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1 lakh cases pending in lower courts for more than 30 years

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NEW DELHI: Pendency in Indian courts is hardly breaking news, but did you know that there are more than a lakh cases in district and taluka courts pending for over 30 years? Or that just four states account for over 90% of these? These include over 67,000 criminal cases and more than 33,000 related to civil matters.

With 41,210 such cases, Uttar Pradesh leads the list and is followed by Maharashtra with 23,483, West Bengal with 14,345 and Bihar with 11,713 cases. That's a total of nearly 91,000 between just these four states. True, they are all large states, but they account for only about 42% of India's population, so it clearly is not just a function of size. Odisha (4,248) and Gujarat (2,826) are the only other states that have over a thousand cases each pending for over 30 years.

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States with highest no. of cases pending for 10 years or more

State/UT	10-20 Years	20-30 Years	Above 30 Years	Above 10 Years
Uttar Pradesh	11,71,384	2,26,482	41,210	14,39,076
Maharashtra	2,56,595	58,404	23,483	3,38,482
West Bengal	4,04,399	52,108	14,345	4,70,852
Bihar	4,79,936	76,860	11,713	5,68,509
Odisha	1,85,791	33,822	4,248	2,23,861
INDIA	28,70,776	4,89,255	1,00,267	34,60,298

Source: National Judicial Data Grid

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There are no cases with over three decades of pendency in Chandigarh, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Ladakh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim. The count is one for Uttarakhand and Puducherry, while it's less than 10 for Himachal Pradesh and Andaman & Nicobar islands.

Among large states, Haryana has the lowest number with only 14 such cases. The count is below 100 for Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Manipur and J&K. For the remaining states, the number is between 100 and 1,000.

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There are nearly 5 lakh cases (4.9 lakh) pending for 20 to 30 years and another 28.7 lakh that are pending for 10-20 years. That takes the total of cases pending for over a decade to 34.6 lakh, shows an analysis of data compiled from the National Judicial Data Grid.

The analysis shows that in Sikkim more than 99.6% of pending cases are less than five years old and among larger states, more than 90% of pending cases in Punjab, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are

less than five years old. This proportion is between 80% and 90% for Delhi, Telangana, Assam, MP, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, J&K and Gujarat. The share of less than five-year-old cases is between 60% and 70% in UP, Odisha and Bihar and slightly below 60% for West Bengal.