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Lecture-15



The current structure of the police system in India

After 1860 recruitment of senior police officers was done in two ways- first, by the appointment of officers from the British Army, and second, by nomination from amongst younger sons of landed gentry in the UK. Both of these ways were abolished in 1893. Recruitment of officers now was done through a combined competitive exam held in London which only Europeans could take. Later it was opened for Indians too. Today recruitment made through Combined Civil Services Examination is conducted annually by the Union Public Service Commission. Article 312 of the Constitution of India mentions about the All India Services. Probationers recruited undergo very tough basic training in physical academics, arms, and other activities.

According to the Constitution, the police force is a state subject. States draw rules, regulations and guidelines for the police in the state police manual. The organization structure of police forces in India is fairly uniform in all the states throughout the country. The head of the police force in a state is called the Director-General of Police (DGP). A state is further divided into several zones, ranges, and districts. The district force is headed by an officer of the rank of Superintendent of Police(SP). Group of districts forms a range which is headed by an officer of the rank Deputy Inspector General of Police(DIG). Zones are composed of two or more ranges headed by an officer of the rank Inspector General of Police(IG). Districts are further subdivided into sub-divisions like circles and police stations which are headed by officers of different ranks. The district police are also divided into two branches—the civil police and the armed police, where the former primarily controls crime, and the latter deals with law and order situations and is also the reserved police of the district kept to meet an emergency situation.

Influence of past police system on the present

The Indian Police system and structure as presently organized are essentially based on an Act 131 years old, the Police Act of 1861. The working of the police has been analyzed twice at an All India level within a period of 90 years. First was the Indian Commission of 1902-03 during the British regime and second was in 1977 by the National Police Commission. They found police far from efficient, defective in training and organization, lacking in public relations, welfare measures, machinery for redressal of grievances, etc. and that it was generally regarded as corrupt and oppressive. Even after independence, we were devoid of a better police administration system. There is still a requirement for a reorientation of attitude and approach on the part of the police.

Conclusion

The literature on the Indian police system is meagre. The role of the police has evolved continuously and still needs change. There is an urgent need to transform it into a professional service rather than one who is simply following the orders of the authority unmindfully. The training, ethics, conduct in public, public dealing mannerisms, criminal procedure codes, power, and freedom of police are certain aspects of the police department that need a complete overhaul. The image that has been carried by the police from the British era of a paan chewing, discourteous, rude, aggressive and bully figure in khaki needs to be changed. In fact, the real situation of the police needs to be mended, like that of being underpaid, understaffed, overworked, stressed, demoralized, inadequately trained and equipped, subjected to political interference, and so on.

Also, in a free society people have a right to know how they are being protected by the police. The cooperation of the public is very important for the police to work effectively which is determined by the degree of trust and respect enjoyed by the police. Police must realize that with changing times its role in society has undergone a sea of changes. Conflict resolution and rendering assistance to distress are demanding their time and attention more than dealing with crime and criminals. If the duty has changed, so should the working and conduct of police to garner the lost faith, trust, and cooperation of the very people for whom the police always stand determined and dedicated to protecting.