Zero FIR

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Why in News?

Zero FIR lodged by the West Bengal police in the killing of a migrant worker in Odisha.

- **FIR –** FIR primarily stands for First Information Report, a crucial document in the Indian legal system that's the first written record of a cognizable offence, filed with the police, initiating a criminal investigation.

  Cognizable offence is a serious crime where police can arrest without a warrant

- It's lodged by the victim or witness at the police station and details the crime, date, place, and involved parties, enabling the justice process to begin.
- The term First Information Report (FIR) is ***not defined*** in the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973, or in any other law.
- However, in ***police regulations or rules***, information recorded under ***Section 154 of the CrPC*** is known as FIR.

  Section 154 CrPC *requires police to record any cognizable offence. Zero FIR extends this by allowing immediate registration at any police station, even if it's outside jurisdiction.*

- **Zero FIR –** It is a type of FIR that can be ***filed at any police station***, regardless of the jurisdiction where the crime occurred.
- **Purpose –** To ensure that victims can report crimes without facing delays due to jurisdictional issues, which can often hinder timely justice.
- **Introduced in –** 2013 on the ***recommendation of the Justice Verma Committee*** to make police more responsive in cases of sexual violence and other serious crimes.
- **Process of Filing a Zero FIR**
  - **Approach any police station** – The victim or informant can go to any police station to file a Zero FIR.
  - **Provide information** – The police officer will record the information provided by the victim regarding the incident. This can be done orally or in writing.
  - **Documentation** – The FIR will be documented in the prescribed format and marked as "Zero FIR."

- **Transfer to relevant Police Station** – After the Zero FIR is registered, the police will forward it to the police station that has jurisdiction over the case for further investigation.

Difference between FIR and Zero FIR

Features	FIR	Zero FIR
Jurisdiction	Filed only in the police station under whose area the crime occurred	Can be filed in any police station, irrespective of jurisdiction
Numbering	Assigned a unique FIR number by that police station	Initially numbered "0" until transferred to the correct jurisdiction
Purpose	Formal start of investigation into a cognizable offence	Quick registration in urgent/serious cases (rape, murder, etc.)
Transfer	Not transferred; investigation remains with the same station	Transferred to the police station with jurisdiction after filing
Use Cases	All cognizable offences (theft, assault, etc.)	Serious, urgent offences where delay could harm victims
Legal Basis	Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) provisions on FIR	Under Section 173 BNSS (Sec 154 of CrPC)

To know about e-Zero FIR, click here

References

1. The Hindu | Zero FIR lodged by West Bengal police
2. Lawctopus AI | Zero FIR
3. Pink Legal | Zero FIR

