

## Livestreaming of Constitutional Bench Proceedings

For the first time, India's apex court livestreamed the three separate constitutional bench proceedings simultaneously in YouTube.

### Key facts

- More than 8 lakh people viewed the proceedings before the three Constitution Benches.
- The livestreaming was closely monitored by technical support teams of the court to ensure the smooth proceedings.
- The cases heard by these benches are the challenge to 10 per cent quota for economically weaker sections of the society, the scuffle between Maharashtra Chief Minister Shinde's faction and the Uddhav Thackeray camp over who was the "real" Shiv Sena Party and the challenge to the All India Bar Examination post enrollment for lawyers.
- This initiative aims to bring the judiciary close to the citizens living across India, especially the important hearings having constitutional significance.
- The initiative was result of the meeting of the Supreme Court Judges on September 20.
- In the future, the apex court would use a dedicated platform for livestreaming the hearings.

### Background

Swapnil Tripathi judgment of September 2018 upheld the plea demanding livestreaming of the Supreme Court proceedings. In this judgement, the apex court held that livestreaming provides the opportunity of the general public to witness the live proceedings, which is otherwise difficult due to logistical challenges and infrastructural restrictions. The court held that livestreaming of court proceedings was part of the right to access justice under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Article 21 provides the right to life and personal liberty. Live telecast of court proceedings will help realize the "open court system" which envisages a universally accessible judiciary. In the 2018 judgement, several conditions were laid out by the Supreme Court for livestreaming. The livestreaming of apex court proceedings happened for the first time in August 2022, when a ceremonial bench said farewell to the outgoing Chief Justice of India N V Ramana. The High Courts of Gujarat, Orissa, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Patna and Madhya Pradesh have been livestreaming their proceedings through their own YouTube channels since the early 2020.