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ZERO FIR AND E-FIR

EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH CIVIL JUSTICE SYSTEM

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Abstract: The process of getting criminal justice in India, starts with the process of filing an FIR, an important procedural step under criminal law, traditionally posed as a practical barrier for the victims. The shift from a regular FIR to Zero FIR and E-FIR, shows that a victim-centric approach has been taken up, so as to ensure easy access of criminal justice in modern India. The concept of Zero FIR, was so introduced in this nation, when it felt that an FIR must be filed irrespective of the territorial jurisdiction, most importantly in cases of sexual offences, interstate crimes and situations demanding immediate action by the administrative authorities. Whereas, the concept of E-FIR ensured that the process of demanding justice, not only starts from the court itself, but also by allowing complaints to be lodged online. This type of Fir addresses challenges like fear to approach the police station, time constraints etc. Together, Zero FIR and E-FIR signify a move towards easy justice acquiring process, and technical integration in criminal field, thereby ensuring transparency and accountability in criminal law enforcement.

Keywords: Criminal Justice, Zero FIR, E-FIR, Transparency, Accountability, Interstate Crimes.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, the main instrument to kick start the criminal proceedings against an accused starts with the **First Information Report (FIR)**, a fundamental document to start the investigation when a crime has been committed. This document consists of all the necessary information, when a cognizable offence has been committed, which the police itself records when a victim comes to the police station, contending that he/she has suffered a crime and has become a victim. This document is only filed by the police, when an offence of such a nature has been committed that disturbed the society at large, and such are only cognizable offences. Usually, an FIR needs to be filed at such a police station, within territorial jurisdiction the crime was committed. But this procedural requirement has faced brutal backlash in the recent years, due to its strict dependence upon the territorial jurisdiction; a rule usually followed in civil law. This backlash was the consequence of a major criminal offence, which was committed in the heart of the nation in 2012, which was, the **NIRBHAYA RAPE CASE (2012)** which shook the nation and resulted in year long riots and fight for justice. Before this case, police often used to refuse to file an FIR, if the offence was committed outside their "Territorial Jurisdiction". This made the victims suffer as sometimes, their crucial evidence was tampered and time and money was wasted. Thus, the **Justice Verma Committee** was instituted in 2013, so that it could suggest some constitutional-friendly amendments to the criminal law after the 2012 incident.

It recommended that, every police station across India must register an FIR, irrespective of the fact that where the offence was committed, so that an immediate action can be taken. (Ghosh. S, 2014). It was also realised that situations where a sexual offence or grievous crime has been committed, instant registration of FIR is necessary, so that the criminal procedure like, investigation and process of collection of evidence can be started. Another fact, which was realised that, our Indian Jurisprudence is based upon the concept that, **“Justice delayed, is Justice denied”**, this disadvantages the victim, as these are the ones who have actually faced the harm arising out of the offence, but are still denied justice due to such criminal procedural constraints. Thus, it was realised by the committee that, this concept of Zero-FIR, must replace the traditional process of filing an FIR, as **“It is in the interest of the state that, matters should come to an end”**. This method allows the victims to file an FIR, at any police station, without thinking about the problem of territorial jurisdiction, thereby ensuring that, the victim does not face any sort of inconvenience or the investigation is interfered with. (Raj Vibhuti Narain, 2014). Zero FIR simplifies the process of FIR filing, minimising bureaucratic obstacles and issues related to jurisdiction. The introduction of the concept of Zero FIR shows that, a change in society also, demands a change in the Judiciary and Legislations, especially the Criminal Justice System. Whereas, the introduction of the concept of **E-FIR** in the Criminal Justice System, shows a need and an attempt to modernise the process of accessing justice to victims by replacing the traditional procedure of FIR filing as done in the police stations since decades in India. This method has actually been advantageous to women, as they can file an FIR against anybody at their home without having any fear to go to the police station, especially at night. Apart from the safety, E-FIR has helped specially-abled people to lodge their FIR'S at home, despite of their physical deformities. Such a tool can really advantage the society and make them believe that, their government is actually doing something for them. The objective of E-FIR, was to streamline the process of FIR registration and make it accessible for all citizens. (Gupta A., et al., 2019). Thus, together these two newly introduced tools of criminal justice system, will be able to help the people of this country to demand what they need and desire, without any fear of being delayed in getting access to justice, which is their Fundamental Right, as enshrined in the Constitution of India.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the Print and Electronic Media came into being, that one topic, which has always been ‘Popular’, that is; **Police Excesses and their Inactions**, because these are those administrative bodies, who have the duty to maintain public peace in their hands, but still they are the ones who disturb and destroy it. It is rightly said that the wrongs done by failure to act by those who are capable and in position, is much larger than the excesses committed. (Raghavan R.K., 2016). Since FIR, is the first crucial step of the starting of the criminal procedure system, it is thus important that, the concepts introduced by our judiciary in the criminal law, that is, Zero FIR and E-FIR, must be carefully understood. It is through these two tools that, accessibility, transparency and technological integration can be ensured in the modern law arena, as significant procedural innovations. These procedures can help the young law students and the aspiring lawyers, to understand the importance of FIR, as a tool to give justice to the victims, which is why it has been included in our criminal procedural law, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, under section 173. The importance of the concept of Zero FIR, was significantly upheld in **State of A.P v. Punati Ramulu & Ors**, (1993), where the court held that, any lack of territorial jurisdiction, should not prevent the recording of a cognizable offence and forwarding the same to the police station, having jurisdiction over the area, where the crime was committed. **Ghosh S. in “Justice Verma Committee and Legal Reform: Missed Opportunities ?” NUJS Law Review**, (2014) mentioned that, the Justice Verma Committee, after acknowledging the challenges suffered by the victims, especially in sexual offences, while filing complaints, suggested that, FIR's should be recorded immediately and strictly without giving importance to territorial jurisdiction. Thus, when this concept of Zero FIR, was finally introduced in **Section 173 of BNSS, 2023**, “it granted legal recognition to Zero FIR, rather than relying on the decisions or the judgments of the courts only”, **Sangeeta Bansal in “Zero FIR: A Tool for Access to Justice for Women”, International Journal of Law and Legal Jurisprudence**

Studies. (2017) Thus, the Legislature provided two modes of filing an FIR, that is, either orally, which will be reduced in writing and read over to the victim and signed by the same or, by electronic communication, where the concept of E-FIR came into being. But, where a person is refused by a police officer to record the information, the victim can send the information to the Superintendent of Police, by a post or in writing, who if satisfied by the information, can either investigate himself or direct the investigation to any police officer subordinate to him, if still the filing of the FIR fails, the victim can directly file a complaint to the Magistrate, argued by **Ruchi Tripathi “E-FIR in India: A Tool for Easy Access to Justice”, International Journal of Law Management & Humanities** (2021). Such kind of FIR's are tagged as “ZERO”, so as to indicate a transfer of jurisdiction. The complaint receives a complimentary copy without delay, **Neha Sharma in “E-FIR and Access to Criminal Justice in the Digital Era”** (2022). Now, when such an FIR is recorded electronically, it is called an **E-FIR**. The need for the introduction of this tool was, because India is moving towards the era of digitalization, after the launch of the campaign “Digital India”. This E-FIR, can be filed by the victim or by anyone on his/her behalf by using many methods, such as, **Smart FIR**, where the E-FIR data is secured through Blockchain within smart cities, this avoids the false registration of the E-FIR and provides integrity to the criminal justice system, **A. Perez Martinez, “Privacy in Smart Cities- A case study of Smart Public Parking”, Conf. Pervasive Embedded Computing and Commun** (2013). Another method is the, E-FIR, through Consortium Blockchain, which was introduced, while keeping in mind the fact that, how people face difficulties while filing an FIR as it wastes their time and their money, **T.T.A. Dinh, “Un-tangling Blockchain: A Data Processing View of Blockchain Systems”, in IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering** (2018). Thus, it can be apprehended that, E-FIR, can be a feasible tool for filing an FIR, so as to provide ease to the victims as such FIR's can be filed anywhere at anytime in India, can reduce the crime percentage in India and increases the knowledge of our current population. Also, it is an online facility which can be very useful for our current generation. While there are literatures, journals, essays and books written on both Zero and E-FIR, but still very limited attention is given to their implementation under the newly introduced Criminal Procedural Law. It has been very well said that, “**Where there is a right, there is a remedy**”, but where the right has not been established or is in practice very well, it is not possible that people will get a remedy out of it. This failure in the implementation of the law, may lead to, societal consequences, where the law is unable to provide justice. If such a law is not strictly imposed, then it will not be able to reduce the crime rate, this will disturb the public peace and tranquility. Citizens will lose their faith in the judiciary, and will not be able to provide accountability to the citizens, which is of utmost importance in a democratic country like India. Lastly, ineffective implementation of the law, will lead to justice for some and injustice for others, which can't happen in a country like India, whose foundation is based upon **Article 14**, that is, **Equality before Law**. Thus, it becomes important for the Judiciary to fill in this lacuna and ensure that, these two tools, that is, **Zero FIR and E-FIR**, are implemented properly in the Criminal Justice System.

III. ORIGIN OF ZERO FIR

The origin of Zero FIR came into being through a landmark judgment in the case of **Satvinder Kaur v. State** (1999), where the Supreme Court looked into the matter of Territorial restraints in the filing of an FIR, where it clearly adjudged that, the police must file an FIR without giving regard to jurisdiction, because such an FIR would be later transferred to the appropriate authority. This step is followed so that, the rights of the victim can be upheld. That is how Zero FIR came into existence through this significant precedent. Initially, the recommendation for the formation of an FIR, was given by the **Justice Verma Committee**, which advised that FIR'S should be immediately recorded without giving importance to the concept of territorial jurisdiction. In the matter of **Ramesh Kumari v. State**, (2006), the Supreme Court focused on the importance of FIR filing in cognizable offences. It realized that, police cannot start the investigation without an FIR, which is why it is vital that an FIR, must be lodged only after an offence has been committed to ensure the validity of the complaint filed by the victim and if, it lacks the territorial jurisdiction then, a serious question arises whether the complaint was filed in good faith or not? Thus, the Delhi High Court adjudged that, when the police deals with a cognizable offence, then they must document an FIR under Section 154 of CrPc and if, later found that,

the offence was committed outside the jurisdiction of the station, then they shall sent it to the appropriate police station as a ‘ZERO FIR’. In, **Lalita Kumari v. Govt of UP** (2014) , it was held that, it is essential to record an FIR when the information reveals the occurrence of a cognizable offence. The Bombay High Court, held in **Kirti Vashisht v. State & Ors** (2019) , that, an investigation can be conducted in a cognizable offence by a police officer, if committed within the geographical limits of the police station. If the officer in-charge of the police station, finds sufficient reasons to transfer the case to the magistrate, having the cognizance, then it must do it accordingly. If the crime took place outside the territorial limits, the FIR must be forwarded to the appropriate police station. But, this does not mean that, the police officer can refuse to file the FIR of the victim.

IV. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO FILE A ZERO FIR

- A Victim
- A Family member
- A Relative
- Any individual having the knowledge or information about the commission of the crime, on the behalf of the victim, provided that the offence must be of a cognizable nature only.

V. OBJECTIVES OF ZERO FIR

- Zero FIR, ensures immediate registration of FIR, thereby ensuring instant investigations and avoidance of tampering of evidence.
- Zero FIR’s importance lies in the convenience and comfort of the victim, so as to avoid delays to them.
- It is a feasible tool for reducing red tape and jurisdictional problems.
- It ensures enhancement of fairness in criminal procedure, by allowing victims to report crimes or complaints without thinking about the place/jurisdiction where the offence was committed.
- Simplifies the criminal process and ensures safety of the victim. (2022)

VI. HOW THE CONCEPT OF ZERO FIR, TURNED INTO A PROVISION UNDER CRIMINAL LAW

We all very well know that, the case of **Mukesh & Anr v. State for NCT Delhi** (2017), led to the introduction of the concept of Zero FIR as a procedure under the criminal law. This was so introduced when, the Justice Verma Committee was of the opinion that, victims must be given an opportunity to get their complaints registered when suffered a cognizable offence without any delay, as the citizens of the country, regardless of the place where the offence was committed. Later, in the case of **Mohd. Akhtar v. State of Jammu Kashmir** (2018), where a girl of 8 years of age, was brutally raped by a gang and then killed. In this matter, the family of the victim suffered severely in filing a formal complaint, which in return lead to a delay in the inquiry process, thereby making the victim’s family suffer, who initially did no wrong, rather suffered the wrong. Also, in **Arnab Ranjan Goswami v. Govt. of Maharashtra** (2020), it was seen that, how the Mumbai police acted negligent to register the FIR, despite the fact that, an architect committed suicide. Thus, the Supreme Court held that, it is the legal obligation of the police officers, as an administrative authority to file the FIR, without causing any delay to the victim. If still, the victim will suffer such form of a harm or delay, then the police will have to face the legal repercussions. In all these judgments, the Supreme Court or the High Court, only repeated the same thing that, the FIR will be filed without any delay, and there is a reason to it, which is that, the Judiciary wants to make such administrative authorities more and more accountable towards the citizens, as the central approach followed in a democracy is that, “The government is not the master, but

the servant of the people”, because the whole idea is based on, “Popular Sovereignty”, where the power ultimately lies with the “People”.

VII. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PROVISIONS OF CRPC AND BNSS OVER ZERO FIR

PROVISION	CRPC 1973	BNSS 2023
Section for registration of FIR	Section 154	Section 173(1)
Zero FIR	Only through SC/HC	Strict Statutory Mandate
Electronic Filing	Not provided	E-FIR within 3 days
Preliminary Inquiry	Usually not allowed	Mandatory 14 day period for offences punishable with 3-7 year imprisonment (2019)

VIII. CHALLENGES WITH ZERO FIR

- **LACK OF AWARENESS AND TRAINING-** It is said that “Ignorance of law, is no excuse”, but when the people at large are not aware about the newly introduced law, then this maxim cannot function at all. Also, awareness should not be given only to the society but also to the police officials, who have to file this FIR. Thus, proper training must be given to them also, so as to avoid mistakes in the recording of the complaint.
- **ISSUE OF FALSE REPORTING OF OFFENCES** - Since these kind of FIR’s can be filed at any police station, at times there are people, who misuse this procedure in the name of fun or to cause harm to another person’s reputation. This leads to a loss of trust in the eyes of the police officer, who have the duty to record the grievance of the victim, because of which there are times, when the victims are refused to get their FIR filed. (2013).
- **DISTURBANCE DUE TO JURISDICTION-** Even if such FIR’s can be filed at any police station, conflicts may arise between police officers, as to who will conduct the investigation, this further causes delays, or at times the case gets completely abandoned. (2021)
- **INEFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION-** Introducing a law, so as to satisfy the needs of the society cannot itself solve their problems. The law must be established properly, so that people can enjoy their remedies out of it. Till the time the law will not be in proper implementation, the people cannot protect themselves out of it. If the provisions related to Zero-FIR, are implemented properly, then it would lead to proper transfer of the FIR’s, and will improve the rights of the victims. If proper monitoring will be ensured, then it would avoid the misuse of the provision and will avoid the violation of the law.

IX. ORIGIN OF E-FIR

The traditional criminal justice system, allows the victim to file an FIR, under **Section 154** of the **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973**, physically at the police station. But there has been a change to this provision, due to the technological advancement and digitisation in governance in the **21st century**. This was the result of the recommendation given by the **22nd Law Commission of India** (2020), which was headed by **Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi**, who was of the opinion that, there must be an amendment introduced to **Section 154** of the **CRPC, 1973**, as the old provision under CRPC, was slow, inconvenient and inaccessible for the citizens and the society as a whole (2019). After the launch of the **National E- Governance Plan (NeGP)** in **2006**, the Indian Government wanted to introduce a considerable change in the society, by making the public services more accessible to the citizens, apart from making them transparent and efficient. This change in the public services, wanted to be introduced through various digital platforms. The reason for the same was, that as the nature of the crime evolved with the modernity in the society, which is why cybercrime, online frauds and phishing was on the rise, the government thought that, it would be necessary for the criminal justice system to evolve technologically, so that it does not remain old-fashioned and inefficient towards the need of the society. Before the introduction of this concept, the common people including the victims, raised their concern regarding their fear to approach the police station, either late at night, or when they are far away from the police station. Apart from this reason, the problem of social stigma, distance and lack of time also disturbed the convenience of the victims or their family members, in cases of vehicle theft, cyber offences etc. Thus, the government, especially the Legislature and the Judiciary, felt it right, to introduce a new mode of filing of FIR, that is through the electronic mode and thus, E-FIR became a citizen-friendly mechanism, after a judgment was passed in the landmark case of, **Lalita Kumari v. Govt. of Uttar Pradesh** (2014). Therefore, the origin of FIR is not only technological, but is also connected to the process of access to justice. E-FIR, shows a shift from rigid procedural model to a model which is, more responsive and makes the criminal justice system more digitally empowered.

X. STATUS OF E-FIR UNDER CRIME AND CRIMINAL TRACKING NETWORK SYSTEMS (CCTNS)

The **CCTNS project** commenced by the **National Crime Record Bureau**, which implemented the registration of E-FIR, was introduced in 8 states. These 8 states allow the registration of E-FIR, in certain specific offences (2023) –

- **Delhi**- Property Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft
- **Gujarat**- Mobile and Vehicle Theft
- **Karnataka**- Stolen Vehicles
- **Madhya Pradesh**- Vehicle Theft up to 15 lakh, General Theft up to 1 lakh
- **Rajasthan**- Vehicle Theft
- **Uttar Pradesh**- in cases where the accused is unknown
- **Uttarakhand**- in cases where the accused is unknown
- **Odisha**- Motor Vehicle Theft
- An E-FIR can be lodged under the **following situations** :-
 - When the accused is unknown
 - In cases of Vehicle Theft, the vehicle must not be used for a crime. The complaint must give a mandatory self-certification of the same.
 - The vehicle should not have been recovered till the filing of the FIR is incomplete. The complaint must give a self certification of the same also.
 - There must be no injury

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT

- Under **Section 154 of CrPc**, in a case where if the accused is **unknown**, the registration of FIR must be allowed, in a cognizable offence.
- If the accused is **known**, the registration of FIR may be allowed in cognizable offences, as an initial, temporary step, where the punishment under the criminal law or any other law, is more than 3 years.
- If the working of the E-FIR turns out to be **effective**, the states may on their discretion, expand the list of the offences for which an E-FIR, could be registered in the future.
- In all **Non-Cognizable offences**, the registration of E-FIR, should be allowed under **Section 155 of CrPc**.
- The verification of the complainant or the informant was recommended to be done using online or online-authentication mode.
- A minimum punishment of either imprisonment or fine should be given, if a false registration of E-FIR has been done.

It was recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee, that the registration of such E-FIR's, must be allowed through special or specific modes regulated or controlled by the state to avoid the multiplicity of such E-FIR's or other logistical challenges.

XII. WHO ALL CAN FILE AN E-FIR

- Victim of the offence
- Relative or friend of the victim
- Witness
- Any person having the knowledge of the offence

XIII. OBJECTIVES OF E-FIR

- To make the criminal justice system more accessible, especially for the vulnerable classes of the society like, aged, women, children and physically disabled.
- Saves time and makes the process of filing of the FIR, also convenient.
- It ensures paperless functioning and transparency in the criminal legal system.
- It ensures speedy disposal of the cases, when FIR's are filed on time without delay.
- When FIR's are not filed due to the hesitation of the police officers, the victims can still file an FIR, without depending upon the police officers.
- It is a victim-friendly approach, which focuses on the victim and not upon the administrative authorities or the government. (Goel, A (2025))

XIV. HOW THE CONCEPT OF E-FIR TURNED INTO A PROVISION UNDER CRIMINAL LAW

According to **Section 173(1)(ii) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, every information regarding the commission of a cognizable offence, may be given through electronic communication and be recorded, with the mandatory need to be signed within three days. This provision, was so introduced so that, fraudulent complaints can be avoided. That is because, the concept of E-FIR, is designed so that, the integrity of the victim could be protected. This raises a question, that is, **“Whether the information disclosing the commission of a cognizable offence, ends up in the diary entry at last ?** Now there can be two answers to this question- **Firstly**, if the victim does not sign the FIR within three days, then that means, the information of the cognizable offence will now be mentioned in the diary entry, which means that, no cognizance will be taken, no investigation and no justice to the victim. But, the **second** answer to this question, could contradict the first answer, as it was rightfully held in **Lalita Kumari v. Govt. of UP, (2014)**, where it was held that, registration of FIR, is the first step towards the process of access to justice and must not be denied, particularly on the grounds of territorial jurisdiction. It is the duty of the police officers to file an FIR without preliminary inquiry, when a cognizable offence has been committed. One of the very first judgments, which lead to the implementation of this concept of E- FIR was, **Tajinder Singh & Another v. Union of India (2019)**, it was contended by the court that, even before the introduction of the new BNSS law, E-FIR’S were already allowed in offences like, motor vehicle theft. Usage of digital methods like, OTP, or IP address tracking, show a proper record of the complaint, and can be deemed to be a reliable evidence, like the physical signature, as it can be properly stored. The court gave a simple reasoning that, in the matter of E-FIR’s, if the state was already successful, without the need to fulfill the condition of physically sign the FIR, within 3 days, then this newly introduced BNSS provision, will not be treated as a strict condition, that cancels the FIR automatically. If the victim does not sign the FIR, within 3 days, then this delay might affect the evidentiary value of the statement of the victim, or even lead to its misuse. But that does not mean that, the police officers are relieved off their duty to conduct the investigation. When the **Malimath Committee (2016)**, considered the sexual violence complaints of the victims, especially the women, it found that, the police officers themselves handle the complaints indifferently and are also harassed, when such FIR’s are filed physically in the police station. Thus, it came to the opinion that, a tool like E-FIR, can reduce the need of the women to go to the male police officers, to physically file the FIR, without thinking about the safety concerns. Thus, E-FIR is a useful mechanism to ease the process of filing of FIR, so that it could be accessible for the whole society. But, the introduction of this concept does not mean that, it has been universally implemented. Introduction of law or any provision, is not sufficient, it must be implemented strictly, so that, out of that right the citizens could enjoy their remedy. For this, the Judiciary must ensure to interpret the laws properly, as it has been already introduced and implemented by the Legislature and the Judiciary.

XV. CHALLENGES TO E-FIR

- **DIGITAL DIVISION** - since our society is divided into two, that is, Urban and Poor, it does not mean that, everybody will have electronic gadgets like phones and laptops. Without which, the filing of an E-FIR, is completely impossible.
- **NARROW SCOPE OF OFFENCES** - E-FIR, is only allowed for specific offences like motor vehicle theft. These are petty offences, for which E-FIR is important but not completely, as for serious offences like murder or rape, it should be allowed too.
- **PROBLEM OF SITE CRASH OR TECHNICAL GLITCHES** - poor internet connectivity or failure in getting the OTP as a victim, who is filing the E-FIR, can cause delay to them and would deny their right to report the crime

- **ISSUE OF DATA PRIVACY AND CYBERSECURITY**- while filing an FIR, victims need to give their personal information like, name, address, email, phone number etc.
- **LACK OF AWARENESS** - since the defense of “**Ignorance of Law**”, cannot be taken by the society, that means it is the duty of the citizens to have the knowledge of the newly introduced or already existing laws. But, when the law itself has not been told to the public properly, then its of no use, so that the victims could use their remedy (2023).

XVI. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

The newly introduced criminal procedural law, **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, which replaced the **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973**, was introduced so that, the criminal procedure could be modernized. This modernization led to the introduction of two important tools of criminal law, that is, **Zero FIR and E-FIR**, that is because, these tools have the power to enhance the accessibility, and accountability in the criminal field. These types of FIR's provide the victims with an opportunity to file the FIR either orally or electronically. This is a progressive shift from **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973**.

Firstly, the concept of **Zero-FIR**, gives an opportunity to the victim to file an FIR, at any police station, irrespective of the territorial jurisdiction. This tool is victim-centric in nature, as it has been decided through various judgments that, no matter what, the police officers cannot deny to file the FIR, where the delay in deciding the jurisdiction would tamper the evidence and would cause prejudice to the investigation.

Secondly, the tool of **E-FIR**, provides the protection to the victims and a way to file their FIR at home, so as to ensure their convenience. Apart from physically going to the police station, the victims can also avoid going to the court physically and can check the status of their case online. To improve the relation between the police and common man, the aggrieved can directly approach the higher authority. Thus, it can be said that, both types of FIR ensure that, genuine complaints of the victims are not rejected, merely on the ground of territorial jurisdiction or technicalities. They both are the tools of such a nature, which have the power to completely change the criminal justice system, by ensuring convenience, transparency and fair justice to the victims. When such remedies are introduced in the Indian legal system, it ensures that the citizens are heard, thereby ensuring public peace.

To ensure the effective filing of Zero-FIR's, it is important that the police stations and the police officers are properly trained. They must have adequate knowledge and skills, as to how to file the Zero-FIR, how to handle it, how to add each and every material information, regarding the offence and only file the same, when they are sure that, the offence was actually committed and there is no chance of fraud. Plus, SHO's must make sure that, the victim is informed about the FIR, to the appropriate police station, without any delay, through electronic means or others, but the station must have the jurisdiction. The SHO's must be made learn about accountability, when there has been a failure in the registration of FIR and an action will be taken against him. The SHO's must ensure that, the identity of the victim is not disclosed at all, who has suffered an offence under Section 64-71 of BNS, 2023. The transfer of the cases must be ensured properly, for which the government must establish a proper mechanism, so that these cases can go to the appropriate court, in whose jurisdiction the crime was committed, without any hassle.

(Goel, D (2021)).

Establishment of kiosks like “Digital Sahyog”, at every police station and post offices, will be a remarkable step in criminal field. Inclusivity will increase if, voice based language interfaces are introduced on online portals. A mandatory timeline in SOP’s must be fixed, for example, the acknowledgement of FIR must be immediate, the transfer of a zero FIR, must be done in 24 hours or the process of preliminary inquiry must be completed within 14 days or so.

As far as E-FIR’s are concerned, an e-complaint register must be maintained at the police station at all times, which will include the information of all E-FIR’s filed at the police station. If the victim does not appear at the police station for signing his/her complaint, then the SHO, has the duty to make a GD entry (2021). The portal must be properly established, so as to avoid site crashes. Judicial vigilance is equally important, to make sure that, the discretionary power “**May**”, mentioned in **Section 173(3) of BNSS, 2023**, is not misused and to equally protect the rights of the victims, who are the people actually demanding justice, through these tools of criminal procedure. Because at the end of the day, the ultimate goal of India is, to ensure a full-fledged e-justice ecosystem, as India is in the process of becoming “**DIGITAL INDIA**”. (2023)

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