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AI in Indian courts: SUVAS, SUPACE and the line the judiciary has drawn

How Indian courts are using artificial intelligence for translation, research and transcription, and why judges insist that AI must assist, not decide.

Artificial intelligence has entered India's courts, carefully. The judiciary has adopted it for particular tasks and has been equally clear about what it must never do.

The tools in use

SUVAS, the Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software, was launched in 2019. It uses machine translation to render judgments from English into Indian languages, with human review. It has made thousands of Supreme Court judgments available to readers who do not work in English.

SUPACE, the Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court's Efficiency, was introduced in 2021. It helps judges and their staff by gathering relevant facts and law from the case record. It does not suggest outcomes.

Transcription tools have been used to produce real-time transcripts of oral arguments, notably in Constitution Bench hearings, and speech-to-text systems are being used in some courts to record witness depositions.

The line

Senior judges have said consistently that AI is to be used for procedural and administrative convenience, and never for the act of judging. The Chief Justice of India restated this publicly in July 2026: AI may assist, but it cannot decide.

Why the caution

- **Accuracy.** Generative tools can produce confident statements that are wrong, including case citations that do not exist.
- **Bias.** Systems trained on past data can repeat past unfairness.
- **Opacity.** A litigant is entitled to reasons from a judge, not an output no one can explain.
- **Confidentiality.** Court records contain sensitive personal information.
- **Accountability.** Judicial power is exercised by a person who answers for it.

Rules are taking shape

In July 2025 the Kerala High Court issued a policy on the use of AI tools in its district judiciary, the first of its kind in the country. In June 2026 a committee of the Supreme Court released draft regulations for the use of AI in courts for comment.

Where AI can help most

- Translation, so that people can read judgments in their own language.
- Transcription of evidence, saving judges' time.
- Sorting and grouping similar cases.
- Detecting defects in filings.
- Summarising large records for a judge who will still read what matters.

What lawyers should take from this

The court's standard is a good standard for the Bar. Use AI to work faster. Verify everything it produces. Disclose where rules require. Never hand over professional judgment.

Used this way, AI can help with the routine work that fills court time, and leave judges free to judge.

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