

Supreme Court Strength Expansion: Procedure and Judicial Impact Explained

Parliament introduced the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 to increase the sanctioned strength of apex court judges.

A statutory procedure under Article 124(1) of the Constitution empowering Parliament to increase the number of Supreme Court judges.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- Parliament introduced the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026** to address judicial pendency.
- **Article 124(1)** empowers **Parliament** to determine and increase the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges by law.
- The Bill aims to form more **Constitution Benches** to settle major legal and constitutional questions efficiently.
- Increasing judicial capacity directly addresses the heavy backlog of over **80,000** pending cases in the apex court.
- Judicial expansion requires support from **administrative reforms**, procedural updates, and court digitisation to succeed.

STATICS & SYLLABUS FOCUS

Originally in **1950**, **Article 124(1)** fixed the Supreme Court strength at 1 Chief Justice and 7 other judges (total **8**).

Parliament increased the judge strength to 10 in **1956**, 14 in **1960**, 18 in **1977**, and 26 in **1986** through legislative amendments.

In **2009**, Parliament raised the strength to **31** (30 judges + CJI) and further increased it to **34** (33 judges + CJI) in **2019**.

Article 124(2) states that every judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the **President of India**.

Supreme Court judges hold office until they attain the age of **65 years**, as per Article 124(2).

Article 145(3) mandates that a minimum of **5 judges** must sit on a Constitution Bench to decide substantial questions of law.

Supreme Court of India was inaugurated on **January 28, 1950**, replacing the Federal Court of India under **GOI Act 1935**.

REVISION FLASHCARD

Under Article 124(1), Parliament holds exclusive power to increase the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges by law.

Syllabus Relevance: High priority for TNPSC Group 1, 2, 2A & 4 under Unit 5 (Indian Polity - Judiciary & Constitutional Articles).

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