

POLICE ADMINISTRATION

The army and the police, together, create peaceful conditions which are a pre-requisite to development. The army guards our country from external aggression and the police prevent and quell internal trouble. Without maintaining law and order and upholding the people's constitutional legal rights, no economic, political or social development can take place.

As the police are entrusted with this task, they are considered one of the most important of the civil service. Sometimes internal strife has escalated so much, that the army has had to be called in. The army is to be kept only as a last resort as an aid to civil authorities.

TASKS OF THE POLICE

The police are the guardian of the people and can never be far away from the public. The police is the primary force for the protection of the individual in the enjoyment of their legal rights designed to stand between the powerful and the weak to prevent oppression, disaster and crime, and to represent the cause of law and order at all times and in all places. In every court or alley, the policeman stands for good citizenship. He is a reality to comprehend and upon his impartiality, efficiency and intelligence depends the estimation in which law is held by the masses.

The police have to prevent or take precautionary measures to ensure that there is little or no scope for the commission of crime or disturbance of law and order. This profession requires a more

acute sense of anticipation and an ability to smell danger, as compared to other professions.

The police have to detect crimes, identify the guilty and apprehend them under the law. It is not uncommon and unnatural for the members of the police force (since they are so visible and are being judged all the time by the public, the politicians and their own bosses) to want to show results and achieve targets.

Another major task of the police is to arrange to prosecute the accused under the relevant provisions of the law (through state prosecutors) and send them up for trial before the court to secure their conviction.

Police is a state subject and is specified, as such, in List II-State List in the seventh schedule of the Constitution. The centre has no police. It has at its command paramilitary forces such as the CRPF, CISF, BSF and so on created by the Acts of Parliament for which Art 355 of the Constitution gives sanction. These are the armed forces of the Union meant to be deployed in a state only in aid of civil power for the purpose of restoring and presenting public order. They have no regular police duties nor does the Indian Police Act 1861 apply to them.

Every state has a police force supervised by the home ministers. The superintendent of police and above, are members of the

Indian Police Service, the rest of the posts are manned by members of the State Police Force recruited by the State Public Service Commission. In big cities there is a police commissioner responsible to the police hierarchy above him but, in districts, the SP functions under the control and supervision of the DC and DM. In each district there are police stations manned by an Inspector or a Sub-Inspector, assisted by a head constable and constables under them. State Armed Police Battalions and District Armed Reserve Police are also there to tackle grave and critical situations.

It is still the Indian Police Act of 1861, which is in force. The ARC (1966) opined that there has been no change in the role of the police since 1861. The National Police Commission set up by the Government of India in 1977 concurred that the basic character of the police is not very different now from then (British Raj), both in the minds of the administration as well as of the public, and this is one of the major areas requiring urgent attention.

The National Police Commission First Report 1979 pointed out that 'the basic and fundamental problem regarding the police today is how to make them function as an efficient and impartial law enforcement agency fully motivated and guided by the objectives of service to the public at large, upholding the Constitutional rights and liberty of the people.'

A sense of security both for the public and the people has to be

created. The police have to be sensitised to community feelings, and the needs and reactions of the public.

The Rule of Law requires police officers to do their work within the framework of the law and with objectivity. Quite often, this is thwarted by political forces.

As a law enforcement agency, the police system even from ancient times has always carried with it the scope for malafide exercise of powers and consequent corruptions.

NATURE OF POLICE DUTIES IN RECENT TIMES

- Provision of security to a very large number of persons who are VIPs and vulnerable, watching over land sites under dispute, resolving disturbances in educational institutions, traffic, hospitals, and other such places and in communal conflicts - all these form present work.
- The police is part of the social and legal system, the penal institutions and voluntary organisations. At higher levels, many DG and IG have to be accommodated and so they look after public enterprises relating to handicrafts and other corporations not normally within the realm of police work.
- With increasing awareness on the part of people, more and more crimes against women and against members of the SCs and STs are being brought to notice.

- Political agitations such as processions, satyagrahas and bandhs require police presence.
- Several 'new' offences like smuggling and dealing in drugs are also becoming widespread.
- Every religion has many festivals. Muslim and Hindu festivals coincide quite often and the police have to be vigilant and alert to prevent communal trouble.

REMEDIAL MEASURES

- Qualifications, recruitment, training and scales of pay in lower cadres are out-dated. They need review and revision in view of vast changes in the complexion of work they have to do and meeting the new challenges of terrorism, subversion, insurgency, kidnapping, gender violence and economic offences.
- Their role, duties, powers and responsibilities have to be redefined from what they were when the Act of 1861 was passed.
- Ready and willing cooperation from the public is not there, so measures are necessary for institutional arrangements to make this possible as well as training to change and modernise the outlook of the police to make it more friendly.
- Development of individuals and career planning are sadly neglected, a good personnel policy is needed for the police.

- Political interference in promotions, postings and transfers is at its height in most states in India. These have to be minimised if they cannot be altogether eliminated. Political patronage or lack of it has adversely affected police morale, accountability and culture .
- We now have many more laws than when we attained independence and these have to be implemented. But in this , the public must cooperate with the police. Difficult areas such as bride-burning, dowry, rape and atrocities against SCs require sensitive handling as the part of policemen. Sensitivity to changes in society is a must for inclusion in training for all levels of the police force.
- The punishment and reward system must be reviewed.

"If there is to be a real reform, there is a crying need for a thorough and radical overhaul of its structure and organisation and for a realistic assessment and acceptance of the norms which should govern their status and emoluments."