency, and allowing for genuine participation. It must be representative of the diverse populace it serves. Crucially, a system must be purpose-built, tailored to the specific needs it is designed to address. It should not be individual based effort but a uniform system-based endeavour.

For decades courts, commissions, (governments and civil society have analysed and chronicled the accumulating deficits and dysfunctions of our justice system even as its users daily experience its manifestations. The sheer volume of prescriptions, recommendations, and proposed solutions is itself overwhelming.

Yet, the justice system does not exist in isolation, it is embedded within the broader governance framework, subject to political, financial, and administrative forces that shape its performance. Reforming it, therefore, requires more than a list of recommendations; it demands sustained pressure, political will, and a clear strategy for incentivising change. Ultimately, we must identify the common pathways across all sub-systems that can translate paper recommendations into tangible, practical outcomes.

The India Justice Report exemplifies how rigorous, data-driven assessments can serve as a catalyst for reform. By tracking state performance over time, it uses benchmarks that can inform policy decisions and shape public discourse. Transparency and comparative rankings create a sense of competition among states, encouraging them to improve their standing. To translate these insights into action, civil society, academia, and the media must use this collated data to demand better performance. Courts, commissions, and policymakers must engage with this information not merely as an

academic exercise but as a tool to drive reforms that impact real lives.

The Report's focus is on one singular challenge: chronic under-resourcing of justice institutions. Whether it is the judiciary struggling under the burden of five crore pending cases, police departments operating with large vacancies, or prisons designed more for containment than rehabilitation, the reality is bleak. Budget allocations have increased over the years, yet their utilisation remains suboptimal. Without addressing structural inefficiencies, increased spending alone cannot not translate into better outcomes. As well, curing capacity deficits is indeed one necessary step to success — but not a sufficient one.

Change is most likely when there are tangible incentives. Performance-linked funding, recognition for well-functioning institutions, leadership accountability mechanisms and feedback through user and citizen audits all play a role in motivating reform. For instance, states that demonstrate improvements in judicial vacancies, police training, or prison rehabilitation programs could be rewarded with additional financial support. Similarly, individual orientation and accountability within institutions— through better training and transparent evaluation systems, promotions linked to service quality, and clear consequences for inaction—could encourage performance-driven positive outcomes. Investigation of Crime and Law and Order are two different subjects requiring different aptitude and training. Scientific investigation of crimes is the cry of the hour.

Reform cannot be piecemeal. Justice is not delivered in silos but through a network of interdependent institutions. Courts cannot function efficiently if the police force is understaffed and untrained. Prisons cannot rehabilitate if legal aid is ineffective. The large number of undertrials as against convicted inmates is a reflection of this problem. Holistic reform demands that all components

of the system—police, judiciary, legal aid, defence and prosecution lawyers, prisons, forensics, and human rights commissions—be strengthened simultaneously.

No reform can succeed without the buy-in of those who run the system. Leaders within the judiciary, government, and civil services must be willing to champion change, take risks, and challenge the status quo. Equally important is the role of public pressure. Justice reform is too important to be left solely to institutions, it must become a societal demand.

This means there must be broad recognition that the delivery of justice is not merely a moral imperative but a vital pathway to the nation's economic progress, social peace, rapid development and the realisation of individual freedoms.

The India Justice Report is serving as a crucial catalyst for this essential dialogue. It is not just a document of record. It is a call to action. Its findings are both a mirror and a roadmap reflecting the reality of our justice system while offering a path forward. The question before us is whether we will use this knowledge to drive change or allow yet another cycle of inaction to unfold. The task before us is clear. What remains is the will to act.



Sanjay Kishan Kaul
Former Judge, Supreme Court of India

24th March 2025



Introduction

“What gets measured gets improved.” — Peter Drucker

The fourth edition of the India Justice Report (IJR) is all about comparisons, trends, and projections as it continues to assess the structural capacity of 18 large and medium-sized states and 7 small states to deliver justice. To its assessment of police, prisons, legal aid, the judiciary, and state human rights commissions, the report draws attention to forensics, mediation, and disabilities. Decadal comparisons and recent changes capture patterns, highlighting areas where states are making headway or falling behind, as well as allow for future projections. As always, the IJR relies entirely on official data.

The India Justice Report’s time-series assessments reveal a landscape of dynamic change across the spectrum. Occupying the top five places, southern states dominate the latest rankings. Karnataka once again takes top position and Andhra climbs to second from fifth. Telangana, eleventh in 2019, has retained its third position. Historically strong performers like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have experienced minor fluctuations but remain within the top five.

In the mid-tier, states like Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha have shown steady gradual improvement. Maharashtra though sees a significant decline from its previously held top position and Gujarat and Punjab exhibit inconsistent performances.

At the bottom tier, states such as Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal have largely maintained their positions with minor shifts. Notably, Uttar Pradesh rising one rung from the bottom has switched places with West Bengal. Overall, these changes underscore the shifting dynamics of state performance, shaped by evolving governance, economic policies, and other influencing factors.

The rankings of small states reveal a mix of trends. Sikkim consistently retains its top position. Himachal

Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tripura occupy the middle ground but Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Goa show a dip in their most recent rankings to 5th, 6th, and 7th places, respectively.

The good news is that, overall, there has been a steady growth in investment in strengthening the structural capacity of the justice delivery system across all key institutions assessed by the India Justice Report. Budget allocations have risen, with judiciary per capita expenditure improving, and gender diversity within the lower judiciary and police has shown an upward trend as it has among legal aid secretaries and paralegal volunteers. Human resource capacity has seen some progress, with judicial vacancies reducing in select states and forensic staffing receiving renewed attention. Infrastructure improvements include reducing the deficits in court halls, and technology being used to fill critical gaps. Despite rising workloads, subordinate courts have improved case clearance rates, urban police stations have increased in number, and targeted interventions in prisons—such as expanded legal aid, video conferencing, and open prisons—are creating more avenues for decongestion and reform.

Trends and Ranking

Nevertheless, now four years distant from the severe disruptions of COVID-19, the present assessment finds that the gap between policy and implementation remains. The shocks, and shortfalls of the pandemic have not led to radical changes in policy, practice, and procedures but instead to a gradualist approach of business as usual.

Financial constraints fundamentally shape the structure and efficiency of every subsystem, compelling difficult trade-offs between competing priorities. Over the past decade, budget allocations for police, prisons, legal aid, the judiciary, and forensic services have seen only modest increases. In real terms, these allocations diminish further when adjusted for inflation.

Salaries consume the lion’s share of all budgets leaving minimal scope for infrastructure development,

modernisation, or capacity-building. This directly impacts training, which requires duty holders to have a thorough grounding in domain knowledge, job-related norms, procedures, and skills attuned to the positions they occupy.

Adequate investment in training is not merely an expense, but a crucial investment in the effective functioning of the entire justice system. Given the persistent pressure to do more with less, it is imperative that training be prioritised, not marginalised.

A cursory analysis of budgets and training facilities reveals a sparse landscape. Illustratively, national police training budgets do not exceed 1.25 per cent, with only four states allocating more than 2 per cent. Current data does not capture deeper facts about ranks or numbers trained, course durations, or availability of resource staff, and hence cannot inform policy decisions. Elsewhere, more insights are available. In 2023, The Centre for Research and Planning of the Supreme Court of India, in collaboration with the National Judicial Academy, evaluated judicial training. It analysed quality, emphasised the need for standardising substantive knowledge, and recommended skill development.

Diversity and Disabilities

India, a diverse agglomeration of marginalised communities, presents a complex challenge to inclusion. From caste groups to women, Dalits, minorities, transgender individuals and persons with disabilities, demands for representation within the justice system are ever-present. The aspiration behind affirmative action is to address historical and systemic inequalities faced by marginalised groups. The standard is to repair the gulf in representation of consistently underrepresented groups in all spheres—placing the onus on governments and public authorities to lead the way.

The years have seen some progress, particularly for women and caste groups. The share of women in the police force has grown in all states and Union Territories (UTs), with five states showing a positive trajectory toward achieving 33 per cent representation.¹ The proportion of women judges in subordinate courts has improved in nearly all states, while their presence

in legal aid structures as panel lawyers and paralegal volunteers continues to expand. Additionally, caste-based representation formalised through quotas has ensured the Schedule Caste and Tribes and OBCs mark their presence in the justice eco-system. Nevertheless, leadership positions remain elusive.

One group continues to remain largely invisible within the justice system—persons with disabilities. The nearly decade-old Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) of 2016 mandates a 4 per cent reservation. While India's legal framework acknowledges the rights of disabled individuals, systemic inaction has led to their continued exclusion. Within the police, judiciary, and prison administration, the representation of persons with disabilities is negligible, often ignored in recruitment policies or implementation. This leaves them both underrepresented as professionals and underserved as users of justice. True diversity in the justice system requires moving beyond token representation. While strides have been made for women and caste-based inclusion, leadership gaps persist, and disability representation remains an afterthought.

Judiciary

Persisting vacancies, low case clearance rates and mounting arrears continue to dog the formal court system. By 2024, case accumulation had crossed the five crore mark—an increase of over 30 per cent across all court levels: an increase that reflects the ongoing challenges with judicial vacancies, procedural inefficiencies, and the influx of new cases each year.

Efforts to improve recruitment speed and compliance with timelines for district judges have constantly been in the public eye, but structural issues like funding shortages, complex procedures, and judicial time to attend to these while being short-handed have remained major impediments to repair. Toward standardising recruitment processes, reducing regional disparities, and ensuring timely appointments in future, the need for an All India Judicial Service (AIJS), and standardised recruitment calendars has been frequently mooted.

Numbers-wise, this has been one of the few periods in which the Supreme Court has managed to reach its full

¹ Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Ladakh, and Tamil Nadu

Practical pathways to improvement have emphasised the use of technology. With the objective of processing significantly higher numbers of new cases and streamlining administrative workload,³ some focussed initiatives included an emphasis on digitisation and e-governance—pushing for e-filing, setting up E-Sewa Kendras and a case management and information system, digitising court records, and paperless courts. The push for broader transparency saw more live-streaming of proceedings, an expansion of the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), and efforts to further enhance the dashboard's technological infrastructure. NALSA's Legal Service Management System platform now allows litigants

to apply for legal aid online and track the status of their cases.⁴ Additional video-conferencing facilities at district courts and prisons provided access for individuals unable to attend in person and allowed for prioritisation of urgent cases, especially those involving individuals at risk of prolonged detention.

Optimisation of technological interventions was nevertheless hostage to prevailing power supply and bandwidth, hardware availability, and entrenched cultures. The issue now is whether even the halting momentum in some areas achieved over the last two years—whether amazing or unremarkable—will be carried forward at a steady pace.

sanctioned strength of 34 judges several times. Efforts to fill vacancies have seen a record 165 high court judges appointed in 2022—the highest annual appointment rate thus far— with 110 appointments being made in 2023.² Yet, over two years (2022 to 2024) high court vacancies have gone up, and in the lower courts where most cases originate, they continue to hover around 20 per cent.

Too often, specialisations—fast-track courts, human rights courts, juvenile justice, consumer redressal systems, commercial courts—though recognised as aids to efficiency, fall short of desired outcomes for the same reasons that everyday courts fail: under-resourcing and overburden. Similarly, with shortages of trained personnel and lack of standardised procedures the promise of mediation as a means of decluttering courts and speeding dispute resolution remains potential.

Police

Nationally, the police-population ratio remained stagnant at 155 police personnel per 100,000 population, significantly below the sanctioned strength of 197.⁵ This shortfall varies considerably across states—at just 81 police per lakh Bihar exemplifies the situation. These gaps have far-reaching consequences: investigations

take longer, crime prevention efforts falter, and public safety is compromised. Overburdened investigating officers must too often juggle with multiple serious cases—murder, fraud, cybercrime, rape—resulting in investigation backlogs, poor case preparation, uncertain outcomes at court and an accumulation of unresolved crimes that then feed a sense of lawlessness.

Concurrently, demographic shifts over five years have seen a 4 per cent increase in urban police stations and a 7 per cent decrease in rural areas. While urban stations typically cover 20 sq km, rural stations, stretched across over 300 sq km, signal the disparity in accessing policing services.

While progressive policies and legislative reforms are frequently enacted, their impact is often blunted by systemic failures in implementation. For instance, the Supreme Court's 2020 detailed mandate for CCTV installation in police stations, aimed at enhancing accountability, has seen patchy compliance, with some states even showing an actual decline in compliance. As of early 2023, many police stations still lacked even a single CCTV, let alone meeting the stringent specifications set out in the Paramvir judgment of that year.

2 Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1006 dated 8 December 2023. Available at: <https://sansad.in/getFile/loksabhaquestions/annex/1714/AU1006.pdf?source=pgals>

3 Supreme Court of India, E-committee Newsletter, November 2024. Available at: <https://cdnbbsr.s3.amazonaws.com/s388ef51f0bf911e452e84bb1d807a81ab/uploads/2025/01/20250122910849551.pdf>

4 NALSA Legal Aid Case Management System. Available at: <https://nalsa.gov.in/lams/>

5 Bureau of Police Research and Development, Data on Police Organisations 2023, Table 2.1.3 p.54. Available at: https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/1716639795_d6fce11ed56a985b635c.pdf

Forensics

Forensic science plays a crucial role in the delivery of justice. Across India the administrative control and capacity of forensic laboratories varies significantly, raising concerns about their efficiency and impartiality. In several states—such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, and Karnataka—state forensic science laboratories function under the direct control of the police. This arrangement risks compromising the independence of forensic analysis. Elsewhere, forensic services work under the Home Department, ensuring some degree of institutional separation in forensic investigations.

Despite their importance, forensic labs across the country face significant capacity constraints. Many suffer from chronic underfunding, outdated infrastructure, and an acute shortage of skilled personnel. The increasing demand for forensic analysis, coupled with limited resources, has led to case backlogs that delay both investigations and trials. Budgetary allocations remain insufficient, and slow recruitment processes exacerbate the shortage of trained experts. Additionally, the lack of adequate regional forensic facilities means that crucial evidence often has to be sent to overburdened state-level laboratories, further prolonging forensic examinations and delaying investigation and trials.

To address these challenges, both the central and state governments have initiated efforts to strengthen forensic capacity. The Union government has proposed setting up regional forensic science laboratories to ease case pendency, while also working to modernise infrastructure and integrate forensic training into law enforcement and judicial processes. Some states have taken independent steps: Tamil Nadu, for one, has expanded its forensic workforce and invested in advanced forensic technology, while Delhi has introduced measures to streamline forensic and autopsy coordination to expedite case resolution. The Centre has also introduced the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill to establish standardised forensic procedures and enhance the reliability of forensic evidence. Ensuring the long-term effectiveness of these measures will require sustained investment, inter-agency collaboration, and a commitment to keeping forensic science independent, well-resourced, and aligned with the broader goal of justice delivery.

Prisons

Despite amended legislation, numerous judicial directions, targeted interventions to reduce populations, and the adoption of the Model Prison Manual 2016 by many states, prison conditions remain lamentable. Over the last decade prison populations have surged by nearly 50 per cent. The proportion of undertrials—people awaiting completion of investigation or trial—has escalated from 66 per cent to 76 per cent.

Nationally, average overcrowding in prisons stands at 131 per cent. But a dozen prisons house four times more inmates than they should. The Amitava Roy Committee points out in its 2023 report to the court (*Re Inhuman Conditions in 1,382 Prisons*) that only 68 per cent of inmates have adequate sleeping space. Though budgets have increased, human resources and infrastructure simply cannot keep pace. All too often a single doctor is available for hundreds of inmates, grossly exceeding the stipulated benchmark of 300 inmates per doctor. A lack of trained welfare officers, social workers, and psychologists ensures prisoners often leave in a worse condition than when they entered, increasing recidivism and further burdening the justice system. The Amitava Roy Committee's ringing exhortations to “act with committed sincerity and resolute responsibility in a mission mode with vision and passion” remain unattainable without the fundamental raw materials of adequate financial, infrastructure, and human resource capacity. Until then prisons must remain holding pens far distant from the centres of reform and rehabilitation envisioned in the Model Prison and Correctional Services Act of 2023.

Legal Aid

This period has seen legal aid emphasise support for specific mechanisms, such as the Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC) system, jail clinics, and the careful calibration of timelines and funds for National Lok Adalats. This focus on targeted interventions has been accompanied by a significant shrinkage of resources for broader, community-based interventions. Consequently, the number of paralegal volunteers has trimmed down, the broader legal awareness mandate has been deprioritised, and taluka-level legal advice and counseling centers, important points of access for distant communities, are now all but defunct. This

shift in direction, while beneficial in addressing specific concerns like prisoner representation, may inadvertently neglect another foundational pillar of legal services—the widespread need for basic legal information and accessible localised support—potentially worsening existing inequalities in access to justice.

State Human Rights Commissions

The India Justice Report 2022 (published in 2023) assessed the capacity of State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs) to effectuate their broad mandates for the first time. Two years on their functioning remains underscored by a recurring theme of gaps between their intended mandate and actual capability on the ground.

Incremental improvements measured through basic metrics such as enhanced budget utilisation, advancements in gender diversity, and improved case disposal rates, have a significant impact on rankings. For instance, West Bengal's SHRC has risen from the bottom to first place due to these changes. However, this does not in itself signal an ability to deliver quality functionality. For instance, impressively high disposal rates of over 80 per cent across SHRCs are misleading as the figure is mainly made up of complaints that are rejected at the outset rather than any institutional effort at comprehensive and early resolution of grievances.

Finally, SHRCs do little to help their own image or functionality by frequently failing to update websites, publish detailed case and diversity statistics or to publish timely annual reports. A reluctance to respond to RTI queries that require little more than access to public data, as well, impedes public accountability, obscures operational deficits and good practice, and leaves much of their functioning beyond public scrutiny.

Conclusion

India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 includes ambitious targets for gender equality, reduced inequalities, peace, justice, and strong institutions. While some progress is likely in certain areas, particularly improved access to justice that is driven by digitisation and increased legal awareness, full achievement across all goals will remain a challenge. Women's participation in the justice system may rise,

though parity is unlikely given the current pace of change. Assuring justice for all will also remain an aspiration despite targeted programmes, as capacity deficits and implementation gaps will persist. Significant progress is most achievable where policy reforms are combined with technology and increased public awareness. Ultimately, transformative change requires sustained effort, increased investment, and a holistic approach to addressing complex social and economic inequalities.

In the time between 2022 and 2024, post the disruptions of Covid, there has been a national election and a series of state elections. Governments have changed and with this have assumed the responsibility of improving and making the justice delivery systems fit for purpose.

Valuable initiatives aimed at strengthening India's justice system are evident in the implementation of mechanisms like the Under-Trial Review Committees (UTRCs), Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) committees, Legal Aid Defense Counsel (LADC) systems, and the new compulsory forensic investigation in serious crime cases mandated in the Bhartiya Nagrik Surakhsha Sanhita. While each addresses distinct facets of justice delivery, they reflect an effort to address long-term challenges. To stand strong they need a solid foundation of structural capacity.

Illustratively, sudden infusions of technology alone cannot be relied upon. Nor is its introduction any guarantee of reductions in workload stress. For example, the introduction of video-conferencing in prisons may have reduced time and cost to administrators who no longer have to expend time and personnel to ferry hundreds of prisoners back and forth from courts in district after district, but given the ever-increasing figures of inmates awaiting trial, there is nothing to show that it has sped up the delivery of justice. Meanwhile, its potential for improving medical attention and expanding education possibilities in prison is yet to be realised.

Of necessity, constrained finances require duty holders to do more with less. Inevitably, limited financial resources demand that those responsible for service delivery maximise efficiency and achieve more with fewer resources. It is logical then to prioritise increased spending and systemic improvements only in areas yielding the greatest positive impact for the largest number of citizens.

While a perfectly funded system may remain an aspirational ideal, the guiding principle should be resource allocation that generates equitable benefits across all public goods.

Data can help with this. Disaggregated, consistent, timely and accurate data, accessible and compiled year-on-year in one place in relation to justice delivery provides the basis for policy makers to frame future directions and identify priorities within a complex set of interdependent operations. Digital initiatives like e-Prisons and digitised court records offer potential for improved data utilisation, but a fragmented ecosystem of data sources makes cross-referencing and correlation difficult, hindering the ability to draw meaningful conclusions on which to base overall policy or pinpoint pain points that need priority intervention.

Weak institutions breed injustice. Persistent institutional deficits hinder the fair application of law, creating a system where some individuals or groups are more vulnerable to unfair treatment, while others may enjoy impunity. Over time, when the system is unable to

address this pattern of inconsistent application of the law it erodes public trust and leads to a tacit acceptance that the rule of law is not a priority.

The problems of overall capacity deficits, impossible arrears, overfull jails, and inadequate avenues of legal redress have culminated in creating a ‘wicked problem’ – multifaceted, deeply challenging, and inviting no single definite pathway to a complete solution; a problem so big from every angle that the solution is not one but many. Multiple efforts need to move forward at the same time and together before solutions can take shape and build momentum.

Even then, the problem may not go away but morph into other forms. Yet, endeavour will defeat stasis and accumulation, and we will not be where we began. As India moves forward into a hundred years of being a democratic, rule of law nation, making the justice system ‘better’ envisions a system that is more accessible, equitable, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the people it serves—a system that truly lives up to the ideals of the Constitution and works tirelessly to ensure that justice is not only done but is seen to be done.

Maja Daruwala,
Chief Editor, India Justice Report

National Deficits



Police

50%

Vacancy among the 10,000-odd forensic staff across the country



1.25%

National average share of training budget in police budget

0

States/ UTs that meet their own reserved quotas for women in the police



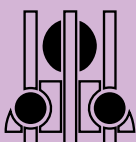
Prisons

176 Prisons with 200% and above occupancy

20 states/UTs

Over 20% undertrials detained for 1-3 years.

25 psychologists/ psychiatrists for 5.7 lakh prisoners in the country. 25 states/UTs sanctioned none.



Judiciary

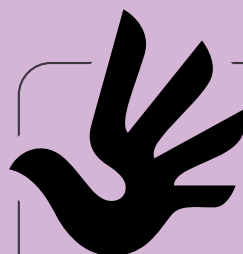
Karnataka: Only state to meet SC, ST and OBC quotas in judiciary and police

6 High Courts have had annual case clearance rates above 100% since 2017



Legal Aid

38% Drop in number of paralegal volunteers since 2019

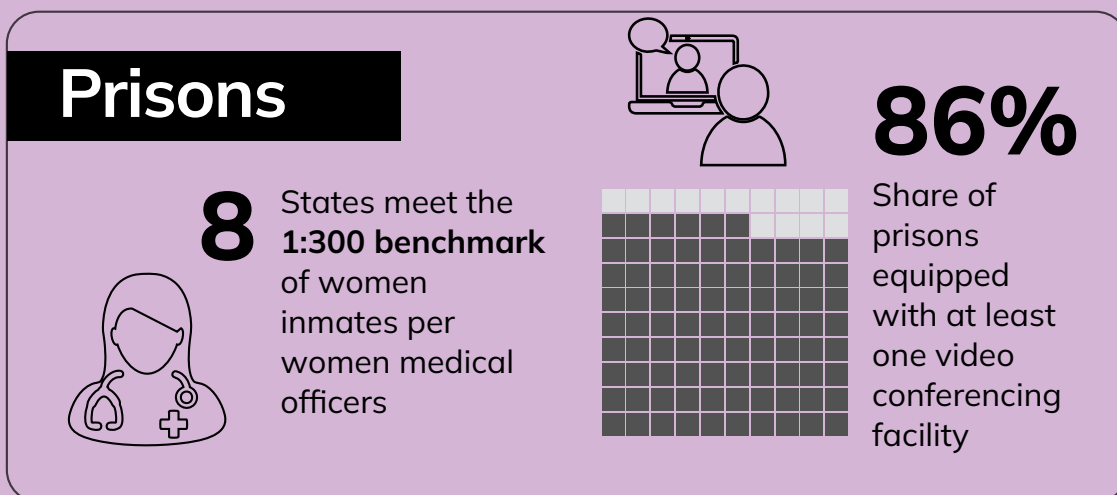
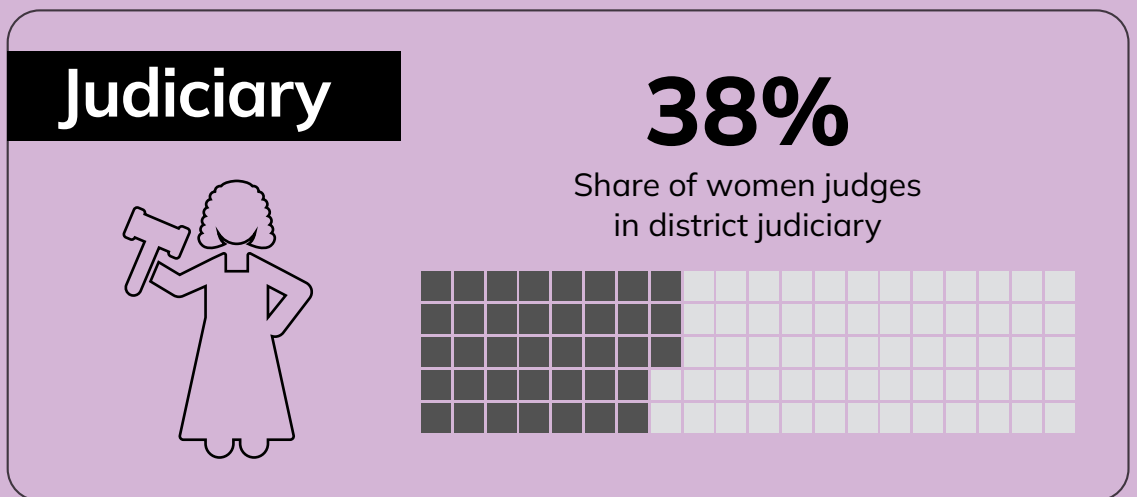
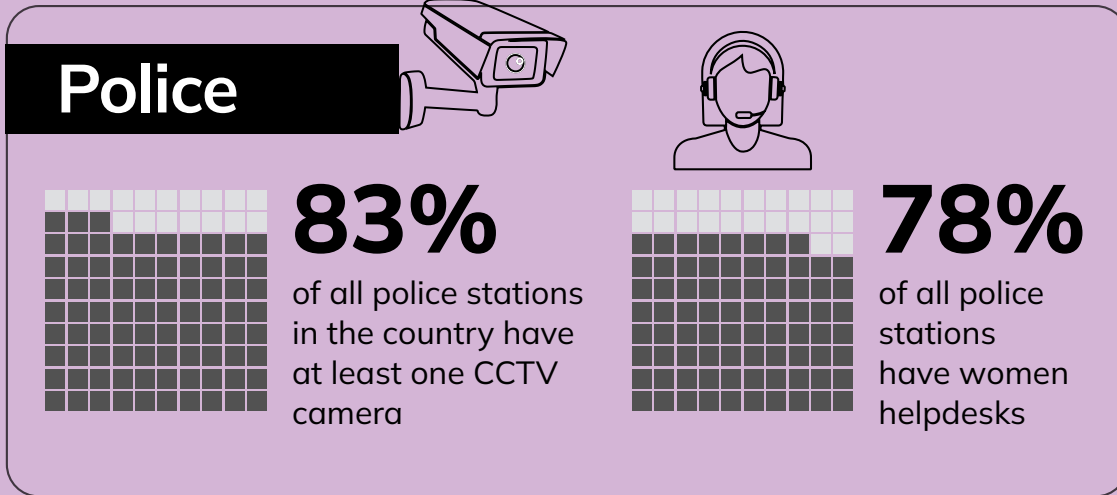


SHRC

Only **4%** of total cases are initiated suo moto.



Good News



Overall ranking *

* Composite ranking across police, prisons, judiciary and legal aid

Color guide

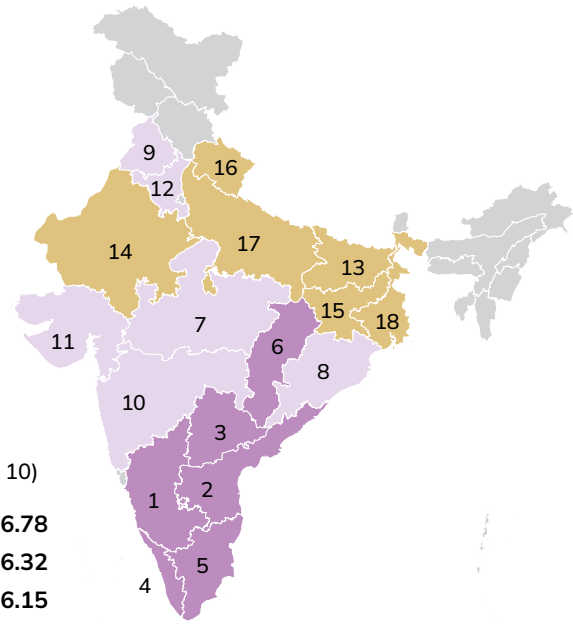
Best Middle Worst

Indicators
(in IJR 4)

102

Clusters

- I. 18 large and mid-sized states (population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states (population up to 10 million)

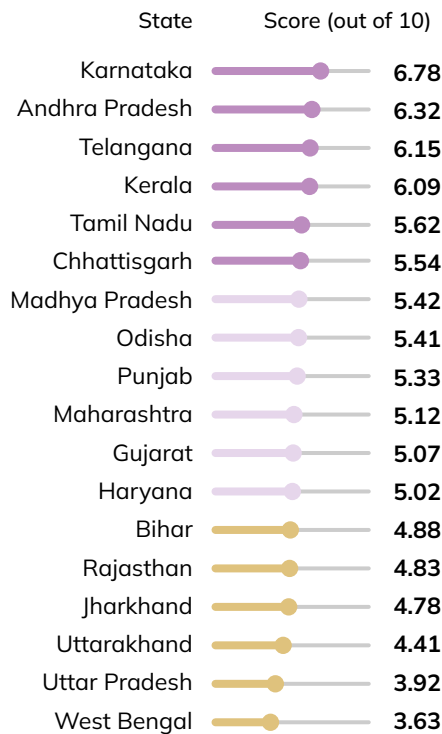


Map 1: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
6	14	1	1
13	12	5	2
11	3	3	3
2	5	6	4
3	2	2	5
10	7	9	6
9	16	8	7
7	11	11	8
4	4	10	9
1	1	12	10
8	6	4	11
5	9	13	12
17	13	16	13
14	10	15	14
16	8	7	15
15	15	14	16
18	18	18	17
12	17	17	18

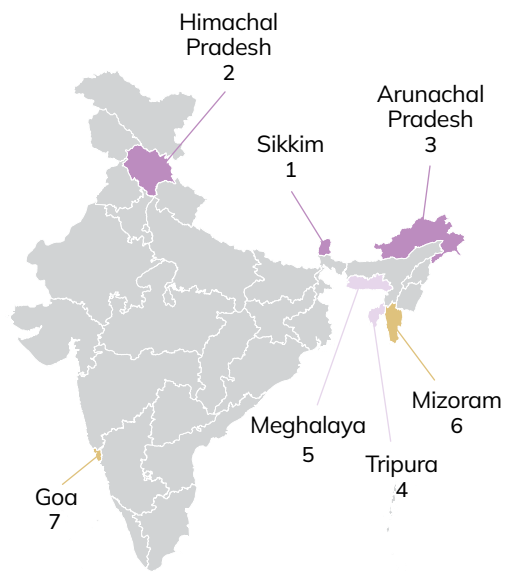
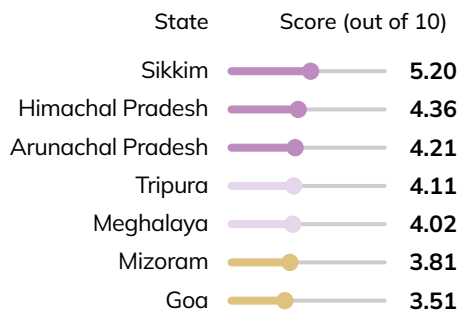


Map 2: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
2	2	1	1
3	4	6	2
6	5	2	3
7	1	3	4
5	7	4	5
4	6	5	6
1	3	7	7



How each ranked state fared in its cluster across the 4 pillars of justice

Table 1: Rank and score for large and mid-sized states

■ Ranks 1 to 6 ■ Ranks 7 to 12 ■ Ranks 13 to 18

	Overall rank IJR 4 2025	Police				Prisons				Judiciary				Legal aid			
		IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
Karnataka	1	6	1	2	3	3	14	2	2	16	12	2	4	7	16	2	1
Andhra Pradesh	2	5	4	3	2	15	7	5	4	13	14	11	5	10	14	13	5
Telangana	3	11	10	1	1	13	2	3	7	11	6	5	2	4	6	5	10
Kerala	4	13	14	17	15	1	5	4	3	5	3	4	1	1	7	6	6
Tamil Nadu	5	1	5	6	13	10	6	1	1	1	1	1	3	12	11	12	16
Chhattisgarh	6	10	2	9	4	8	11	13	13	12	4	6	8	8	15	11	7
Madhya Pradesh	7	15	18	7	11	7	8	7	5	6	11	10	9	9	12	14	9
Odisha	8	7	3	4	8	5	9	11	6	9	15	13	12	15	8	10	8
Punjab	9	3	12	13	7	16	13	12	15	2	2	3	7	3	3	9	2
Maharashtra	10	4	13	10	5	2	4	10	10	4	5	12	11	5	1	7	14
Gujarat	11	12	8	8	9	9	10	6	9	7	8	9	14	6	9	3	13
Haryana	12	8	9	12	14	11	16	16	14	3	7	14	10	2	5	4	3
Bihar	13	14	11	16	10	6	3	9	12	18	18	16	15	16	2	16	12
Rajasthan	14	17	16	14	16	12	1	8	8	8	10	17	6	11	13	17	18
Jharkhand	15	9	6	11	12	18	15	15	17	14	9	7	13	14	4	1	11
Uttarakhand	16	2	7	5	6	17	18	18	18	15	13	8	16	17	10	8	4
Uttar Pradesh	17	18	15	15	17	14	17	17	16	17	17	15	17	18	18	18	17
West Bengal	18	16	17	18	18	4	12	14	11	10	16	18	18	13	17	15	15

States arranged in descending order of overall rank in IJR 4.

Table 2: Rank and score for small states

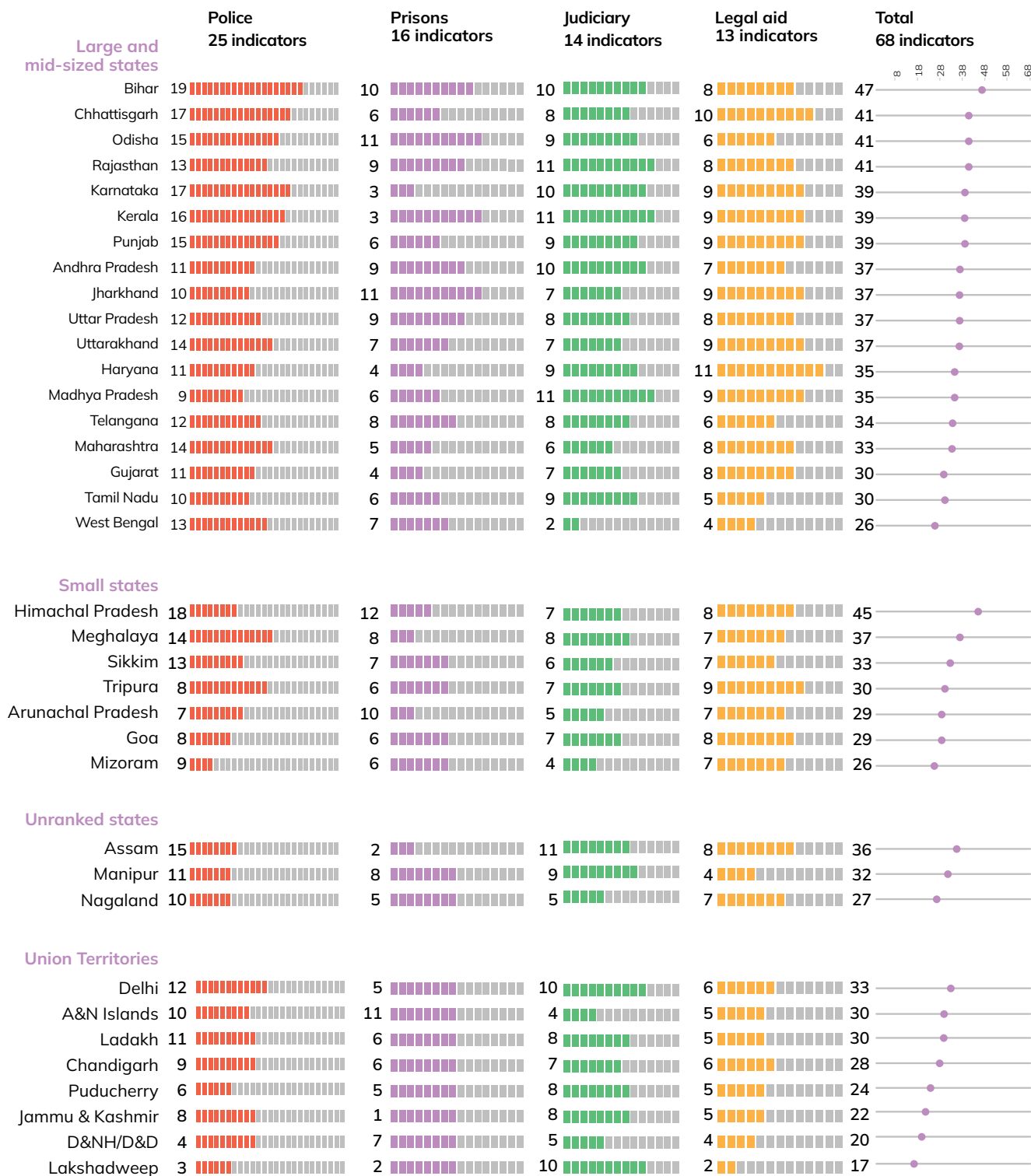
■ Ranks 1 to 3 ■ Ranks 4 to 5 ■ Ranks 6 to 7

	Overall rank IJR 4 2025	Police				Prisons				Judiciary				Legal aid			
		IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025	IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2021	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
Sikkim	1	1	1	1	1	7	6	4	3	1	1	1	2	4	3	1	1
Himachal Pradesh	2	6	2	5	4	6	1	2	2	3	2	6	5	3	6	5	4
Arunachal Pradesh	3	2	4	2	2	3	3	1	1	7	5	4	4	7	7	7	7
Tripura	4	4	5	7	6	5	2	5	6	6	6	2	1	5	2	4	3
Meghalaya	5	5	3	3	5	2	5	6	4	4	7	5	3	6	5	3	5
Mizoram	6	7	6	4	3	4	7	3	5	5	3	3	6	2	4	6	6
Goa	7	3	7	6	7	1	4	7	7	2	4	7	7	1	1	2	2

States arranged in descending order of overall rank in IJR 4.

Figure 1: The improvement scorecard between IJR 2022 and IJR 2025

Of the 68 static indicators (listed on page 33) common to this and IJR 2022, in how many did a state/UT improve?



Methodology: Count of indicators on which a state has improved over IJR 3. Only non-trend and comparable indicators present in both IJR 3 and IJR 4 have been considered. For indicators with benchmarks, if a state met the benchmark, it was marked as an improvement even if its value declined within the benchmark. If a state didn't meet the benchmark but its value improved, it was marked as an improvement. Where an indicator value was not available for one or both years, that indicator was not considered.

Ranking human resources *

* How do states fare on 19 human resources indicators across police, prisons, judiciary and legal aid? Indicators listed on Page 32.

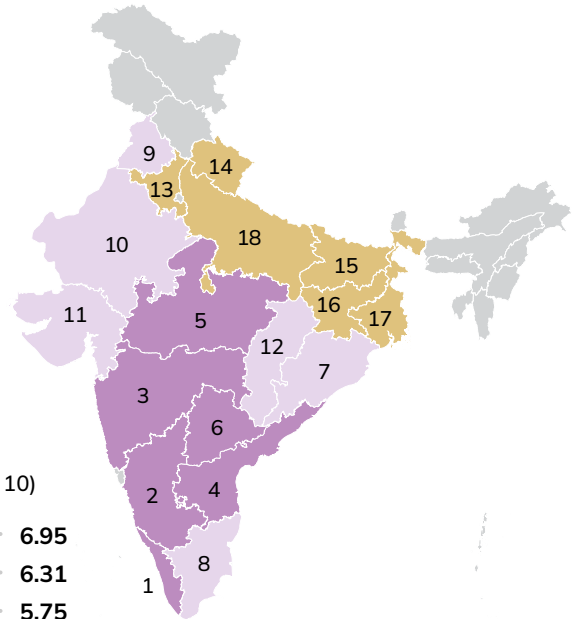
Color guide

Best Middle Worst

Indicators (in IJR 4) **19**

Clusters

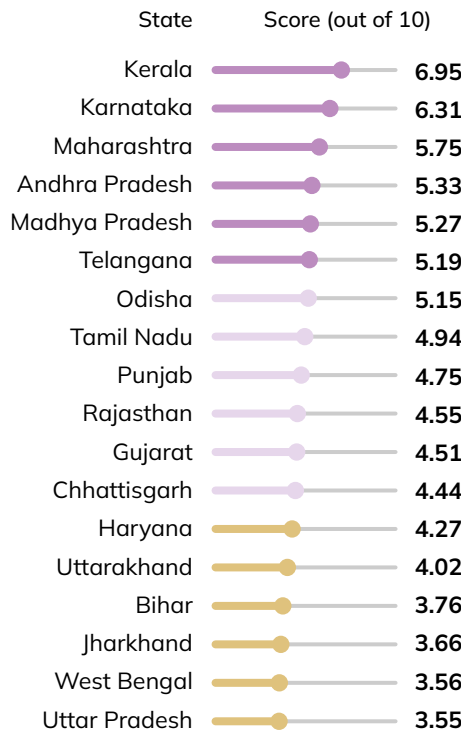
- I. 18 large and mid-sized states (population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states (population up to 10 million)



Map 3: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

NEW			
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
1	3	2	1
6	11	1	2
2	1	3	3
13	16	12	4
5	9	10	5
12	5	6	6
3	4	4	7
4	2	5	8
7	6	8	9
8	7	14	10
10	8	7	11
14	14	9	12
9	12	11	13
15	13	16	14
17	15	18	15
16	10	13	16
11	17	15	17
18	18	17	18



Map 4: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW			
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
1	1	1	1
6	2	4	2
3	5	5	3
5	4	3	4
4	3	2	5
7	6	7	6
2	7	6	7

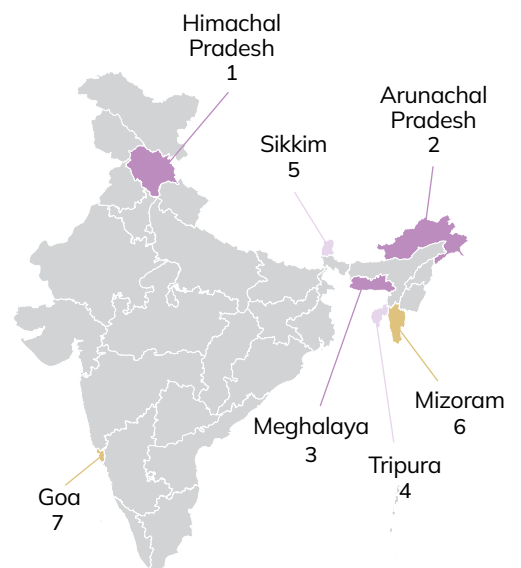
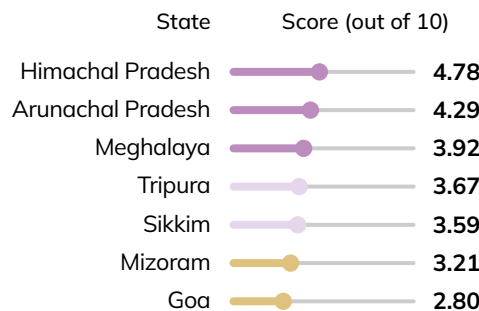


Figure 2: Vacancy across pillars

We looked at vacancies on 11 key personnel ranks across the 4 pillars. Many states, of all sizes, have vacancies that exceed 25% of the state's own sanctioned strength.

Up to 20% 20% to 40% Above 40%

	Police vacancy (%)		Judiciary vacancy (%)		
	Constables Jan 2023	Officers Jan 2023	High Court judges Feb 2025	Subordinate court judges Jan 2025	High Court staff Jun 2024
Large and mid-sized states					
Andhra Pradesh	21.0	10.4	18.9	11.7	18.0
Bihar	23.3	44.7	35.8	23.9	39.8
Chhattisgarh	21.0	27.8	27.3	29.9	22.1
Gujarat	29.0	24.2	38.5	31.1	46.6
Haryana	38.9	17.8	40.0	29.4	35.4
Jharkhand	25.9	33.9	36.0	28.2	22.1
Karnataka	5.7	1.2	21.0	16.1	16.6
Kerala	5.7	16.4	4.3	12.9	4.1
Madhya Pradesh	12.9	19.3	37.7	16.6	18.1
Maharashtra	29.1	21.3	27.7	11.4	26.1
Odisha	21.9	23.6	45.5	19.2	35.1
Punjab	12.6	23.4	40.0	10.1	35.4
Rajasthan	8.4	51.8	34.0	20.7	30.9
Tamil Nadu	4.4	28.0	13.3	25.3	17.2
Telangana	30.4	13.0	28.6	20.5	23.8
Uttar Pradesh	28.3	41.7	50.6	26.9	19.4
Uttarakhand	0.6	19.6	27.3	9.4	22.0
West Bengal	40.7	27.3	40.3	20.8	33.4
Small states					
Arunachal Pradesh	28.0	37.0	20.0	25.0	9.8
Goa	18.6	28.9	27.7	20.0	26.1
Himachal Pradesh	2.1	14.6	29.4	10.6	14.9
Meghalaya	14.4	12.3	0.0	43.4	12.2
Mizoram	38.2	27.2	20.0	39.2	9.8
Sikkim	-0.5	-20.1	0.0	34.3	15.3
Tripura	25.6	45.4	0.0	18.0	11.4

Note: States ranked in alphabetical order within cluster.

Footnotes: 1. PSI shows 0 sanctioned and actual correctional staff. 2. 0 DLSA secretaries sanctioned and appointed.

Source: Data on Police Organizations, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), January 2023; Department of Justice; Parliamentary Question – Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 433; Supreme Court Annual Report (Volume 2 - High Courts) 2023-2024; Prison Statistics India (PSI), December 2022; National Legal Services Authority

Figure 2: Vacancy across pillars

We looked at vacancies on 11 key personnel ranks across the 4 pillars. Many states, of all sizes, have vacancies that exceed 25% of the state's own sanctioned strength.

■ Up to 20% ■ 20% to 40% ■ Above 40%

	Prisons vacancy (%)					Legal Aid vacancy (%)
	Officers Dec 2022	Cadre staff Dec 2022	Correctional staff Dec 2022	Medical staff Dec 2022	Medical officers Dec 2022	DLSA secretary Mar 2024
Large and mid-sized states						
Andhra Pradesh	20.6	27.9	NA ¹	21.7	4.5	7.7
Bihar	28.6	44.9	48.7	42.7	42.2	2.7
Chhattisgarh	65.6	30.6	49.5	52.6	58.7	0.0
Gujarat	42.5	37.6	44.4	28.6	15.2	0.0
Haryana	34.6	30.5	100.0	50.5	47.2	0.0
Jharkhand	68.2	64.8	33.3	55.8	75.5	0.0
Karnataka	10.8	23.8	20.7	63.8	74.1	0.0
Kerala	9.2	17.8	7.1	25.5	16.7	23.1
Madhya Pradesh	43.0	12.2	28.9	35.6	31.0	2.0
Maharashtra	25.9	10.5	46.5	30.0	22.7	0.0
Odisha	14.2	23.7	44.7	51.1	62.8	13.3
Punjab	28.8	40.7	100.0	27.3	19.0	0.0
Rajasthan	36.4	25.0	87.5	17.8	15.4	0.0
Tamil Nadu	11.4	7.2	19.6	12.4	25.6	50.0
Telangana	8.8	18.8	0.0	58.5	47.8	0.0
Uttar Pradesh	25.4	29.9	NA ¹	54.2	34.8	0.0
Uttarakhand	69.0	39.0	NA ¹	62.5	90.0	0.0
West Bengal	20.5	21.8	30.4	65.1	73.5	0.0
Small states						
Arunachal Pradesh	37.5	2.3	NA ¹	10.0	0.0	0.0
Goa	29.6	34.3	100.0	84.6	83.3	0.0
Himachal Pradesh	27.3	19.3	61.5	60.9	25.0	0.0
Meghalaya	42.1	26.6	100.0	5.0	0.0	45.5
Mizoram	21.2	22.6	NA ¹	-8.3	33.3	NA ²
Sikkim	51.9	59.5	NA ¹	28.6	50.0	100.0
Tripura	68.8	54.7	100.0	28.6	0.0	12.5

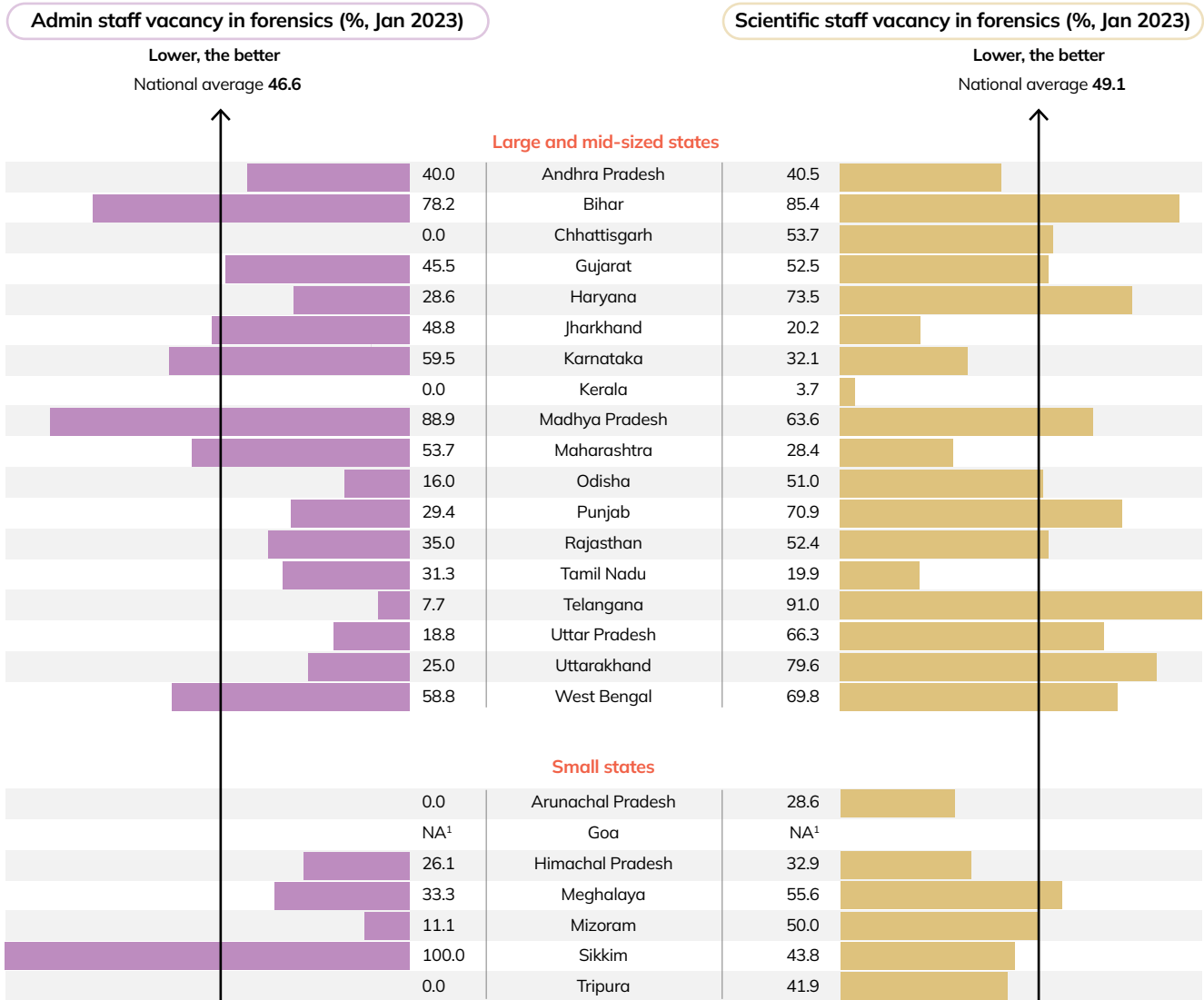
Note: States ranked in alphabetical order within cluster.

Footnotes: 1. PSI shows 0 sanctioned and actual correctional staff. 2. 0 DLSA secretaries sanctioned and appointed.

Source: Data on Police Organizations, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), January 2023; Department of Justice; Parliamentary Question – Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 433; Supreme Court Annual Report (Volume 2 - High Courts) 2023-2024; Prison Statistics India (PSI), December 2022; National Legal Services Authority

Figure 3: Vacancies in forensics

Out of nearly 10,000 sanctioned posts across states, nearly 50% remain vacant. Some states like Telangana, Haryana and Bihar have over 70% scientific staff missing.



Footnote: 1. Data not available for regional forensic science laboratories (FSL) and forensic unit/district mobile forensic units (DMFUs).
Source: Data on Police Organizations, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D)

Ranking diversity *

* How do states fare on 17 diversity indicators across police, prisons, judiciary and legal aid? Indicators listed on Page 32.

Color guide

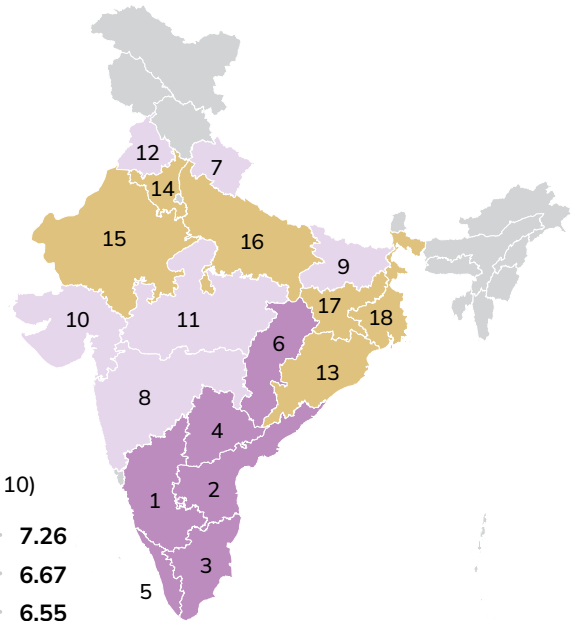
Best Middle Worst

Indicators
(in IJR 4)

17

Clusters

- I. 18 large and mid-sized states (population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states (population up to 10 million)

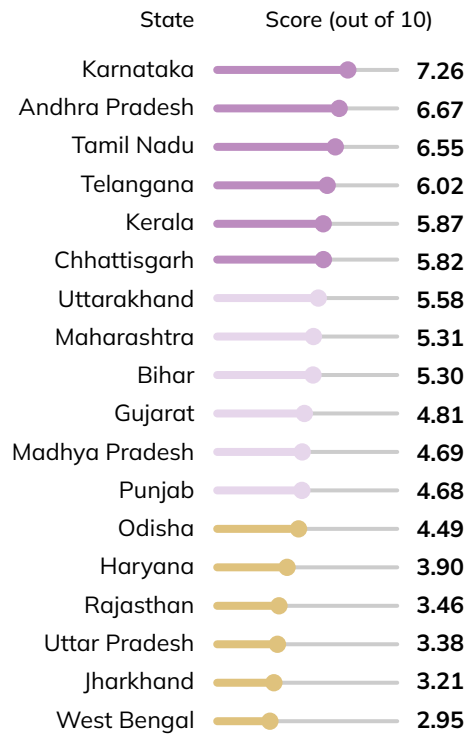


Map 5: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
2	1	2	1
6	4	4	2
1	7	1	3
11	9	3	4
3	2	7	5
13	5	5	6
7	14	10	7
4	8	6	8
17	10	12	9
8	6	9	10
12	17	8	11
10	12	13	12
5	3	11	13
14	11	15	14
16	15	14	15
18	18	17	16
15	13	16	17
9	16	18	18



Map 6: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW

IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
1	2	1	1
6	3	5	2
4	6	3	3
2	1	2	4
5	5	4	5
3	4	6	6
7	7	7	7

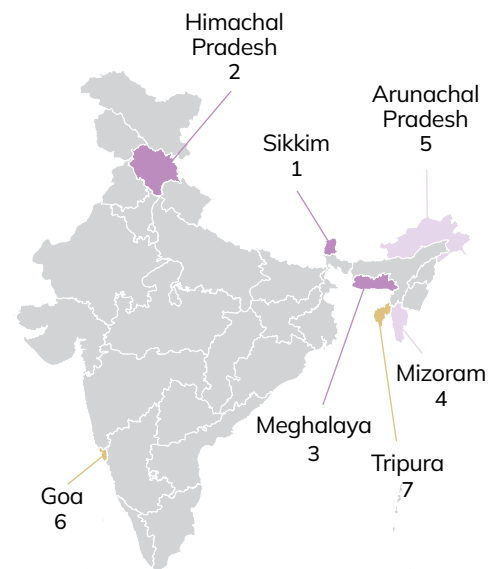
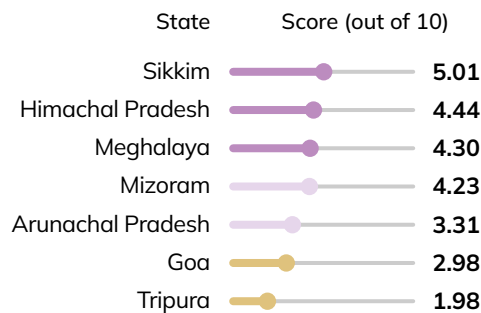


Figure 4: Caste representation in judiciary

Most states fail to fill their quotas for SCs and STs while doing much better in filling the reserved seats for OBCs.

SC and ST judges in subordinate courts: actual to reserved ratio (%)

	Judges in subordinate courts: actual to reserved ratio (%)						Improvement between IJR 3 and IJR 4		
	Scheduled caste (SC) judges		Scheduled tribe (ST) judges		Other backward classes (OBC) judges		SC judges	ST judges	OBC judges
	IJR 3 (Jul 2022)	IJR 4 (Feb 2025)	IJR 3 (Jul 2022)	IJR 4 (Feb 2025)	IJR 3 (Jul 2022)	IJR 4 (Feb 2025)			
Large and mid-sized states									
Andhra Pradesh	91	111	69	83	119	138	↑	↑	↑
Bihar	68	74	77	84	51	60	↑	↑	↑
Chhattisgarh	128	92	79	60	123	97	↓	↓	↓
Gujarat	108	97	2	2	55	47	↓	↓	↓
Haryana	56	60	NA ³	NA ³	33	40	↑		↑
Jharkhand	39	21	35	16	36	16	↓	↓	↓
Karnataka	85	110	66	116	75	168	↑	↑	↑
Kerala	79	84	9	16	106	112	↑	↑	↑
Madhya Pradesh	73	82	56	58	90	112	↑	↑	↑
Maharashtra	80	80	5	5	120	120	↔	↔	↑
Odisha	11	18	0	2	48	64	↑	↑	↓
Punjab	83	92	0	0	100	104	↑	↔	↑
Rajasthan	63	69	58	62	94	76	↑	↑	↓
Tamil Nadu	93	86	68	73	122	113	↓	↑	↑
Telangana	82	81	117	119	125	123	↓	↑	↑
Uttar Pradesh	64	69	45	53	83	86	↑	↑	↑
Uttarakhand	83	81	125	101	96	89	↓	↓	↓
West Bengal	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Small states									
Arunachal Pradesh	NA ¹	NA ¹	104	91	NA ⁵	NA ⁵		↓	
Goa	0	0	33	33	15	15	↔	↔	↔
Himachal Pradesh	57	56	91	78	38	40	↓	↓	↑
Meghalaya	NA ²	NA ²	57	64	NA ⁷	NA ⁷		↑	
Mizoram	NA ¹	NA ¹	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	NA ⁶	NA ⁶			
Sikkim	0	0	66	60	116	100	↔	↓	↓
Tripura	63	57	61	53	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	↓	↓	

1. No SC reservation and no SC judges. 2. No specific reservation for SC judges. 3. No ST reservation and no ST judges. 4. No specific reservation for ST judges. 5. No OBC reservation. 6. No OBC reservation and no OBC judges. 7. No specific reservation approved for OBCs.

Source: Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2354 dated 20 March 2025.

Available at: https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/267/AU2354_GpF5iE.pdf?source=pqars.

Figure 5: Share of women across pillars

More women have joined the judiciary but remain clustered at the lower echelons. The same pattern is observed in police where women account for just 8%. In 17 ranked states women officers were below 10%.

	Share of women (%)							
	Police		Prisons	Judiciary		Legal Aid		
	Total police staff	Police officers	Total prison staff	Judges (High Court)	Judges (Sub. court)	Panel lawyers	PLVs	DLSA secretaries
Large and mid-sized states								
Andhra Pradesh	21.5	5.2	8.4	16.7	50.9	20.7	33.6	50.0
Bihar	23.7	12.6	22.2	2.9	26.6	18.1	29.3	22.2
Chhattisgarh	7.6	9.3	11.1	6.3	43.7	22.2	37.8	43.5
Gujarat	16.7	10.0	7.3	25.0	20.8	26.9	46.4	NA ²
Haryana	9.2	12.2	1.8	25.5	40.7	28.3	40.2	27.3
Jharkhand	7.4	3.7	9.4	6.3	26.5	15.7	32.4	25.0
Karnataka	8.9	6.1	32.9	16.3	37.0	43.8	59.0	20.0
Kerala	8.3	2.7	8.3	8.9	48.8	48.6	63.3	60.0
Madhya Pradesh	7.1	9.2	17.8	3.0	40.6	15.6	37.7	18.0
Maharashtra	18.7	6.8	15.4	16.2	30.8	34.5	40.8	13.5
Odisha	11.0	14.2	12.9	5.6	47.7	14.2	38.5	69.2
Punjab	11.1	8.5	8.6	25.5	51.9	24.3	38.7	63.6
Rajasthan	10.9	7.5	19.6	9.1	42.4	NA ¹	26.7	0.0
Tamil Nadu	20.7	20.1	13.8	20.0	40.8	23.6	46.9	NA ²
Telangana	8.7	7.6	6.6	33.3	55.3	18.1	44.0	23.5
Uttar Pradesh	10.5	4.6	10.8	3.8	35.5	14.6	28.4	15.5
Uttarakhand	12.2	10.2	3.0	0.0	40.7	32.5	53.1	30.8
West Bengal	9.6	4.2	10.9	14.0	42.4	25.0	38.4	65.2
Small states								
Arunachal Pradesh	11.3	6.5	18.6	16.7	33.3	26.1	40.6	40.0
Goa	10.8	16.3	1.2	16.2	70.0	50.5	78.4	100.0
Himachal Pradesh	14.5	5.5	8.7	8.3	37.5	26.5	44.2	72.7
Meghalaya	5.8	8.9	16.1	0.0	60.7	62.6	41.5	83.3
Mizoram	8.2	18.2	34.5	16.7	51.1	61.4	29.2	NA ³
Sikkim	8.2	6.4	25.3	33.3	47.8	44.7	75.8	NA ³
Tripura	5.7	6.0	4.4	0.0	35.8	30.4	27.0	57.1

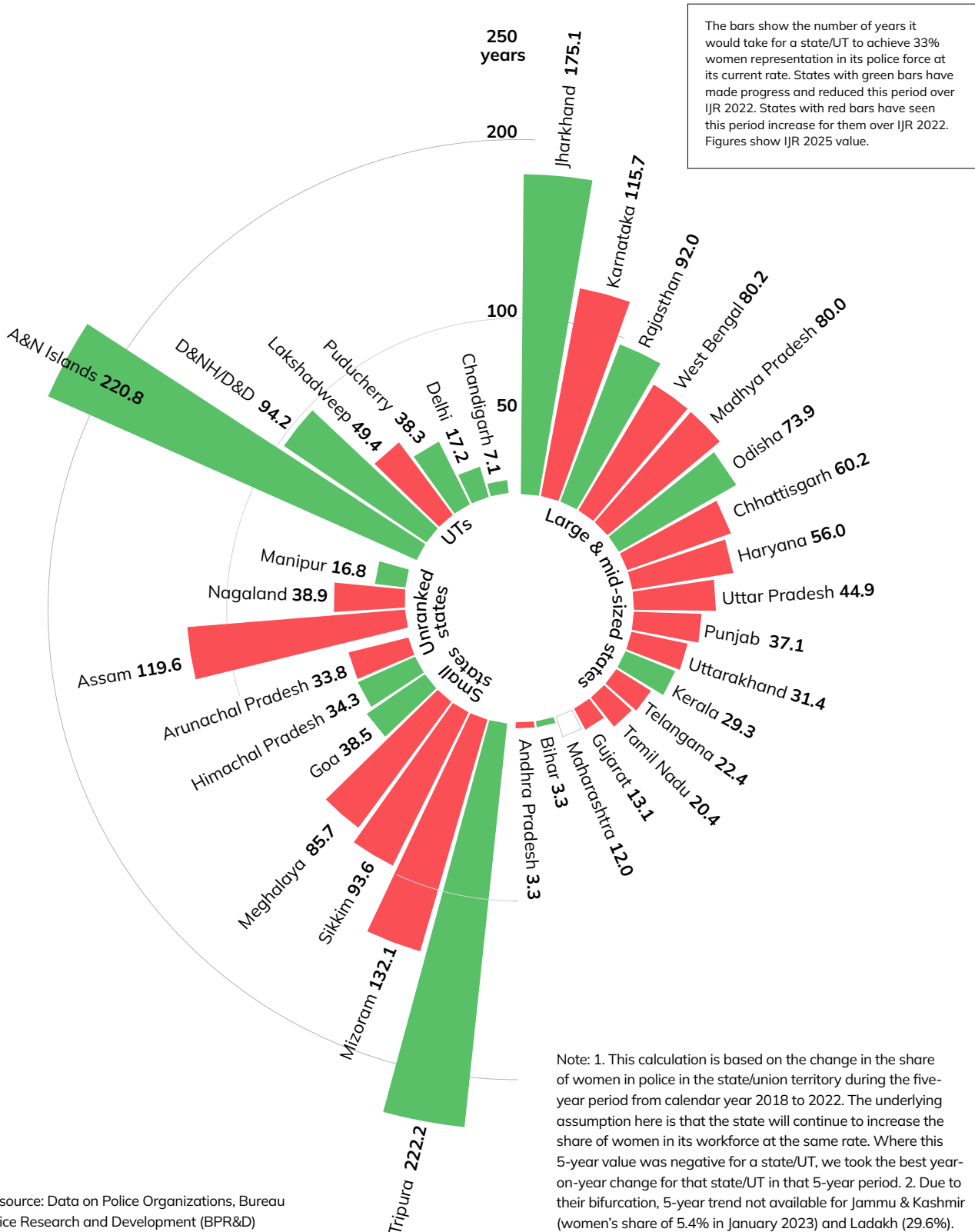
Footnotes: 1. Data shows no panel lawyers. 2. Data on women secretaries not available. 3. Data shows 0 DLSA secretaries sanctioned and appointed.

Note: 1. States ranked in alphabetical order within cluster. 2. Data as of January 2023 for police indicators; December 2022 for prisons indicators; February 2025 for judges; March 2024/September 2024 for legal aid indicators.

Source: Data on Police Organizations, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D); Prison Statistics India (PSI); National Legal Services Authority (NALSA); Parliament questions

Figure 6: How long will it take for women’s share in police to hit 33%?

Compared to IJR 2022, 22 states/UTs have marginally improved representation of women in their police force in IJR 2025. Current rates remaining constant, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar would see 33% women in roughly three years. At around 200 years, it would take Jharkhand, Tripura and Andaman and Nicobar Islands several generations to meet this quota.



Data source: Data on Police Organizations, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D)

Ranking intention *

* What the trends show based on 5-year data for 23 indicators across police, prisons and judiciary. Indicators listed on Page 32.

Color guide

Best Middle Worst

Indicators (in IJR 4) **23**

Clusters

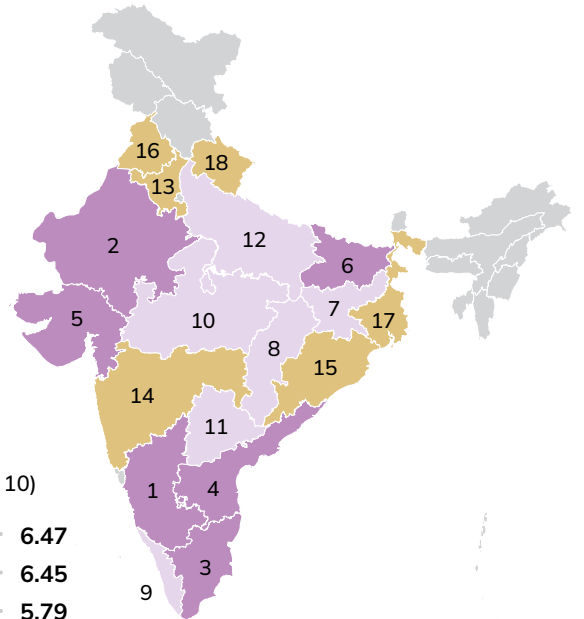
- I. 18 large and mid-sized states (population above 10 million)
- II. 7 small-sized states (population up to 10 million)

Map 7: Large and mid-sized states

Rank (out of 18)

NEW			
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
14	16	1	1
10	5	14	2
7	1	6	3
NA	6	5	4
3	3	4	5
13	4	3	6
15	7	2	7
6	2	10	8
12	15	12	9
11	17	7	10
NA	18	9	11
9	12	8	12
4	14	18	13
2	9	17	14
8	11	11	15
5	8	15	16
1	10	13	17
16	13	16	18

State	Score (out of 10)
Karnataka	6.47
Rajasthan	6.45
Tamil Nadu	5.79
Andhra Pradesh	5.78
Gujarat	5.78
Bihar	5.66
Jharkhand	5.66
Chhattisgarh	5.65
Kerala	5.59
Madhya Pradesh	5.50
Telangana	5.32
Uttar Pradesh	5.03
Haryana	4.64
Maharashtra	4.56
Odisha	4.28
Punjab	4.19
West Bengal	3.35
Uttarakhand	3.03

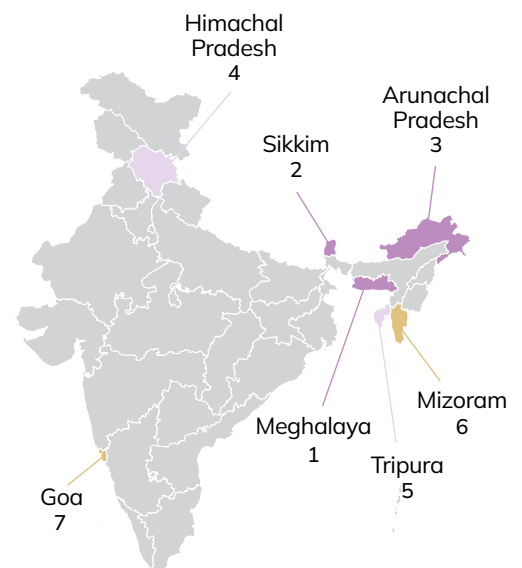


Map 8: Small states

Rank (out of 7)

NEW			
IJR 1 2019	IJR 2 2020	IJR 3 2022	IJR 4 2025
2	7	1	1
4	5	3	2
7	4	2	3
3	1	6	4
5	3	5	5
6	6	4	6
1	2	7	7

State	Score (out of 10)
Meghalaya	5.64
Sikkim	5.33
Arunachal Pradesh	5.24
Himachal Pradesh	4.81
Tripura	3.63
Mizoram	3.49
Goa	2.89



Note: Scores are shown up to 2 decimals. Thus, while they both show the same score, Andhra Pradesh is ranked above Gujarat on the third decimal (5.785 vs 5.777) and Bihar above Jharkhand (5.661 vs 5.655).

Figure 7: Budgets for the justice system

The graphic below shows the 5-year average growth in expenditures to police, prisons and judiciary, and whether they have kept pace with the increase in the total state budget expenditure. Among the 25 ranked states, the increase in police budgets trails the increase in total budget in 13 states, prisons in 9 states and judiciary in 7 states.



Note: States arranged in alphabetical order within cluster.

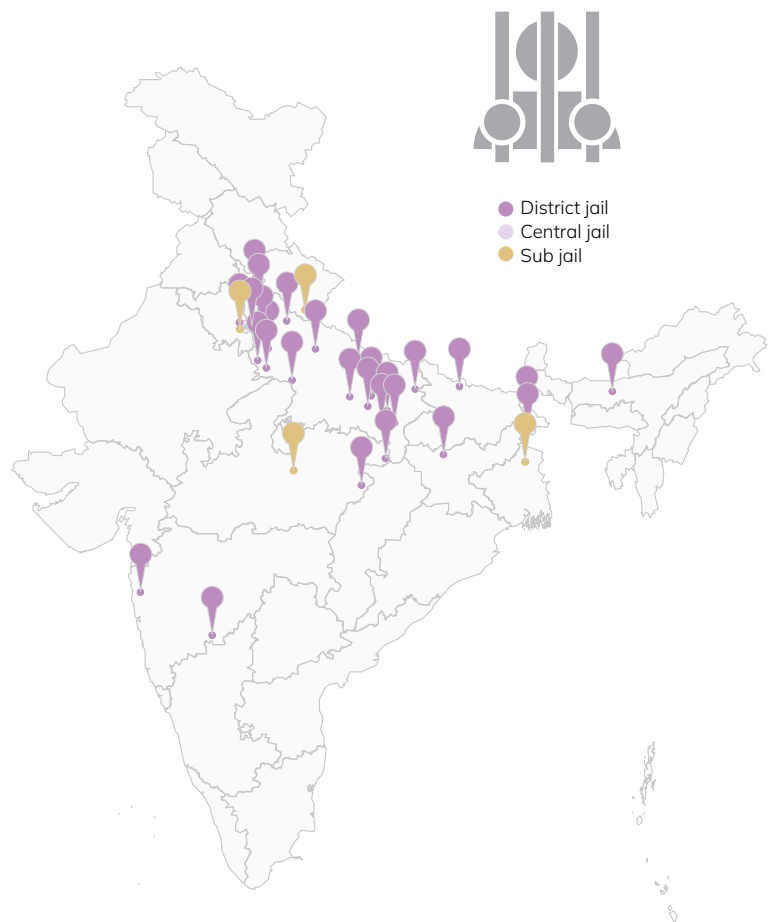
Footnotes: 1. Budget data for 2021-22 and 2022-23 not available. 2. Total expenditure for 2022-23 not available.

Source: Combined Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Union and State Governments in India, Comptroller and Auditor General of India

Figure 8: Locating chronic overcrowding in prisons

Listed below are the 34 prisons whose occupancy rate was above 250% between 2020 and 2022, led by UP. There are more than 85 prisons across India that showed above 200% occupancy in the same period.

Jail name	Jail type	Occupancy rate (%)		
		2020	2021	2022
Assam (1)				
Nalbari	District jail	267	310	318
Bihar (1)				
Sitamarhi	District jail	255	308	316
Delhi (3)				
Central Jail No.1	Central jail	358	440	411
Central Jail No.3	Central jail	278	325	297
Central Jail No.4	Central jail	352	425	467
Jharkhand (1)				
Chatra	District jail	267	328	272
Madhya Pradesh (3)				
Anuppur	District jail	282	283	352
Baidhan	District jail	321	337	360
Rehli	Sub jail	306	309	250
Maharashtra (2)				
Kalayan	District jail	352	361	369
Solapur	District jail	298	300	355
Uttar Pradesh (18)				
Agra	District jail	263	258	279
Aligarh	District jail	291	339	342
Bahraich	District jail	285	295	305
Buland Shahr	District jail	278	298	299
Deoria	District jail	308	327	369
Ghaziabad	District jail	292	309	332
Gyanpur	District jail	299	388	454
Itawa	District jail	286	321	334
Jaunpur	District jail	344	400	381
Mathura	District jail	296	346	337
Muradabad	District jail	472	488	497
Muzaffarnagar	District jail	267	327	332
Pratapgarh	District jail	271	264	298
Raibareli	District jail	271	276	322
Saharanpur	District jail	283	414	405
Shahjahanpur	District jail	265	292	309
Sultanpur	District jail	299	305	403
Varanasi	District jail	290	290	349
Uttarakhand (1)				
Haldwani	Sub jail	394	315	330
West Bengal (3)				
Kandi	Sub jail	394	369	477
Malda	District jail	326	307	298
Raiganj	District jail	268	363	393



Data as of December 31 for each year. Jails arranged in alphabetical order by state name.
Source: Prison Statistics India

Figure 9: Indian Prisons over a Decade

2012 2022

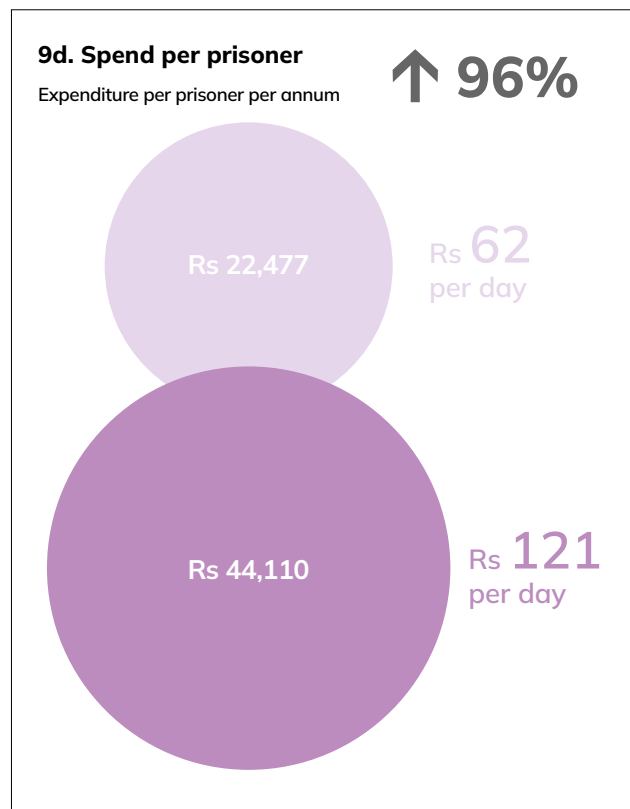
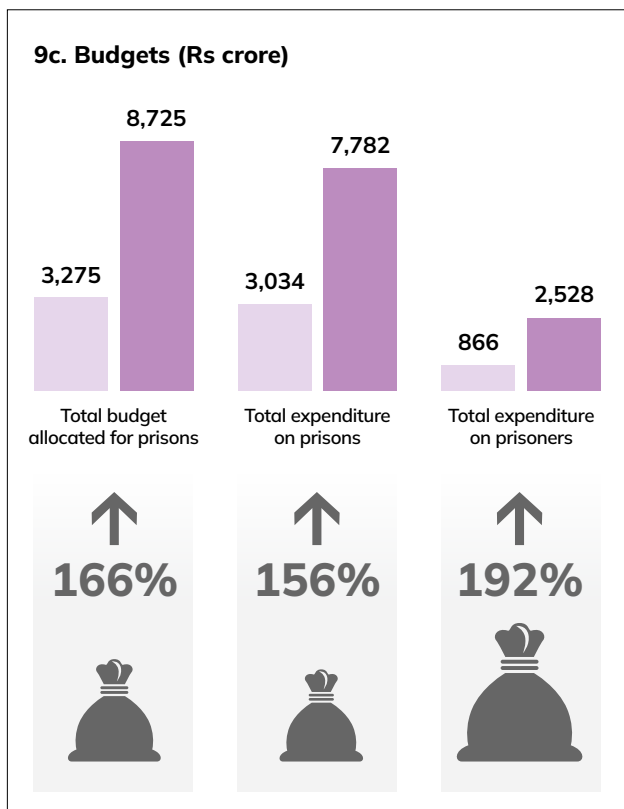
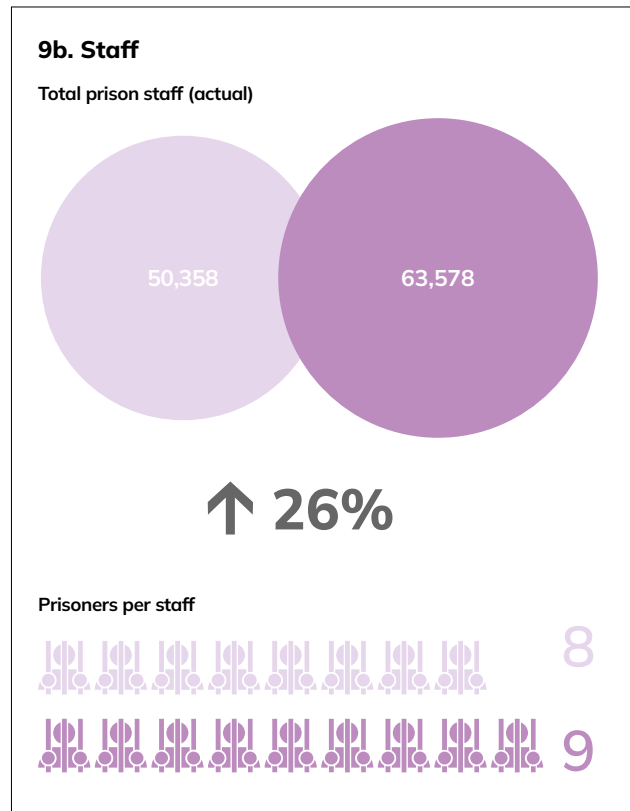
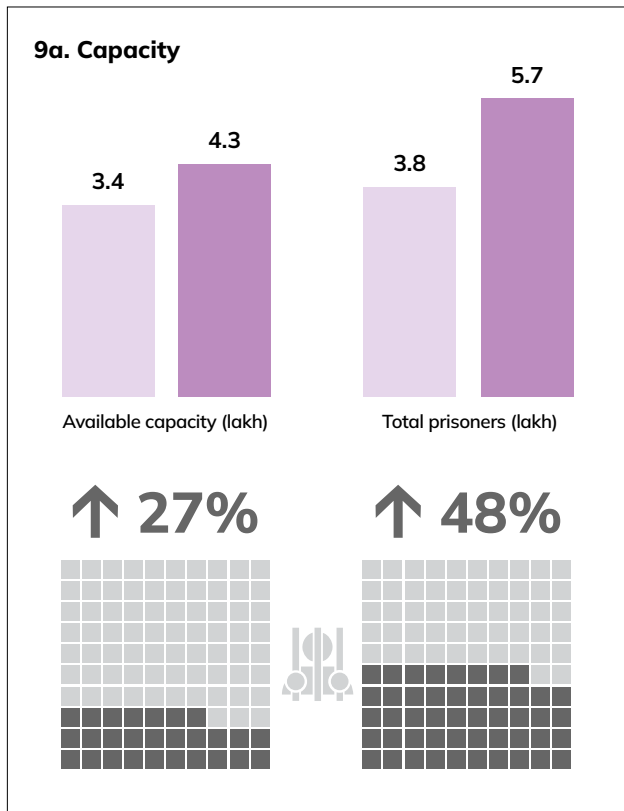
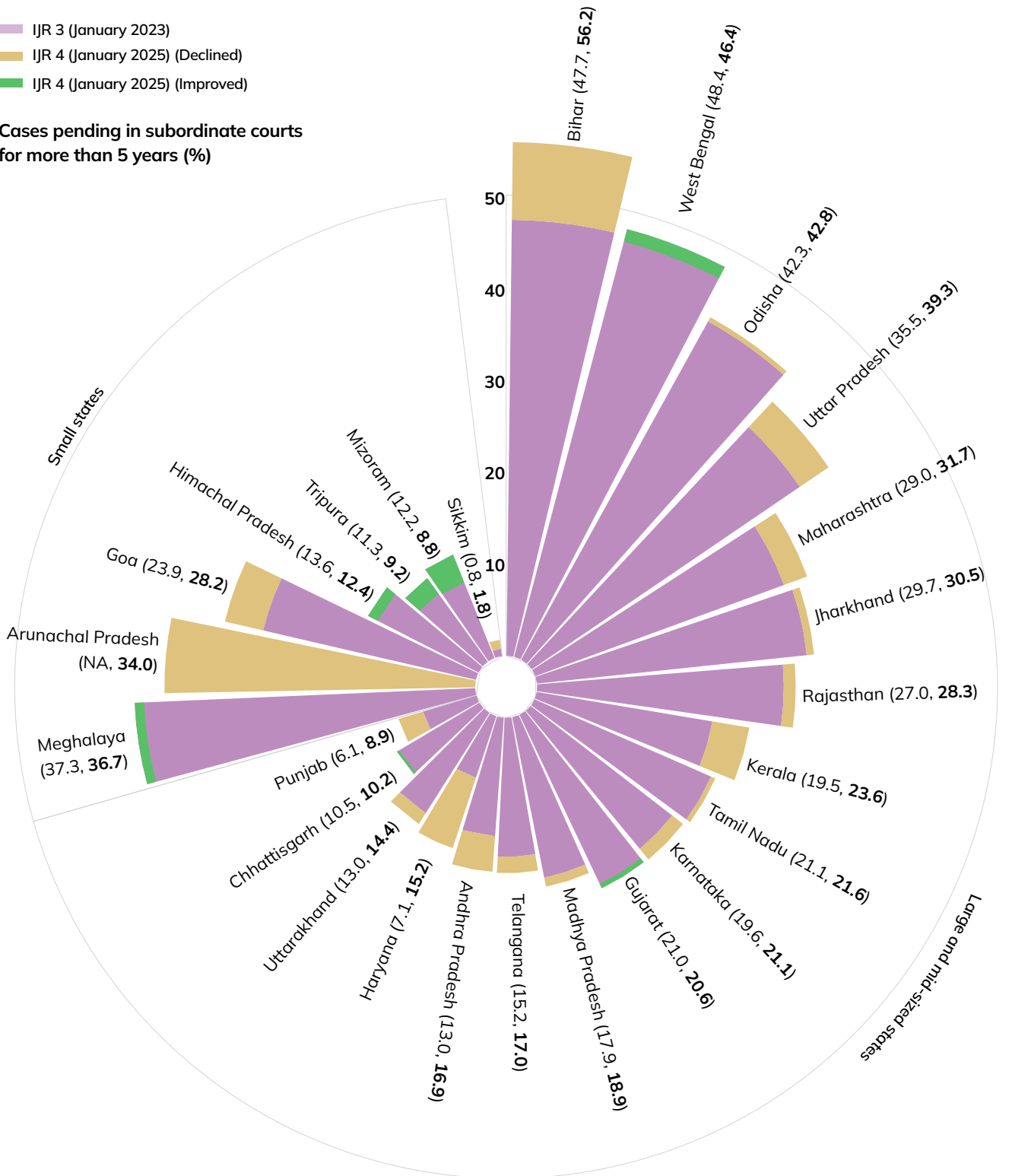


Figure 10: Cases pending for more than 5 years in subordinate courts

In 16 states/UTs, cases pending in subordinate courts for above 5 years have increased in the last 2 years. In 10 states, such cases amount to over 25% of pending cases. The green and brown bars signify the extent to which the share of cases pending over 5 years in subordinate courts have either reduced or increased in states, compared to IJR 2022.

- IJR 3 (January 2023)
- IJR 4 (January 2025) (Declined)
- IJR 4 (January 2025) (Improved)

Cases pending in subordinate courts for more than 5 years (%)



Note: 1. States arranged in respective cluster in descending order of IJR 4 value. 2. Data for Arunachal Pradesh (small state) not available for IJR 3. Source: National Judicial Data Grid

Map 9: SHRC Ranking

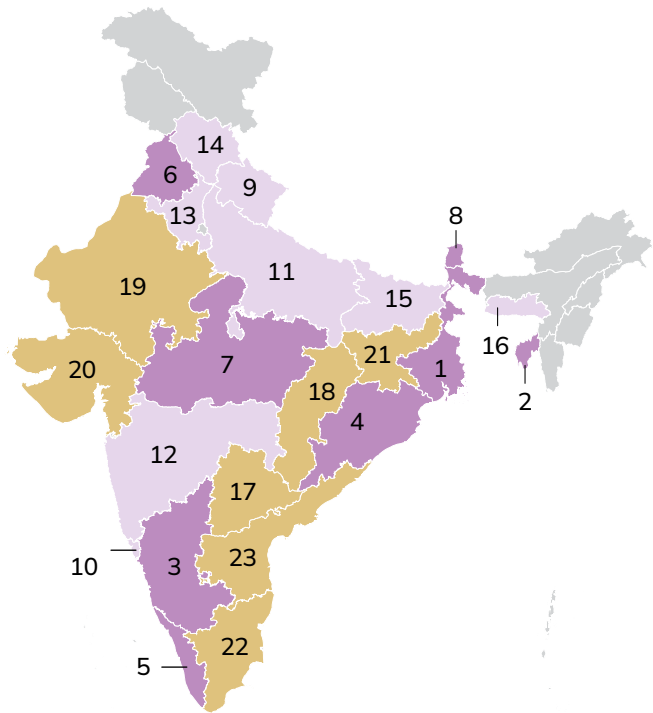
IJR 4 rank	State	Score (out of 10)
1	West Bengal	6.99
2	Tripura	6.09
3	Karnataka	5.89
4	Odisha	5.52
5	Kerala	5.51
6	Punjab	5.47
7	Madhya Pradesh	4.93
8	Sikkim	4.91
9	Uttarakhand	4.48
10	Goa	4.34
11	Uttar Pradesh	4.32
12	Maharashtra	3.96
13	Haryana	3.86
14	Himachal Pradesh	3.53
15	Bihar	3.41
16	Meghalaya	3.40
17	Telangana	3.24
18	Chhattisgarh	3.16
19	Rajasthan	2.94
20	Gujarat	2.74
21	Jharkhand	2.42
22	Tamil Nadu	2.15
23	Andhra Pradesh	2.08

Indicators

9

Color guide

- Best (Ranks 1 to 8)
- Middle (Ranks 9 to 16)
- Worst (Ranks 17 to 23)



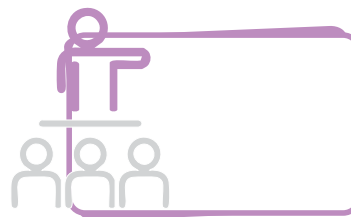
Jharkhand, Sikkim and Andhra Pradesh **do not have separate investigation wings.**



Only 4% of the total cases are initiated **suo moto.**



Haryana, Jharkhand and Telangana had **no chairperson and no members.**



No commission has a woman chairperson and **only five have women in their executive staff.**



Recommendations

<p>1 Ensure 24*7 legal guidance and representation is available at all police stations and courts at first instance. Increase presence of paralegal volunteers in the community</p>	<p>7 Ensure compliance with UTRC's guidelines of the categories of prisoners to be considered for release and review the performance of the committees</p>
<p>2 Fully implement the Supreme Court's Paramvir Singh Saini judgement, mandating every police station to be equipped with stipulated CCTV cameras to check abuse</p>	<p>8 SHRCs must be fully resourced and reach out to the community proactively</p>
<p>3 Fill vacancies on an urgent footing</p>	<p>9 Promote mediation as an effective tool for dispute resolution and strengthen the infrastructure and human resources needed for the same</p>
<p>4 Prioritise increased resources at the level of first responders</p>	<p>10 Release timely, validated and comprehensive data on different aspects of the justice system, including on persons with disabilities, to ensure targeted policy recommendations</p>
<p>5 Increase diversity of caste, gender and the specially abled across subsystems</p>	<p>11 Designate the justice delivery system as an essential service and enhance, enlarge and equip it as a first responder able to provide effective justice delivery at all times</p>
<p>6 Give training pride of place and prioritise human and financial resources in all training facilities</p>	

About the Partners

- **Centre for Social Justice (IDEAL)** is an organisation fighting for the rights of the marginalised and the vulnerable, principally in the sphere of access to justice. Inspired by Freirean thought, CSJ has been active in more than eight states across India, creating human rights interventions, using law as a key strategy through an intimate engagement with grassroots realities. Central to CSJ's efforts are its institutional interventions in legal reform and research, which bridge and symbiotically combine grassroots activism, law and policymaking on a wide gamut of issues concerning the rights of women, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities and other socially vulnerable groups.
- **Common Cause** is dedicated to championing public causes, campaigning for probity in public life and the integrity of institutions. It seeks to promote democracy, good governance and public policy reforms through advocacy and democratic interventions. Common Cause is especially known for the difference it has made through a large number of Public Interest Litigations (PILs), such as the cancellation of the entire telecom spectrum; cancellation of arbitrarily allocated coal blocks; and the Apex Court's recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity. Common Cause and CSDS-Lokniti bring out the Status of Policing in India Reports (SPIRs) on police accountability and citizen-centric policing since 2018.
- **Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)** is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation working for the practical realisation of human rights through research, strategic advocacy and capacity building within the Commonwealth. CHRI specialises in the areas of access to justice (police and prison reforms) and access to information. It also works to advance freedom of expression, media rights and the eradication of contemporary forms of slavery. CHRI is a Commonwealth Accredited Organisation and has a Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC.
- **DAKSH** is a Bengaluru-based think-tank working on promoting the rule of law by working towards robust, responsive and citizen-centric public institutions.
- **TISS-Prayas** is a social work demonstration project of the Center for Criminology and Justice, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, established in 1990. Prayas's focus is on service delivery, networking, training, research and documentation, and policy change with respect to the custodial/institutional rights and rehabilitation of socio-economically vulnerable individuals and groups. Their mission is to contribute knowledge and insight to the current understanding of aspects of the criminal justice system policy and process, with specific reference to socio-economically vulnerable and excluded communities, groups and individuals who are at greater risk of being criminalised or exposed to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
- **Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy** is an independent think-tank doing legal research to make better laws, and improve governance for the public good. It does this through high quality, peer reviewed original legal research; through engaging with the Government of India, State governments and other public institutions to both inform policy-making and to effectively convert policy into law; and through strategic litigation petitioning courts on important law and policy issues. Their abiding values are impact, excellence, and independence.

List of indicators on preceding map pages

Ranking Diversity

Police

Share of women in police (% , Jan 2023)
 Share of women in officers (% , Jan 2023)
 SC officers, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)
 SC constables, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)
 ST officers, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)
 ST constables, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)
 OBC officers, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)
 OBC constables, actual to reserved ratio (% , Jan 2023)

Prisons

Women in prison staff (% , Dec 2022)

Judiciary

Women judges (High Court) (% , Feb 2025)
 Women judges (sub. Court) (% , Feb 2025)
 SC judges, actual to reserved (sub. court) (% , Feb 2025)
 ST judges, actual to reserved (sub. court) (% , Feb 2025)
 OBC judges, actual to reserved (sub. court) (% , Feb 2025)

Legal aid

Share of women secretaries (% , Mar 2024)
 Share of women in panel lawyers (% , Sep 2024)
 Women PLVs (% , Sep 2024)

Ranking Human Resources

Police

Constables, vacancy (% , Jan 2023)
 Officers, vacancy (% , Jan 2023)
 Officers in civil police (% , Jan 2023)
 Admin staff vacancy in forensics (% , Jan 2023)
 Scientific staff vacancy in forensics (% , Jan 2023)

Prisons

Officers, vacancy (% , Dec 2022)
 Cadre staff, vacancy (% , Dec 2022)
 Correctional staff, vacancy (% , Dec 2022)
 Medical staff, vacancy (% , Dec 2022)
 Medical officers, vacancy (% , Dec 2022)
 Personnel trained (% , 2022)

Judiciary

Population per High Court judge (Feb 2025)
 Population per sub. court judge (Jan 2025)
 High Court judge vacancy (% , Feb 2025)
 Sub. Court judge vacancy (% , Jan 2025)
 High Court staff vacancy (% , Jun 2024)

Legal aid

Sanctioned secretaries as % of DLSAs (% , Mar 2024)
 DLSA secretary vacancy (% , Mar 2024)
 PLVs per lakh population (Number, Sep 2024)

Ranking Intention

Police

Women in total police (% , CY '18-'22)
 Women officers in total officers (% , CY '18-'22)
 Constable vacancy (% , CY '18-'22)
 Officer vacancy (pp, CY '18-'22)
 Difference in spend: police vs state (pp, FY '19-'23)

Prisons

Officer vacancy (% , CY '18-'22)
 Cadre staff vacancy (% , CY '18-'22)
 Share of women in prison staff (% , CY '18-'22)
 Inmates per prison officer (% , CY '18-'22)
 Inmates per cadre staff (% , CY '18-'22)
 Share of undertrial prisoners (pp, CY '18-'22)
 Spend per inmate (% , FY '19-'23)
 Prison budget used (pp, FY '19-'23)
 Difference in spend: prisons vs state (pp, FY '19-'23)

Judiciary

Cases pending (per High Court judge) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Cases pending (per sub. court judge) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Total cases pending (High Court) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Total cases pending (sub. court) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Judge vacancy (High Court) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Judge vacancy (sub. court) (% , CY '20-'24)
 Case clearance rate (High Court) (pp, CY '20-'24)
 Case clearance rate (sub. court) (pp, CY '20-'24)
 Difference in spend: judiciary vs state (pp, FY '19-'23)

About India Justice Report 2025

The India Justice Report (IJR) 2025 is India's first and only comprehensive quantitative index which uses government data to rank the capacity of 'pillars' of the formal justice system. First published in 2019, it continues to track improvements and persisting deficits in each state's structural and financial capacity to deliver justice based on quantitative measurements of budgets, human resources, infrastructure, workload, and diversity across police, judiciary, prisons, legal aid, and Human Rights Commissions for all 36 states and UTs. The IJR is a collaborative effort undertaken in partnership with DAKSH, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Common Cause, Centre for Social Justice, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and TISS-Prayas.

Visit <https://indiajusticereport.org> for the main report, data explorer and more.

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