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THE FUTURE OF LEGAL TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The integration of emerging technologies into India's legal system is transforming the administration of justice, legal practice, and access to legal services. From e-Courts and electronic filing to Artificial Intelligence (AI), automated legal research, and Online Dispute Resolution (ODR), LegalTech offers significant opportunities to enhance efficiency, accessibility, and transparency. However, its growing application also raises concerns regarding data privacy, algorithmic bias, accuracy, accountability, and the preservation of judicial independence. This article examines the evolving landscape of legal technology in India, with particular emphasis on AI-assisted legal decision-making, digital legal infrastructure, and the regulatory and ethical challenges associated with technological advancement. It also considers the significance of judicial oversight, responsible AI principles, and data protection safeguards in ensuring the reliable use of technology within the legal profession. The article argues that technological innovation must remain complementary to human judgment rather than serve as its substitute. Ultimately, the future of LegalTech in India depends upon a balanced approach that promotes innovation while safeguarding fairness, accountability, and the fundamental principles of justice.

INTRODUCTION

A major technological shift is currently reshaping India's legal ecosystem. Modern legal services and court operations now frequently rely on everything from e-filing systems to automated litigation research and instant translation tools. This widespread transition toward e-Courts strongly suggests that digitized frameworks represent the inevitable trajectory for domestic legal practices. However, integrating sophisticated algorithms simultaneously raises serious questions about data privacy, operational errors, moral accountability, and basic human empathy. Navigating this evolution requires balancing technological efficiency with a commitment to protecting foundational judicial ethics.

From Digital Courts to Intelligent Justice

India's tech-driven justice system has already entered the next phase beyond digitization. Under the e-Courts Phase III, the Government has proposed to computerize Indian courts and make them paperless with a total budget outlay of ₹7,210 crore for 2023–27. Initiatives include digitization of case records, expansion of video conferencing, online courts, e-filing, and e-payment. As of December 31, 2025, more than 637.85 crore pages of court records had been digitized, and more than 3.93 crore video-conferencing hearings had been held in India.[1]

Information management, translation, and communication with litigants. [1] Meanwhile, the next frontier of legal technology in India involves harnessing emerging technologies. The Department of Justice has noted that Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Optical Character Recognition,

[1] Dep't of Just., Gov't of India, e-Courts Project Phase III (2026).

and Natural Language Processing technologies are being integrated into e-Courts for “intelligent” applications such as scheduling, prediction and forecasting, filing, case-[2] in other words, the emphasis is shifting from digital courts to technology assisted justice.[2]

Artificial Intelligence as an Aid to Legal Decision-Making

AI has particular applicability in legal research and judicial processes, given the volume of statutes, case law, and paperwork involved. AI can help in searching, analyzing, summarizing, translating, and transcribing to finding relevant documents. Within India’s legal ecosystem, judiciaries have tried tools such as SUPACE and SUVAS to aid research and accessibility.[3] However, the Supreme Court of India has been particularly clear that technology cannot replace the “human element” in law, with efficiency serving as an aid rather than an eview found expression in the Supreme Court’s judgment in Pooja Ramesh Singh v. Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd., 2026 INSC 668.existent and “imaginary” materials generated by AI as legal precedents.[4] The Supreme Court held that “the court must retain total and absolute control over adjudication, with a human in the loop at every stage.” [3] In this case, the Supreme Court ruled on an issue concerning orders passed by lower courts citing non[4] In other words, while the Court has no issue with the use of AI as an auxiliary tool, it has drawn a red line around the use of unvetted AI-generated information as a basis for legal decision-making.

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[2] Dep't of Just., Gov't of India, Lok Sabha Replies: e-Courts Project (2026).
[3] Pooja Ramesh Singh v. Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd., [2026] 7 S.C.R. 571, 2026 INSC 668 (India).
[4] Id.

Legal Technology Beyond the Courtroom

Beyond courtroom technologies, legal technologies also impact legal practices and organizations. Research platforms, contract management systems, electronic signatures, compliance software, and online dispute resolution are some of the ways in which LegalTech influences the work of lawyers and businesses.

India has laws governing electronic transactions and digital signatures. The Information Technology Act, 2000 governs electronic records and signatures, while Section 10A validates contracts under certain conditions.[5] In other words, India has a legal framework for electronic commerce that forms the basis of developing digital legal solutions [5]. The rise of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) is thus part of a continuum of India's digital legal infrastructure.

LegalTech's relevance extends beyond the judiciary and lawyers. Contract management systems, electronic signatures, and compliance tools reduce repetitive tasks, and make legal services more accessible to individuals and small businesses that lack in-house counsel. At the same time, technology can democratize legal services only if digital tools are intuitive and accessible to people with limited digital literacy.

Regulation, Privacy, and Responsible AI

The rise of LegalTech raises questions about regulation and ethical AI. India does not have a unified legal framework for all aspects of AI, but there are foundational statutes and policy guidelines. The Di[ital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 reflects India's approach to data privacy and governance.[6] By considering individual interests in privacy with legitimate processing, the Act lays guidance on the ethical use of data in LegalTech. personal information from court records, contracts, and other documents. [6] After all, legal databases and AI systems contain vast amounts of

NITI Aayog's Principles for Responsible AI highlight areas of safety and reliability, equality, inclusivity, and protection of positive human values.[7] Notably, the principles recognize that "AI systems may exhibit bias that is directly encoded in the system or arise indirectly from the design or training data" and that "opaque systems undermine accountability and due process". [7] These themes are critical in legal technologies because issues of bias, discrimination, and due process are particularly pertinent to the law.

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[5] Information Technology Act, No. 21 of 2000, §§ 4, 5, 10A (India).
[6] Digital Personal Data Protection Act, No. 22 of 2023 (India).
[7] NITI Aayog, Approach Document for India: Part 1—Principles for Responsible AI (2021).

The Way Ahead

The future of LegalTech in India must therefore weigh innovation with responsibility. AI can lighten the workload of legal professionals, assist in legal research, improve access to information, and enhance judicial processes. However, the ultimate responsibility for legal judgments and decisions must rest on accountability of human agency. The Supreme Court's recent jurisprudence on the scope and limits of AI highlights this point. As the Court held in Pooja Ramesh Singh's case, technology is an aid to human judgment, not a substitute.

Lawyers, judiciaries, and legal institutions must therefore adopt a similar attitude to AI-driven legal technologies. Verification, auditing, and data privacy safeguards can provide the necessary checks and balances for AI-assisted legal research. Likewise, NITI Aayog's responsible AI framework promotes ongoing governance of technologies while acknowledging the dynamic nature of innovation.[8]

Conclusion

The legal space across India stands at a critical crossroads. Online hearings, automated data analysis, digital dispute resolution, and workflow digitization possess immense capability to streamline case operations while expanding public access. However, ignoring digital vulnerabilities jeopardize institutional fairness. Moreover, the domestic industry must entirely avoid substituting human wisdom with cold code instead focus on deploying these advanced tools to enhance our system.

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[8] NITI Aayog, Approach Document for India: Part 2—Operationalizing Principles for Responsible AI (2021).