

'Fast-Track Judicial Forums Compromise Justice More Than They Deliver It'.

1. Introduction

- Thesis Statement: Fast-track judicial forums prioritize speed over process, often compromising fairness and judicial independence. Without strong safeguards, swift justice risks becoming flawed justice.

2. Rationale Behind Fast-Track Judicial Forums

2.1 Case Backlogs and Delayed Justice

2.2 Public Demand for Swift Accountability

3. Procedural Shortcuts and Due Process Concerns

3.1 Limited Time for Evidence Examination

3.2 Constraints on Right to Defence

4. Quality of Judgments and Legal Soundness

4.1 Increase Risk of Judicial Errors

4.2 Weak Precedential Value

5. Selective and Politicised Use of Fast-Track Courts

5.1 Targeting of Specific Cases or Groups

5.2 Executive Influence on Judicial Process

6. Impact on Judicial Independence

6.1 Parallel Judicial Structures

6.2 Undermining Institutional Credibility

7. INlay Forward

7.1 Strengthening Regular Courts

7.2 Procedural Safeguards in Fast-Track Forums

7.3 Institutional Accountability and Oversight

8. Conclusion.

• 'Justice delayed is justice denied', yet justice rushed can be equally destructive. In response to chronic justice delays and mounting case backlogs, fast-track judicial forums have increasingly been presented as a remedy to inefficiency. These forums promise swift disposal of cases, immediate accountability and public reassurance that the law is functioning. In societies where patience with slow courts is low and demand for instant justice is high, such mechanisms appear attractive and politically convenient. However, the pursuit of speed often comes at the cost of fairness, due process and judicial independence. In the local context, the establishment of

special and fast-track courts - particularly in accountability and security related matters has been justified as a necessary to deal with complex and sensitive cases. Anti-terrorism courts and expedited accountability proceeding were introduced to bypass procedural delays of ordinary courts. While these forums succeeded in accelerating trials, they frequently relied on compressed timelines, restricted defense opportunities and limited judicial discretion. The result has been a pattern where verdicts are delivered swiftly but later challenged, suspended or overturned by higher courts due to procedural weaknesses. Moreover, fast-track forums tend to operate under intense public and political pressure, especially in high-profile cases. The environment risks converting courts into instruments of expediency rather than impartial adjudication. When justice becomes outcome-oriented rather than process-oriented, one of the foundational principles of equality before law and fair trial are compromised. Thus, instead of strengthening the justice

system, fast-track judicial forums
often expose its fragility, raising
serious questions about whether speed
truly serves justice or silently
erodes it.