

## **4. Maharashtra Tops in Justice Delivery**

**Prelims:** Judiciary

**Mains:** GS-II Structure, organization and Functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary Ministries and Departments of the Government; Pressure Groups and Formal/Informal Associations and their role in the Polity.

### **Why in News?**

- According to the India Justice Report 2019, Maharashtra has topped the list in the overall first-ever ranking of Indian States on justice delivery.

### **About:**

- The India Justice Report 2019, commissioned by Tata Trusts, was prepared by groups like Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, DAKSH, Tata Institute of Social Sciences - Prayas and Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.
- The report has been prepared based on publicly available data of different government entities on the four pillars of justice delivery — police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.
- Maharashtra has topped the list of 18 large-medium States in the overall first-ever ranking of Indian States on justice delivery, followed by Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Haryana.
- In this category, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are at the bottom, while among the list of seven smaller States, Goa leads the group.

### **Highlights of the Report:**

- The report highlights the fact that even the best performing States scored less than 60% in their performance on capacity across the police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.
- The country has about 18,200 judges with about 23% sanctioned posts vacant, notes the report, adding that women are poorly represented in these pillars, constituting just 7% of the police. Prisons are over-occupied at 114%, where 68% are under trials awaiting investigation, inquiry or trial.
- Regarding budgets, most States are not able to fully utilise the funds given to them by the Centre, while the increase in spending on the police, prisons and judiciary does not keep pace with the overall increase in State expenditure, the report said.

### **Policing:**

- The study took several factors to assess the police system in the states, ranging from modernisation, inducing women, diversity, budgeting, human resource planning and infrastructure.

- On this front, the best score was achieved by Tamil Nadu - 6.49. UP received a score of 2.98, whereas Bihar got 3.77. UP fared poor in terms of budgeting, spending on police per person, vacancies and diversity.

### Prisons:

- This parameter was assessed on various factors ranging from overcrowding, inclusion of women staff, adequate human resources, budgeting, infrastructure, etc.
- Jharkhand fared the worst with a score of 3.46. It was followed by Uttarakhand (3.72), Punjab (4.35), Andhra Pradesh (4.35) and UP (4.42). Surprisingly, Bihar stood at number six with a score of 5.61. The best in this regard was Kerala with a score of 7.18.

### Judiciary:

- This parameter was assessed on availability of judges, clearance of cases, spending on judiciary, etc.
- Bihar, with a score of 2.41, fared the worst in this regard. It was followed by UP (3.7), Karnataka (3.76), Uttarakhand (4.17) and Jharkhand (4.3). Tamil Nadu again featured on the top in terms of judiciary with a score of 6.99. It was followed by Punjab (6.57), Haryana (6.23) and Maharashtra (5.96).
- On an average, Bihar saw a bleak growth in expenditure on judiciary in comparison to total spending. From 2011 to 2016, the state expenditure rose by 17.8 per cent; however, expenditure on judiciary rose by only 8 per cent.

### Legal Aid:

- The report also highlighted the importance of legal aid.
- It said that almost 80 per cent of India's 1.25-billion populations are eligible for free legal aid, but only 15 million people have availed it since 1995.

