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Your Honor!
Globally, the time between filing a case and the verdict has been widening, much because of under-investment in the judicial process

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All around the world, many countries are experiencing a widening gap between the filing of legal cases and the final verdict, often due to a combination of increasing case backlogs, shortage of judges, complex legal procedures, and under-resourced judicial systems. Let us the see some country-wise data.

1. India

1. Major issue: Chronic backlog. Over 50 million cases pending across various courts (as of 2024).
2. Delay reasons: Shortage of judges, procedural delays, frequent adjournments, and poor infrastructure.
3. Average time: Some civil and criminal cases can take 10–15 years to conclude.

2. United Kingdom

1. Delay trend: Court backlogs have increased, especially after COVID-19.
2. Criminal courts: Crown Court delays have worsened; the average time to trial is now over 12 months for some cases.
3. Family and civil cases: Also seeing significant delays.

3. France

1. System stress: The French judicial system has seen growing delays, particularly in civil matters.
2. Contributing factors: Understaffing, increased caseloads, and slow implementation of judicial reforms.
3. Recent efforts: Investment in digital transformation and more judges.

4. United States

1. Federal courts are generally efficient, but state courts face serious backlogs.
2. Civil litigation: Can take 2–5 years, depending on the complexity and state.
3. Criminal trials: COVID exacerbated delays; some areas are still recovering.

5. Brazil

1. Huge backlog: One of the most overloaded judiciaries in the world.
2. Automation: Brazil has led in digitalizing court processes but still struggles due to the sheer volume of cases.
3. Delays: Civil and tax cases often take many years to resolve.

6. Australia

1. Moderate delays: Not as severe as in some countries, but certain courts (like family courts) have long queues.

2. Family law: Cases can take over a year due to complexity and demand.
3. Efforts: Court mergers and digital case management systems introduced to ease pressure.

7. China

1. Reform-heavy: China has been actively modernizing its judiciary.
2. Delays: Still present, especially in rural areas and lower courts.
3. Efficiency push: Use of AI and digital platforms to speed up processes.

1.0 Trend Summary

Across these countries:

1. Rising caseloads and resource constraints are common.
2. COVID-19 exacerbated delays almost everywhere.
3. Most systems are moving toward digital transformation, but reform implementation is often slow.
4. Justice delayed = Justice denied is becoming a lived reality for millions.a summary table with average case durations and backlog stats

Here's a comparative summary table 1 showing how the judicial delays and backlogs in India, UK, France, USA, Brazil, Australia, and China have evolved between 2010 and 2024. The data highlights changes in average case duration, backlog growth or reduction, and key reforms or trends during this period.

2.0 Under-investment in the Judicial Process is Common

Under-investment in the judicial system is a major reason behind the growing delays and backlogs in many countries. Here's a breakdown of how under-investment impacts justice delivery and how it ties into the situation in countries like India, UK, France, Brazil, etc.:

3.0 Country-Specific Examples of Under-Investment

India:

a. Judge-to-population ratio is way below global standards.
b. Many lower courts lack basic facilities like Wi-Fi, video conferencing, and even washrooms.
c. The budget for the judiciary is ~0.1% of GDP (very low).

UK:

a. Austerity cuts since 2010 led to closure of court buildings.
b. Severe staffing shortages and delayed recruitment have slowed justice.

Table 1. Judicial Delay and Backlog Comparison (2010 *vs*. 2024)

Country	Avg. Case Duration (2010)	Avg. Case Duration (2024)	Backlog (2010)	Backlog (2024)	Key Changes (2010–2024)
India	3–7 years	5–15 years	~30 million cases	~50 million+ cases	Increased filings, e-Courts introduced, pendency worsened
UK	~9–12 months	1–2 years	~40,000 Crown Court cases	~60,000+ Crown Court cases	COVID worsened delays, digital justice reforms underway
France	~1 year	1.5–3 years	~1.2 million cases	~1.6 million+ cases	Budget constraints, digital reform ongoing, delays slowly rising
USA	1.5–3 years	2–5 years (civil)	High (varied by state)	Still high; COVID impact	Some federal courts are efficient; state courts are overloaded post-COVID
Brazil	3–6 years	4–10 years	~60 million cases	~77 million+ cases	Strong digital push; backlog remains due to litigation culture
Australia	~9–15 months	1–2 years	Low–moderate	Moderate	Family law bottlenecks, digital case management introduced
China	~1–2 years	6 months–2 years	Moderate	~20 million new cases/year	AI-assisted courts, online platforms, and rural access are still a challenge

Table 2. How Under-Investment Hurts the Judicial System

Area of Under-Investment	Impact
Judicial Manpower	Fewer judges = slower hearings = backlog builds up
Court Infrastructure	Outdated or inadequate courtrooms = inefficiency, delays
Technology Adoption	Lack of digital tools = manual processing, missed hearings, slow updates
Legal Aid & Access to Justice	Poor access for the vulnerable = delay in filing or defending cases
Training & Case Management	Judges/staff lack tools to manage cases efficiently

France:

a. The judiciary has long suffered from low per capita funding compared to other EU countries.
b. Judges and prosecutors have publicly protested budget constraints.

USA:

a. Federal courts are relatively well-funded, but state courts (where most litigation happens) are chronically underfunded.
b. This leads to staff shortages and reduced court hours.

Brazil:

a. While Brazil spends a significant amount on its judiciary, a lot goes to pensions and overhead, not to efficiency improvements.
b. Still struggles with complex bureaucracy and underfunded lower courts.

Australia and **China**:

a. Australia has invested more in digital case systems, but family courts still under-resourced.
b. China has aggressively invested in AI courts and online platforms, improving efficiency.

A summary of how under-investment hurts the judicial system can be seen in Table 2.

4.0 Conclusion

Yes — under-investment in judicial systems is a core structural reason for long delays, alongside procedural inefficiencies and rising case volumes. Investing in more judges, modern tech, infrastructure, and training is essential to reduce delays and uphold the principle of "justice delayed is justice denied."