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Five crore Indians wait when the courts take a break

India's judicial vacation system is increasingly difficult to justify amid an unprecedented backlog of over 5.39 crore pending cases and a prison population in which nearly three-fourths are undertrials. While acknowledging that judges are overworked and require leave to write judgments and recover from demanding schedules, the authors contend that courts should not function at reduced capacity for extended periods. The practice of collective summer and winter recesses, inherited from the colonial era, persists despite the judiciary sitting for only about 190 days a year, with the 2024 renaming of the summer break as "partial court working days" leaving the number of working days unchanged.

Rather than abolishing judicial vacations, the authors advocate staggered leave, ensuring courts remain fully operational throughout the year. This recommendation echoes proposals from the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the Law Commission, and the Justice Malimath Committee. While judicial vacancies remain a major concern, reforming the court calendar is within the judiciary's own control.

The article also emphasises reducing litigation through greater use of Lok Adalats, mediation, and arbitration, alongside leveraging the expertise of retired judges to identify bottlenecks, monitor case disposal, and improve judicial efficiency. The central message is that justice should remain continuously accessible because delays impose severe costs on millions of litigants awaiting resolution.

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Editor

Abridged from an article that appeared in The Hindu on July 13, 2026.

The same can be accessed at: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/five-crore-indians-wait-when-the-courts-take-a-break/article71214475.ece>

Message for our Readers

The 27th edition of the National Affairs Monthly Brief contains selected published news or comments on trade, regulatory, and governance issues.

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When will the India-US Trade Deal Take Effect?

The Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that the first tranche of the proposed India-US bilateral trade agreement (BTA) will come into force once the US ensures that India enjoys a comparative tariff advantage over competing countries. He said the understanding reached between the two countries was based on India securing a competitive edge over rival exporting nations.



UK-India Free Trade Agreement Comes into Force



The UK-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) came into force on July 15, 2026, marking one of the most significant bilateral trade deals in recent years. Covering trade worth £48bn in 2025, the agreement lowers trade barriers, boosts investment and business collaboration, and provides consumers in both countries with easier access to goods and services.

- [India's First Commercial Container Freight Train Reaches Nepal](#)
India Education Diary, July 29, 2026
- [Integrating Sustainability into Banks' Risk Management](#)
United Nations Environment Programme, July 22, 2026
- [South Asia: Turning Strategic Competition into Shared Prosperity](#)
Business Standard, July 18, 2026
- [IGAD Strengthens Environmental and Social Risk Management](#)
The Intergovernmental Authority on Development, July 16, 2026



[India Rises to 57th in Global Reform Rankings](#)

India climbed from 82nd to 57th in the Competere Foundation's Market Distortions Performance Index, reflecting major structural and pro-competitive reforms between 2010 and 2023. The report credits sustained efforts to reduce market distortions and boost competitiveness. Released at a CTIL-IIFT event in New Delhi, it highlighted reforms needed to sustain growth and strengthen India's global competitiveness.



Digital Competition Bill to Focus on Big Tech



The government is likely to retain the ex-ante framework in the proposed Digital Competition Bill while revising thresholds so that it primarily targets global Big Tech firms. Domestic start-ups are expected to remain outside its scope. An MCA-commissioned MDI Gurgaon study is reviewing financial, user-based and qualitative criteria for designating Systematically Significant Digital Enterprises (SSDEs).

- [India's Chip Production to Reach 13% by 2030](#)
The Hindu, July 29, 2026
- [Go Digit, Graphite India, RVNL, HUDCO Among Stocks in Focus](#)
The Hindu Business Line, July 29, 2026
- [Delaying Reforms Will Hurt Youth: Montek Singh Ahluwalia](#)
Business Standard, July 23, 2026
- [Skyroot's Vikram-1 Succeeds, Payload Results Mixed](#)
NDTV, July 23, 2026
- [Low-Cost Energy, Rising Demand Drive Aluminium Expansion](#)
The Hindu, July 03, 2026



PM Modi Marks 12 Years of Kisan Samridhi Yojana

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 31, 2026, commemorated the 12th anniversary of the Kisan Samridhi Yojana by emphasising the significance of various government initiatives aimed at supporting farmers. He praised key agricultural welfare schemes such as the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (Crop Insurance Scheme) for their role in safeguarding farmers' income and bolstering agriculture.



Rajasthan Launches Cooperative Bharat Taxi Mobility Service



Rajasthan has launched the Bharat Taxi cooperative mobility service in Jaipur as part of India's wider effort to expand cooperative-led digital transport services. The initiative aims to strengthen employment opportunities, improve last-mile connectivity and give drivers a stake in the platform through cooperative ownership. The programme is being expanded in partnership with state agencies and public service organisations across Rajasthan.

- [CCPA Fines SpiceJet ₹1 Lakh for Dark Patterns](#)
Economic Times, July 17, 2026
- [Reclaiming the Footpath](#)
Down to Earth, July 17, 2026
- [Judging Bureaucrats by Delivery](#)
Hindustan Times, July 15, 2026
- [The Governance of Better Nutrition](#)
Hindustan Times, July 14, 2026
- [Road Accidents in Rajasthan Decline After Five Years](#)
Times of India, July 12, 2026
- [Rajasthan Signs Clean Energy Pact with ISA](#)
Saur Energy, July 09, 2026

Articles

- Trans-humanism: The Silent Capture of the Human Mind
Pradeep S Mehta & Sohom Banerjee, The Asian Age, July 12, 2026
<https://cuts-ccier.org/trans-humanism-the-silent-capture-of-the-human-mind/>
- Beyond big tech: Why India's competition policy must remember traditional sectors
Ujjwal Kumar & Saharsh Panjwani, The Economic Times, July 12, 2026
<https://cuts-ccier.org/beyond-big-tech-why-indias-competition-policy-must-remember-traditional-sectors/>

Publication

- A Harmonising Bike Taxi Regulations in India: *An Evidence-Based Assessment and Suggested Pathways for Reform*
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/research-report-harmonising-bike-taxi-regulations-in-india-an-evidence-based-assessment-and-suggested-pathways-for-reform.pdf>