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“HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS ENHANCING EFFICIENCY IN INDIAN COURTS: A PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVE”

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian judicial system, which is among the largest judicial systems in the world, is still struggling to address its long-term predicaments in terms of backlog of cases, delays in the judicial process as well as administrative bottlenecks. As the number of outstanding cases in different courts exceeds 5 crore, the need to find innovative solutions that can streamline the delivery of justice in a manner that does not affect the independence of courts and human discretion has been identified as increasingly pressing.¹ In this regard, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has proved to be a game changer that can modernise the justice delivery system without affecting the independence of courts and human discretion.

The application of AI in the Indian court is much more than mere theoretical experimentation. It already works in various areas legal research and automated translation, case management, virtual hearings, and administrative decision support. The SUVAS translation system used by the Supreme Court, e-SCR, digital case repositories, and AI-based transcription are not something futuristic but are practical technologies that help a judge and court personnel to reduce the number of manual operations, improve the accuracy of the work, facilitate hearings, and, finally, make justice more accessible to citizens². This has been an application of AI as a practical component that shows that technology when wielded in a responsible manner can assist the judicial system deal with systemic inefficiencies without compromising the fundamental values of equity, accountability, and transparency.

¹ National Judicial Data Grid, *Pendency Statistics* (2024).

² Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, *SUVAS Launch Note* (2023).

AI IN LEGAL RESEARCH AND DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

AI is transforming the way legal research and documents are analysed in India through the introduction of previously unheard-of speed, accuracy, and efficiency into the previously time-consuming processes. Decades ago, the law research had to be done manually as the lawyer and judge would have to dig through large volumes of case law, statutes, and commentaries, which could take days to complete.³ It can now be done with AI-powered research tools which scan a large body of legal databases in a few seconds and provide specific, context-relevant information.

Amongst the most outstanding innovations in the Indian judicial system is SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Courts Efficiency), an artificial intelligence-based service that helps judges to perform analysis of case files.⁴ Up to the point, SUPACE determines the fundamental facts, derives legal questions, condenses arguments, and suggests applicable precedents, assists the judges in navigating the intricate records in a more efficient and time-saving manner and still leaves the judicial independence intact.

AI technologies are also effective at analyzing the documents, especially reading the contracts, pleadings, affidavits, and bulk case files. The consistency of elements, risk identification, clause comparison and the identification of missing information can be more effectively identified by Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies than by human review where thousands and thousands of pages of documentations are involved.⁵ In the case of lawyers, AI positively affects the accuracy of drafting, the quality of citations, and the amount of clerks. AI tools will help to increase the efficiency and reliability of the legal system in India by eliminating human error and speeding up the process of research.

AI-BASED TRANSLATION AND ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Free translation and accessibility apps are now a vital part of the effort to assist people with greater linguistic diversity across India to access justice. Cases which are taken to Indian courts are dealt with in different languages depending on the region and there is usually a delay, misunderstandings and administration strains due to failure of uniformity in translation systems. To deal with this, the judiciary has developed AI-powered resources like SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software), which translates judicial documents, including

³ Rishabh Dara, *AI and Legal Research Trends in India*, 18 Indian J. L. & Tech. 44 (2023)

⁴ Supreme Court of India, *SUPACE Launch Note* (2021)

⁵ NITI Aayog, *AI in Legal Services Report* (2022).

orders, pleadings and judgments, into different Indian languages with a greater degree of accuracy and makes the processing of documents more rapid across courts.⁶

Furthermore, e-SCR project of the Supreme Court incorporates optical character recognition (OCR) which is AI based in order to change older judgments to machine readable forms so as to increase access to lawyers, researchers, and citizens through online access to searchable, machine-readable legal data.⁷ Such improvements are in line with the overall objective of the judiciary of inclusiveness as evidenced in the e-Courts Mission Mode Project.⁸ In general, translation and accessibility technologies based on AI enhance the transparency, minimize language obstacles, and guarantee fair access to the justice system.

VIRTUAL HEARINGS AND AI-ENABLED COURT INFRASTRUCTURE

The virtual hearings have become a hallmark of the contemporary Indian jurisprudential system, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic that increased the implementation of digital courtrooms. Video-conferencing solutions are currently adopted in courts throughout the nation to achieve efficient hearings that do not require physical presence, save a lot of time, and resources and enhance accuracy, speed, and administrative organization.⁹

The use of AI-based transcription devices has become beneficial in the form of real-time transcript of the courtroom proceedings to ensure that the records contain accurate information and have to be found fast, so judges can concentrate on the content of the arguments they provide.¹⁰ The digital case files, hearing management, and prioritisation of urgent issues are also managed using AI to run automated case-flow management systems. Moreover, the quality and reliability of the virtual hearings are also improved by smart courtroom infrastructure, such as high-definition cameras, audio enhancement systems, and noise reduction delivered by AI, to ensure that the proceedings are seamless even in distant locations, which will contribute to the accessibility of justice by citizens who might have trouble with traveling, cost, or even physical disabilities.¹¹ Altogether, AI-based virtual hearing infrastructure helps to improve efficiency, transparency, and inclusiveness, which is a significant step to the future-ready judicial system.

⁶ Ibid (5)

⁷ Ibid (4)

⁸ Ibid (3)

⁹ Ibid (2)

¹⁰ Supreme Court of India, *e-SCR Project Overview* (2023).

¹¹ e-Courts Mission Mode Project, *Phase III Vision Document* (2023).

ETHICAL CONCERNS AND THE NEED FOR HUMAN OVERSIGHT

Although AI can indeed be rather effective in terms of judicial efficiency, it also poses some crucial ethical issues, such as algorithmic bias, data privacy, and transparency. Artificial intelligence is also designed based on past biases, and thus can generate unbiased results unintentionally, and also automated systems are often black boxes, so it is hard to follow the path of reasoning.¹² Human control is necessary since the decisions of the courts influence the basic rights. The judges will still need to confirm AI-generated insights, which are fair, accountable, and respecting the constitution, so AI should not replace judicial reasoning.¹³

CONCLUSION

India's judiciary has been augmented through the application of technology like automation and AI, helping both practitioners and judges with their research efforts and thereby increasing the efficiency and accessibility of the court system to the public. Technology is instrumentally helping to decrease a number of delays that are currently occurring within the Indian court system, allowing for cases to be resolved more quickly. The increased speed of resolution creates a fairer and more just judicial system. The continuing expansion of India's judicial system is reliant upon continued technological advancements.

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