POSITIONING INDIA IN GLOBAL POWER DYNAMICS

As India becomes the world's fastest-growing economy, **debates arise over its great power aspirations**, with critics pointing to weak strategy and limited global influence compared to China & US.

Factors Hindering India's Global Power Aspirations	Supporting Factors
• **Ambition vs. Strategic Capacity:** India's strategic clarity is limited, with **military spending (USD 86B) lagging behind China (USD 314B)** & heavy reliance on global supply chains. • **Strategic Ambiguity:** Balancing Quad and SCO, preserves independence but may undermine its reliability in crises. • **Human Development:** Ranked 130th on HDI (2023), with **Inequality-Adjusted HDI is 0.475,** indicating high social inequality. • **Economic vs. Per Capita:** Despite being the 4th largest economy, **India's per capita GDP (USD 2,711) ranks 144th** globally, limiting its global leverage. • **Technological Gaps:** Ranked **39th on GII**, behind China (11th) & US (3rd), with gaps in semiconductors & biotech. • **Internal Fault Lines:** Ranked 159th on World Press Freedom Index, with **development gaps b/w states** like Goa (HDI ~0.75) & UP (~0.60), weakening national coherence.	• **Economic Growth & Demographics:** India's economy is projected to grow 6-7% annually, becoming the **3rd largest by 2030**. With a median age of 28.2, its young workforce will drive innovation & growth. • **Geopolitical Significance:** India controls key maritime chokepoints in the Indian Ocean, plays an active role in **Quad, SCO & BRICS**, and leads South Asia through **SAFTA** & Neighbourhood First policy. It shapes ASEAN's future trade & security. • **Technological & Defence Strength:** India is a digital powerhouse (e.g., UPI) with 100 tech+ unicorns, space missions & growing defence capabilities. It has the **2nd largest military personnel** & one of Asia's largest standing armies. • **Strategic Autonomy & Soft Power:** India balances relations with US, Russia & China, its **leadership in NAM and push for UNSC reforms**; exerts soft power through its diaspora, film industry, yoga, etc.

Suggestions to Navigate Evolving Global Power Dynamics

⌘ **Strengthen Domestic Foundations:** Focus on health, education, skilling, infrastructure, and institutional reforms in judiciary, policing, and governance.

⌘ **Strategic Communication**: Highlight India's unique development, democracy, and growth, sharing its **"civilisational state"** story globally.

⌘ **Balanced Partnerships:** Balance assertiveness on territorial issues with pragmatism in engaging with the **US, China & Russia**; prioritize issue-based coalitions.

⌘ **Soft Power & Tech Leadership:** Invest in tech diplomacy and promote India's leadership in global tech, environment, and health discourse; battle for global influence lies in tech, data, diplomacy & soft power.
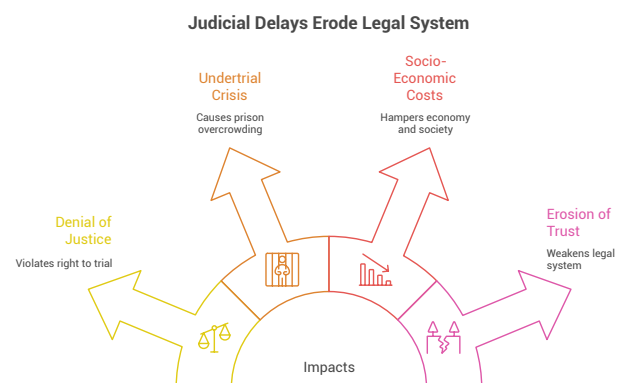
RISING JUDICIAL PENDENCY IN INDIA

Despite 34 judges, **SC case pendency reached 88,417** in Aug 2025, with a disposal rate of 80.04%.

⌘ **HC pendency:** 63.3L+ cases; **district courts:** 4.6 cr cases, **totaling 5 cr+ pending cases in India**.

Reasons of High Case Pendency

Mnemonic - LACK

⌘ **L - Low Judge-to-Population Ratio:** India has 15 judges/million, below the **1987 Law Commission's recommendation** of 50.

⌘ **A - Absence of Effective ADR:** Mediation, arbitration & conciliation remain largely untapped.

Judicial Delays Erode Legal System

Undertrial Crisis
Causes prison overcrowding

Socio-Economic Costs
Hampers economy and society

Denial of Justice
Violates right to trial

Erosion of Trust
Weakens legal system

Impacts

- ⌘ **C - Court Vacancies & Infrastructure Lapses:** As per IJR 2025, **5,600+ vacancies**, with HCs at 33% vacancy in 2025; limited courtrooms, staff shortages & weak ICT systems.
- ⌘ **K - Keen Govt. Litigation:** ~50% of pending cases involve govt. depts.

Suggestions

Mnemonic - JUSTICE

- ⌘ **J - Judge Strength:** Raise judge-to-population ratio to 50/million **(120th Law Commission Report (1987))**, fast-track appointments & establish AIJS.
- ⌘ **U - Upgrade Infrastructure:** Expand **e-Courts** with AI-based case management.
- ⌘ **S - Simplify Procedures & Laws:** Limit adjournments, adopt summary trials, and simplify laws **(2nd ARC)** for quicker justice.
- ⌘ **T - Training & Tech Tools:** Implement AI-based tools **(FASTER)** & provide staff training.
- ⌘ **I - Institutional Reforms:** Establish NJIA to standardize court infrastructure.
- ⌘ **C - Channel cases to ADR:** Promote conciliation, mediation & arbitration.
- ⌘ **E - Expand Access & Outreach:** Strengthen Tele-Law, mobile clinics & NALSA outreach.

SC ISSUES DNA EVIDENCE GUIDELINES IN CRIMINAL CASES

In the *Kattavellai@Devakar v. State of TN case 2025*, the SC issued guidelines to ensure the integrity of **DNA evidence** in criminal investigations.

Guidelines	Issues Involved in DNA Evidence Management
• **Documentation at Collection Stage:** FIR No., investigating officer details, signatures of medical professionals & witnesses. Samples must not be altered without court authorization. • DNA samples **must be transported to the Forensic Science Laboratory within 48 hours.** • **Maintain a Chain of Custody Register** from collection to case closure (for trial court record).	• **Collection & Preservation Issues:** DNA evidence is prone to contamination, degradation, and insufficient quantity for analysis. • **Reliability Issues:** Human error, bias & lack of standardized lab protocols. • **Privacy Issues:** Raises concerns about privacy, surveillance & genetic discrimination. • **Misinterpretation:** Overreliance on DNA and challenges with complex mixtures can lead to misinterpretation and wrongful convictions.

Judicial Rulings

- ↳ **Kunhiraman v. Manoj Case (1991):** DNA technology was first used in India to resolve a paternity dispute.
- ↳ **Sharda v. Dharmpal Case (2003):** SC endorsed DNA technology use in civil & matrimonial disputes, ruling it does not violate **Article 21 or Article 20(3)** (right against self-incrimination).
- ↳ **BNSS, 2023 (Sec. 51):** Authorizes medical examination, including DNA profiling, of apprehended individuals by a registered practitioner.
- ↳ **Rahul v. State of Delhi, MHA (2022):** DNA evidence was rejected due to the sample being in police custody for 2 months, raising tampering concerns.
- ↳ **Devakar Case (2025):** DNA evidence classified as opinion evidence under **Section 39 of BSA, 2023**, with probative value requiring scientific & legal validation.

ANNUAL LICENSING POLICY FOR OPIUM CULTIVATION

Govt. has announced the **policy for opium poppy cultivation for 2025-26 in MP, Rajasthan & UP** (traditional opium-growing states), increasing eligible farmers to 1.21 lakh.

- ⌘ Aims to ensure a **steady supply of alkaloids** for medical use & promote **self-reliance in opium & alkaloid production** through govt-run factories.
- ⌘ Includes eligibility criteria, **incentives for high-performing farmers & regulations for underperformers**.
- ⌘ Under the "Make for World" vision, the govt is modernizing to meet global standards, with the **Neemuch Alkaloid Factory (MP) achieving WHO Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certification**.

Opium Poppy

- ⌘ **Family:** Annual medicinal herb from the *Papaveraceae* family.
- ⌘ **Main Product:** Source of opium gum, containing alkaloids (morphine, codeine & thebaine) used in medicine; grown for edible seeds & seed oil.
- ⌘ **Favourable Conditions:** Best in temperate climates & winter cultivation possible in sub-tropical regions; requires well-drained, fertile, light black or loamy soil with **pH ~7.0.**
- ⌘ **India's Role:** Only country authorized by the **UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)** to produce gum opium.
- ⌘ **Regulation:** Cultivation under license from the Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) as per the **NDPS Act, 1985**.

PROJECT CHEETAH & GANDHI SAGAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

MP plans to introduce a **female cheetah to Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary**, making it a second home for cheetahs **after Kuno National Park (KNP)** under Project Cheetah.

> **Conservation Status of Cheetah: IUCN-** Vulnerable**; CITES-** Appendix I**; WPA, 1972-** Schedule- I

Project Cheetah

- **About**: Launched in **2022** to reintroduce cheetahs; **world's first intercontinental carnivore translocation project** under Project Tiger.
- **Implementation:** Managed by **NTCA**, in collaboration with MP Forest Dept. & WII; **Cheetah Project Steering Committee** was formed in 2023.
- **Objective:** Establish cheetah populations in safe habitats, restore ecosystems, promote eco-development & ecotourism, and **reduce human-wildlife conflict**.
- **Achievements:** 8 cheetahs from Namibia & 12 from South Africa relocated to KNP; **350+ 'Cheetah Mitras'** educate locals & mitigate conflict.

GANDHI SAGAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

- ✤ **Location:** Northwestern MP, bordering Rajasthan, in the Khathiar-Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion.
- ✤ **Ecosystem: Features savanna** (suitable for cheetah reintroduction like **Maasai Mara in Kenya**); **Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA)**.
- ✤ **Topography:** Includes Gandhi Sagar Dam & **Chambal River** (bifurcates the sanctuary into two nearly equal parts).
- ✤ **Historical Sites:** Chaurasigarh, Chaturbhuj Nala rock shelters, Bhadkaji rock paintings, & Hinglajgarh Fort.

SEX SORTED SEMEN FACILITY UNDER RASHTRIYA GOKUL MISSION

Sex Sorted Semen facility (under RGM) was **inaugurated in Bihar** to boost the dairy sector in Eastern and NE India.

⌘ It will produce 5 lakh doses of sex-sorted semen annually using **'Gausort' technology**, ensuring **90% accuracy in sorting semen for female calves**, helping dairy farmers reduce costs.

Rashtriya Gokul Mission

⌘ **Background:** Launched in **2014** for indigenous bovine breed development & conservation, continued under **Rashtriya Pashudhan Vikas Yojana (2021-26)**.

⌘ **Implementing Agency:** Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

⌘ **Objectives:** Enhance bovine productivity, promote high genetic merit bulls, expand AI (artificial insemination) coverage & conserve indigenous breeds.

⌘ **Achievement:** Milk Production increased by 63.55% from 2014-15 to 2023-24.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Recently, in eastern DRC, a US-brokered peace deal with Rwanda and a ceasefire with M23 were made (mediated by Qatar), but M23 resumed fighting, hindering peace.

⌘ **Political Features**:

- ❖ Africa's **2nd-largest country, borders 9 countries** (Angola, the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zambia), and has an **Atlantic coastline** (to the south west).
- ❖ **Key conflict zones:** North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.

⌘ **Geographical Features**:

- ❖ **Mineral-rich Katanga Plateau** (cobalt, copper, tin, uranium, diamonds).
- ❖ **Capital:** Kinshasa, on the Congo River (crosses equator twice).
- ❖ Contains **Congo Basin rainforest and savanna** regions.
- ❖ **Significant lakes:** Tanganyika, Albert, Edward, Kivu.
- ❖ **Notable feature:** Mount Nyiragongo, an active volcano in the Virunga Mountains.