

The Quest for Institutional Independence to Advance Police Pluralism in Ethiopia

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Abstract : The primary objective of this study is to report the tributes that are significantly impeding the Ethiopian police's ability to provide quality services to the people. Policing in Ethiopia started in the medieval period. However, modern policing was introduced instead of vigilantism in the early 1940s. The progress counted since the date police became modernized is, however, under contention when viewed from the standpoint of officers' development and technologies in the 21st century. The police in Ethiopia are suffering a lot to be set free from any form of political interference by the government and to be loyal to impartiality, equity, and justice in enforcing the law. Moreover, the institutional competence of the police in Ethiopia is currently losing its power derived from the constitution as a legitimate enforcement agency due to the country's political landscape encouraging ethnic-based politics. According to studies, the impact of ethnic politics has been a significant challenge for police in controlling conflicts between two ethnic groups. The study used qualitative techniques and data was gathered from key informants selected purposely. The findings indicate that governments in the past decades were skeptical about establishing a constitutional police force in the country. This has certainly been one of the challenges of pluralizing the police: building police-community relations based on trust. The study conducted to uncover the obstructions has finally reported that the government's commitment to form a non-partisan, functionally decentralized, and operationally demilitarized police force is too minimal and appalling. They mainly intend to formulate the missions of the police in accordance with their interests and political will to remain in power. It, therefore, reminds the policymakers, law enforcement officials, and the government in power to revise its policies and working procedures already operational to strengthen the police in Ethiopia based on public participation and engagement.

Keywords : community, constitution, Ethiopia, law enforcement

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