



## District Judiciary

**For Prelims:** District judiciary, [Supreme Court](#)

**For Mains:** Significance of the district judiciary in India's judicial system, Importance of financial security and independence for judicial officers' impartiality.

### Why in News?

The [Supreme Court of India](#) has emphasized the crucial role of the **district judiciary** in **upholding justice and declared its independence as an integral part of the [Constitution's basic structure](#).**

- In a recent judgment, the court underscored the need for judicial **independence from the executive and legislature, including matters of finances.**
- The judgment, based on a petition filed by the All-India Judges Association, has led to significant directions and recommendations for the district judiciary's functioning and welfare.

### What is the District Judiciary?

- **About:**
  - The district judiciary refers to the **judicial system at the district level in India.** It is the **first level of the judiciary** and is responsible for hearing and deciding on cases at the local level.
  - The district judiciary is composed of **district courts and other lower courts**, which are presided over by **district judges** and other judicial officers.
- **Importance of district judiciary:**
  - The district judiciary performs an important role in upholding the **rule of law.** The district judiciary plays a vital role in achieving the preambular goal of justice by ensuring access to justice for **litigants.**
  - The district judiciary, **being the most accessible court for litigants**, serves as the **primary interface between the justice system and the people.**

### What is the SC Judgement?

- **Independence of District Judiciary:**
  - The Supreme Court declares the independence of the district judiciary as a crucial part of the **Constitution's basic structure.**
  - Access to justice, **a preambular goal**, would remain illusory without impartial and independent judges at the grassroots level.
- **No Longer "Subordinate":**
  - The term **"subordinate judiciary" rejected as it misrepresents the constitutional position of a district judge.**
    - The constitution recognizes and protects district judges as vital components of the judicial system.
  - Greater respect should be accorded to the district judiciary and its contributions.

- **Recognition of District Judiciary's Importance:**
  - District judiciary plays a vital role in upholding the rule of law and delivering justice.
  - Handles approximately 1.13 million cases daily, making it the most accessible court for litigants.
  - Showed efficiency in functioning even during the pandemic, ensuring timely delivery of justice.
- **Financial Security and Economic Independence for Judicial Officers:**
  - Independence of judicial officers serving in the district judiciary is vital to the judicial system.
  - Financial security and economic independence of judicial officers are essential to maintain their impartiality.
  - **Judicial officers have been working without a pay revision for nearly 15 years.**
- **Recommendations and Directions:**
  - **Enhanced salary, pension, and other retiral benefits ordered for judicial officers.**
  - The pay of judicial officers should be **stand-alone and not compared to staff in the political executive or legislature.**
  - Incentives and promotion opportunities are needed to maintain the high level of functioning of the judiciary.

[Source: TH](#)

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