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Police System: An Analysis of their Powers and Functions with Special Reference to Police Reforms

*Dr. Vikash Agrawal **
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Introduction: Police are one of the organ and functionaries of the Criminal Justice System. In India police primarily belong to the State List of the Constitution¹ and, therefore, police, policing and various police matters basically fall into the jurisdiction of the respective State governments. Police organizations are identified by the name of the State and even their nomenclatures are given after the names of the respective States, i.e. Rajasthan Police, Assam Police, Kerala Police etc.² There is no concept of federal police in India, though, the Central Government maintains various Central Police Organization (CPO). The CPO's are mostly Para-military in nature. The CPO's are assigned specific nature of duties which are peculiar and specific to their operations and functioning. The CPOs do not discharge duties of civil police, but they help and assist the State Governments in exceptional cases.³ The Indian Police Act, 1861 is the current basic governing instrument of the Indian Police Force. Section-3 of this Act also provides that the superintendence of the police throughout a general police-district shall vest in and shall be exercised by the State Government to which such district is subordinate.⁴ Indian Police Act lays down the structure and functions of the police department in the country.

Hierarchy of Police: State Police Organizations in India are structurally organized into various formations. The structural formation of any State Police in India is as follows:

State
↓
Zone
↓
Range
↓

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