APHC010315502026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

TUESDAY, THE 6th DAY OF OCTOBER 2026

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

WRIT PETITION NO: 17052 OF 2026

Between:

1. Rakhata Siva, S/o. Prakasha Rao, Aged about 44 years, Occ Business, R/o.D.No.2-238, Chinna Barapa, Vadarevu Village, Chirala Mandal, Bapatia District-523157

...Petitioner

AND

1. State of Andhra Pradesh, Rep.By its Principal Secretary to Government, Home Department, Secretariat, Velagapudi, Amaravati, Guntur District-522237.
2. The Superintendent of Police, Ankapalli District at Ankapalli-531001.
3. The Divisional Superintendent of Police, Ankapalli Division, Ankapalli District-531001.
4. The Circle Inspector of Police, Nakkapalli Circle, Nakkapalli Village and Mandal, Ankapalli District-531081.
5. The Station House Officer, Nakkapalli Police Station, Nakkapalli Village and Mandal, Ankapalli District-531081
6. Surada Vani, W/o.Nagaraju, Aged about 52 years, R/0.D.N0.66-4-1/3A, Narasannanagar, Kakinada Urban, Kakinada District-533033
7. Vanka Lakshmi, W/o.Lokadha Rao, Aged about 46 years, R/o.Chakaratheer Road, Puri Pentakota Village, Puri District, State of Odisha-752002

...Respondents

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue an appropriate writ or order or a direction more particularly one in the nature of WRIT OF MANDAMUS declaring the action of the 5th respondent in interfering into the civil dispute, calling the petitioner to police station by the influence of the respondents 6 and 7 and pressurized to settle the agricultural land dispute for the land an extent of Ac.4.66 cents in Survey Nos.352/1, 352/1A/4, 352/2A/1, 352/2A/2, 352/2A/3 and 352/2A/4 of Vempadu Revenue Village in Nakkapalli Mandal of Ankapalli District without there being any authority of law, which is illegal, arbitrary and violative of Articies 14, 21 and 300-A of the Constitution of India and also violative of Principles of Natural Justice and also violative of Principles of Natural Justice, consequently direct the respondent not to interfere in any manner into the civil disputes at the instance of respondents 6 and 7 and pass

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased to direct the 5th respondent not to interfere in any manner into the civil disputes at the instance of respondents 6 and 7 in respect of land as aforesaid. pending disposal of the main writ petition and pass

Counsel for the Petitioner: NAGA PRAVEEN VANKAYALAPATI

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR HOME

APHC010302692026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

TUESDAY, THE 6th DAY OF OCTOBER 2026

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

WRIT PETITION NO: 16432 OF 2026

Between:

1. KURELLA NAGA VARA LAKSHMI, W/o Kurella Srinivasa Rao, Aged 38 years, R/o, D-No.4-39, Kommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.

2. Kurella Srinivasa Rao,, S/o Kurella Rama Krishna, Aged 47 years, R/o, D-No.4-39, Kommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.

...Petitioners

AND

1. THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH, Rep by its Principal Secretary Home Dep A.P.Secretariat,Velgapudi, Amaravati.522237

2. The Director General of Police, Police Head Quaters, Mangalagiri.522503

3. The Superintendent of Police, Bhimavaram, West Godavari District.534006

4. The Circle Inspector of Police, Ganapavaram Police Station, Ganapavaram, West Godavari District.534198

5. The SubInspector of Police, Ganapavaram Police Station, Ganapavaram Village and Mandal West Godavari District.534198

6. Smt Maddala Bala Tripura Sundari, W/o Venkanna, Aged about 37 years, R/o, D-No.4-40, Jallikommara Village,534198 Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.

7. Mr Kavala Venkateswara Rao, S/o Somudrudu, Aged 57 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

8. Mr Kavala Dharmaraju, S/o Venkateswara Rao, Aged 33 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

9. Mr Valla Tata Rao, S/o Pedasubbarao, Aged 44 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.

10. Mr Kavala Peddiraju, S/o Venkateswara Rao, Aged 33 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

11. Mr Maddala Bhismudu, S/o Rama Krishna, Aged 30 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

12. Mr Maddala Shanta Raju, S/o Rama Krishna, Aged 30 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

13. Kavala Kondamma, W/o Venkateswara Rao, Aged 33 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

14. Smt Vallapu Jhansi Rani, W/o Tata Rao, Aged 37 years, R/o, D-No.4-18, Jallikommara Village, Ganapavaram Mandal, West Godavari District.534198

...Respondents

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue writ or order more particularly one in the nature WRIT OF MANDAMUS declaring the impugned malcifiade action of the respondents No. 4 and 5 in interfering with civil disputes aid infringing the fundamental rights of the petitioners as highly arbitrary and illegal and unconstitutional and consequentially direct the respondent No. 4 and 5 not to interfere with the life

and liberty of the petitioners without their being any crime registered against them and pass

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased to direct the respondents No. 4 and 5 not to call the petitioners day in and day out to the police station in civil disputes, without their being any crime registered against them, pending disposal of the above writ petition and pass

Counsel for the Petitioners: VARDHINEEDI SAI KIRAN
Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR HOME

APHC010217312026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

TUESDAY, THE 6th DAY OF OCTOBER 2026
PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

WRIT PETITION NO: 10836 OF 2026

Between:
1. GUNDALA AKHIL, S/o Chinna Thirupathaiah, aged about 29 years, R/O Lakshmipuram Village, Ravvavaram post, Nuzendla mandal, Guntur district pin-522660

...Petitioner

AND
1. THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH, Rep. by its Principal Secretary, Home Department, Secretariat, Velagapudi, Guntur district-522237.
2. The Superintendent of Police, Narasaraopet 522601 Palanadu district
3. The Station House Officer, Inavolu Police Station, Vinukonda, Palanadu district -522647.
4. Chavali Padma, W/o Srinivasa Rao, aged about 54 years Lakshmipuram Village, Ravvavaram post, Nuzendla mandal, Palanadu district-522660
5. C Brahmaiah, S/o not known, Circle Inspector of Police, Inavolu Police Station, Vinukonda, Palanadu district -522647
6. Polam Sorojini Devi, w/o Polam Venkata Narayana, aged about 77 yearsLakshmipuram Village, Ravvavaram post, Nuzendla mandal, Palanadu district-522660

...Respondents

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue a Writ, Order or Direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action of the respondents particularly 3rd

and 5th respondent in interfering with the civil disputes between the petitioner and 4th and 6th respondent in respect of 16 cents out of Ac.3.10 cents in Sy.No.166/2 of Botlagatla village, Putchanuthala panchayat, Nuzendla mandal, Palanadu district and harassing the petitioner at the instance of the 4th respondent without any authority, without any valid reason or ground without any case being registered as illegal, unjust, arbitrary, highhanded, malafide and against statutory provisions and consequently direct the respondents particularly 3rd respondent and 5th respondent not to interfere with the civil disputes between the petitioner and 4th and 6th respondent in respect of 16 cents out of Ac.3.10 cents in Sy.No.166/2 of Botlagatla village, Putchanuthala panchayat, Nuzendla mandal, Palanadu district and pass

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased to direct the respondents particularly 3rd respondent and 5th respondent not to harass the petitioner at the instance of the 4th respondent by calling the petitioner to the police station and subjecting to injuries and mental agony pending disposal of the above writ petition and pass

Counsel for the Petitioner: L J VEERA REDDY

Counsel for the Respondents: GP FOR HOME

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

WRIT PETITION Nos: 17052, 16432 and 10836 of 2026

COMMON ORDER:

As the issue involved in all the Writ Petitions is one and the same and in view of the consent expressed by both the parties, the batch of Writ Petitions is disposed of by way of common order.

2. Overall sum and substance of the instant *lis* is that when the matter is *sub judice* before competent Civil Courts, appropriate forums, interference of police in respect of the very same subject properties *inter-se* parties is under challenge in these Writ Petitions, mainly on the ground that the police have no jurisdiction to interdict or determine the civil rights of the parties.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioners draws the attention of this Court to the relevant provisions enunciated in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and the Police Act, 1861. Substantiating their assertions, learned counsels also relied on ***J.Lakshmi @ Lakshamamma & Another Vs. Commissioner of Police & Others***[1] and ***G.B.C.Raj Gopal Vs. The Government of Andhra Pradesh, Represented by the Principal Secretary***[2].

4. Sri P.Ajay Babu, learned Assistant Government Pleader for Home, while denying the averments made in the affidavit filed in support of the Writ Petitions, submitted that the respondent-police never called the petitioners to the respective police stations and that they will not interfere with the civil disputes *inter se* parties, unless any crime is registered for commission of any

[1] 2004 (2) ALD Cr.477
[2] 2014 SCC OnLine AP 322

cognizable offences. Learned Assistant Government Pleader fairly brought to the notice of this Court the categorical instructions (dealing with land disputes) of the Director General of Police, Andhra Pradesh vide No.76/DGP's Peshi/ 2025 dated 24.10.2025 to the concerned police personnel. He also read out the relevant paras of the same, for the sake of a comprehensive view, which are extracted hereunder:

> *It has been observed that land-related disputes, both private and government, are increasingly being reported across several districts. These disputes are often escalating into law and order situations, leading to communal tension, violent altercations, and property damage. Even minor disagreements over land boundaries or ownership are, in some instances, turning into major conflicts due to political, caste, or community dimensions being injected into the issue.*
> *xxx*
> *4. All Unit Officers and Range Officers are hereby directed to evolve a comprehensive district-wise strategy to identify, monitor, and resolve land dispute-related issues in coordination with the Revenue and Judicial authorities. The following course of action shall be strictly adhered to:*
> *(a) Preventive Measures under Law:*
> 1. *In cases where law and order disturbances are likely, the police must initiate preventive proceedings under BNS in coordination with revenue authorities and, where necessary, bind over the parties under preventive sections.*
> 2. *The local police should immediately bring the matter to the notice of the concerned Executive Magistrate and ensure that prohibitory orders are issued promptly to prevent breach of peace.*
> 3. *In every such case, the local CI/SDPO must personally supervise the situation until the dispute is brought under control or referred to competent authorities.*
>
> *(b) Coordination with Revenue & Judicial Authorities:*
> 1. *In cases involving civil ownership or title disputes, police should not take sides or interfere in the civil adjudication process.*
> 2. *However, close coordination with Tahsildars, RDOs, and Revenue Divisional Officers must be maintained to ensure timely demarcation, eviction, and enforcement of legal orders.*
> 3. *The District Collector and SP/CP shall jointly review sensitive land disputes at least once every month to assess potential flashpoints.*

(c) Registration of Criminal Cases:

1. *When criminal intent or violence is evident—such as trespass, cheating, forgery, assault, or criminal conspiracy—appropriate criminal cases shall be registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.*
2. *Particular attention should be given to repeat offenders and politically motivated land grabbers, who often exploit technicalities in the civil process to encroach upon land or disturb peace.*
3. *Ensure speedy investigation and charge-sheet filing in such cases to deter others from similar behaviour.*

(d) Monitoring & Accountability:

1. *District SB shall prepare and maintain a Land Dispute Risk Register, classifying disputes as Low / Medium / High Risk based on communal sensitivity, violence potential, and local influence factors.*
2. *The SP/CP shall personally monitor the top 10 high-risk disputes in the district and submit a monthly status report to PHQ through the Range DIG concerned.*
3. *Any negligence, delay, or failure to act preventively leading to violence will be viewed seriously, and disciplinary action will be initiated against the responsible officers.*
4. *It is reiterated that Police do not play any role in deciding ownership or possession, which falls exclusively under the purview of civil courts and revenue authorities. However, police intervention becomes mandatory when there is a threat to public peace, life, or property, or when criminal acts arise from such disputes. Officers must therefore strike the right balance between legality and prevention, ensuring that law and order is preserved without overstepping jurisdictional limits.*

5. *The above instructions shall be implemented in letter and spirit, and Range DIGs shall review compliance during their district inspections and monthly law & order reviews.*

Emphasis supplied

5. In view of the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case and also taking note of the statutory regime as well as the well-settled legal principles of the Apex Court and various High Courts that the Police have no jurisdiction to determine the civil disputes, and more particularly, as the civil disputes *inter se* parties are pending before competent forums, this Court is inclined to dispose of the *lis*, at the stage of admission itself.

6. In light of the above facts and circumstances of the case, the core common issue to be determined in the present batch of cases is:

> Whether the police have any jurisdictional powers to interfere or determine the civil rights of the parties, more particularly, pending the disputes before competent Civil Courts or statutory forums or not?

7. Heard learned counsels for the petitioners and learned Assistant Government Pleader for Home appearing on behalf of official Respondent-State and perused the entire material available on record.

8. Police have a statutory duty to maintain law and order and preserve public peace and safety. They are primarily responsible for preventing crime, controlling situations that may lead to breach of the peace, protecting the lives and properties of people, and taking lawful action against persons who engage in violence, threats, intimidation, or other unlawful activities. The police may also take necessary preventive measures when there is anticipation of disturbance or danger to public order. Thus, the essential role of Police is to prevent unlawful acts, protect people and property, maintain peace, and ensure that individuals are able to carry on their lawful activities, without unlawful interference.

9. In fact, when the statutory powers are conferred on the particular wing more particularly, judicial/quasi-judicial forums and the respective forums have seized the matter and dealt with the matter as per the prescribed procedure,

no other executive authority, who is not vested with such adjudicatory powers under the relevant statutory framework, cannot encroach upon or usurp the powers of such exclusively vested jurisdictional powers of the competent forums and deal with the rights of parties contrary to the fundamental principles of law, if anything, going contrary to the prescribed tenets amounts to acting without jurisdiction under the principles of law.

10. In the scheme of Constitution of India, the duty to resolve civil disputes is entrusted to the judiciary. No such power is empowered to the Police. Interference in a pending civil dispute or a potential civil dispute between two citizens or two groups is not within the province of the police. Furthermore, if a cognizable offence is reported to the police even as per the enunciated scheme of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, (for brevity “BNSS 2023”), it is the duty of the police to register and investigate the crime to unravel the truth and submit a report by way of charge sheet or final report to the concerned jurisdictional Court only. Thereafter, it is the duty of the competent Court to adjudicate the case after providing reasonable opportunity to the parties as well by following statutory procedures and to reach its logical conclusions, as per its jurisdictional sphere. It is well settled that judicial power is a sovereign power which can be conferred only by constitutional as well as statutory schemes, and it cannot be taken away or assumed S*uo motu* by any other authority on its own, which is contrary to the well-settled legal principles.

11. Coming to the instant issue, the Police Department, which has no jurisdiction to determine civil rights *inter se* parties, seeking to take over the

powers vested in another statutory forum may lead to multifarious problems and anomalies, not only affecting the functioning of said police wing, but also prejudicing the rights of the parties, furthermore, to the societal interests too.

12. It is apt to note that Courts in our Indian context generally would not assume the role of an investigative agency, unless it is required, so why, because it is in the orbit of an investigative agency empowered with fundamental duties in their domain.

13. Interesting facet in this context is that, evidently, the executive magisterial authorities such as Mandal Level, Sub-Divisional Level, District Level officers, though they are empowered under the provisions of the BNSS, 2023 & BNS, 2023 as well as other Legislative regimes to initiate statutory measures, such as maintaining public peace and security and also preventing breach of law, the said executive powers also came to a halt when the competent Judicial Forums, such as Civil Courts, seize the subject in issue, *inter se* parties.

14. For better understanding, Section 164 BNSS, 2023 (corresponding to Section 145 of CrPC, 1973) deals with disputes relating to land, water, buildings or their boundaries which are likely to cause a breach of peace. Under this provision, where a dispute exists about the actual possession of the disputed property, the Executive Magistrate may initiate appropriate proceedings in accordance with law and require the concerned parties to appear before him and submit their respective claims, along with such

material as they may seek to rely upon, regarding the actual possession of the property in question. An Executive Magistrate primarily determines who is in actual possession of the property, rather than adjudicating the ultimate question of ownership or title. Where necessary, particularly when the possession cannot be ascertained, or there is an immediate likelihood of breach of peace, the property may be attached, until the competent Court determines the rights of the parties. The primary purpose of Section 164 BNSS, 2023 is to prevent disputes from escalating into violence and to maintain peace and public order. Thus, even as per the provisions of BNSS, 2023 also, when competent Judicial authority seized the dispute *inter-se* parties over the very same subject property, executive magisterial powers come to be very minimal.

15. In light of the above perception, it is relevant to note some of the expressions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India which are as under:

> In ***Mohd. Abid and Others v. Ravi Naresh and Others***[3], the Hon'ble Supreme Court held that where the competent Civil Court has already seized itself of the dispute concerning the same property, the proceedings under Sections 145 and 146 CrPC, 1973 cannot be permitted to continue in parallel. Determination of the *inter se* rights of the parties relating to title or possession ultimately falls within the jurisdiction of the Civil Court, whereas the proceedings before the

[3]2022 SCC OnLine SC 2416

Executive Magistrate are intended only as a preventive measure to avert a breach of peace.

> ***"4.*** *Once the Civil Court is seized of the matter, it goes without saying that the proceedings under Section 145/146 Cr.P.C., cannot proceed and must come to an end. The inter-se rights of the parties regarding title or possession are eventually to be determined by the Civil Court."*

16. In ***Mohd Shakir v. State of UP***[4]***,*** Apex Court held that even while dropping proceedings under Section 145 Cr.P.C., an executive Magistrate cannot make observations on the respective rights in respect of the subject property, as it is the exclusive domain of the Civil Court.

17. Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, while interpreting the statutory regime in respect of the powers of the Courts in ***Shailesh Kumar Singh alias Shailesh R.Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh & Ors.***[5]*,* held that while exercising jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution of India or Section 482 CrPC, the Court must examine the allegations in the FIR and the material on record to ascertain whether the ingredients of any criminal offence are disclosed. The criminal process cannot be permitted to be used as a means for recovery of a monetary claim arising out of a commercial dispute, and quashing of criminal proceedings cannot be made subject to payment of a specified amount to the complainant. Where the dispute is essentially civil or commercial in nature, the parties are at liberty to pursue the appropriate civil remedy.

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[4]2022 SCC OnLine SC 2389
[5] 2025 SCC OnLine SC 1462

18. In this context, it is trite to quote the specific observations of the Apex Court in *Shailesh Kumar Singh's case (supra), which reads* are as under:

> *"11. The entire case is squarely covered by a recent pronouncement of this Court in the case of "Delhi Race Club (1940) Limited v. State of Uttar Pradesh", (2024) 10 SCC 690. In the said decision, the entire law as to what constitutes cheating and criminal breach of trust respectively has been exhaustively explained. It appears that this very decision was relied upon by the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner before the High Court. However, instead of looking into the matter on its own merits, the High Court thought fit to direct the petitioner to go for mediation and that too by making payment of Rs. 25,00,000/- to the 4th respondent as a condition precedent. We fail to understand, why the High Court should undertake such exercise. The High Court may either allow the petition saying that no offence is disclosed or may reject the petition saying that no case for quashing is made out. Why should the High Court make an attempt to help the complainant to recover the amount due and payable by the accused. It is for the Civil Court or Commercial Court as the case may be to look into in a suit that may be filed for recovery of money or in any other proceedings, be it under the Arbitration Act, 1996 or under the provisions of the IB Code, 2016.*
> *12. xxx*
> *13. …. Money cannot be recovered, more particularly, in a civil dispute between the parties by filing a First Information Report and seeking the help of the Police. This amounts to abuse of process of law."*

Thus, from the above vivid opinions of the Apex Court, it is too well settled that the police have no Jurisdiction to meddle with civil rights *inter se* parties.

19. It is relevant to note that when the police interfere with the rights of the parties without any lawful or jurisdictional authority, such interference can have serious and far-reaching consequences, not only for larger societal interests but also the very functioning of the police and the discharge of their statutory duties. For instance, if a Station House Officer of a prominent and sensitive police station, along with his subordinate personnel, engages in resolving civil disputes based on his own whims and fancies, without any

jurisdiction conferred upon them, it would affect all the stakeholders in the civil disputes and give rise to far more complications. Ultimately, such conduct would also adversely affect the maintenance of law and order and the effective discharge of their own statutory policing duties also which is not good for the societal interest as well as the police department's interest too.

20. In the above scenario, it is pertinent to note different expressions of the Constitutional Courts while dealing with the rights of police in interfering with the civil rights of the parties. In ***J. Lakshmi @ Lakshmamma and Anr. vs Commissioner of Police***[6]**,** the High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad reiterated that the police authorities have no jurisdiction to interfere with the disputes or to compel the parties to arrive at a settlement through police intervention. Determination of civil rights and disputes relating to title or possession purely falls within the domain of the Civil Court, and police cannot assume such adjudicatory powers. The High Court, while observing that police cannot interfere in civil disputes, observed as under:

> *"4. The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that when the dispute is purely of civil nature, the jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution cannot be exercised. The Supreme Court also repeatedly laid down that when the dispute between the two citizens is of civil nature and no crime is registered, police have no jurisdiction to interfere in the civil dispute. Further, when there is a civil litigation either before the court of law or before the tribunal, the police have no jurisdiction to interfere in the civil disputes. Further, when there is a civil litigation either before a court of law or before a tribunal, the police cannot interfere and even if a complaint is made in relation to such dispute pending in a civil court, the citizens have to be advised to resolve the dispute through a duly constituted court of law.*
> *In the scheme of the Constitution of India, the duty to resolve civil disputes is entrusted to judiciary. Police have no such power. Any*

[6]2004 SCC OnLine AP 29

interference by police in a pending civil dispute or a potential civil dispute between two citizens or two groups of citizens is not within the province of the police. Furthermore, if a cognizable offence is reported to the police, it is the duty of the police to register the crime under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Cr.P.C.,) and take up investigation immediately. In a given case, even if a civil dispute, to say a land dispute, is pending before a civil court and if the quarrel between the two warring parties has a potential of resulting in a law and order problem posing threat to the society at large, the police can always take up the case only after registering the crime under Section 154 Cr.P.C. Without registering the crime and without any reason the police cannot interfere."

21. In ***G.B.C. Raj Gopal vs. The Government of A.P., Rep. by the Principal Secretary (2014)***[7], High Court of Andhra Pradesh, at Hyderabad, while stating that the police have no jurisdiction to adjudicate civil or property disputes *inter se,* parties opined that:

"51. The function of resolving civil disputes is entrusted to the judiciary. Police officers lack jurisdiction to interfere in civil/property disputes between two citizens. Even in criminal case, their role is limited to the registration of complaints and causing investigation. The power to adjudge whether or not an accused is guilty of having committed a criminal offence, and to convict and sentence him therefor, is vested exclusively in the judicial branch of the State. Judicial power cannot be exercised by agencies outside the judicial orbit and, where there is no legislative foundation for exercise of judicial power by a forum, it has no legal capacity to entertain requests for adjudication. Judicial power is a facet of sovereign power and can be conferred only by a Statute or by a Statutory instrument. It cannot be assumed suo motu*. No authority may exercise adjudicatory powers absent a conferment of such powers by Statutory instruments. The coercive power of the State may not be employed to adjudicate disputes. (M/s. Janathaem Industries Ltd., rep., by its Public Relations Officer M.S. Ganesan, Vijayawada v. The District Collector, Krishna district at Vijayawada)."*

22. Thus, once the statutory powers that are conferred on the Executive Authorities itself come into the plunge with the intervention of Civil Courts, the very fundamental, foundational fact that the police authorities have not been

[7]2014 SCC OnLine AP 322

conferred adjudicatory powers under the statutory scheme either in terms of provisions of BNS, 2023 or BNSS, 2023 nor under police laws, police interference with the civil disputes of parties is *per-se* illegal, arbitrary and absolutely without jurisdiction; moreover, it is diametrically opposed to the constitutional vistas.

23. It is also well settled that where the legal position on an issue stands authoritatively settled by the Supreme Court, it is not necessary to multiply authorities by referring to a catena of judgments reiterating the same proposition. In furtherance of the above settled proposition, this Court is not venturing into referring similar dictums.

24. Yet another facet is that, even as per the data records, though Andhra Pradesh police population is approximately 166.18 per one lakh population, however, as per the United Nations recommendations, a Police-Population ratio of 222 per lakh is required for apt policing. Hence, overall perception also suggests that police, extending their limited forces, infrastructural facilities and professional powers towards non-Jurisdictional arenas, may leads to futile exercise except for the “unjust enrichment” of some of police personnel's interests, which is *per se* illegal and unconstitutional and also against the letter and spirit of our “Indian Constitutional” tenets, as well as antithesis to ***“Salus populi suprema lex esto”*** (Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law).

25. Recently, in ***Rohit Chaturvedi v. State of Uttarakhand***[8], the Supreme Court of India reiterated that executive action having a bearing upon the personal liberty of an individual must satisfy the constitutional requirement of fairness and non-arbitrariness under Article 21 of the Constitution and held that the exercise of executive discretion affecting liberty cannot be allowed to remain uncanalised and must be based on relevant and rational considerations. Apex Court also emphasized that deprivation of liberty must have a lawful, rational and constitutionally sustainable basis and cannot rest upon a cryptic or unexplained executive decision.

26. In this context, it is apt to note some of the ground realities and problems that existed in our contemporary society, from the backdrop of the colonial phase too. In fact, Sri Upendra Baxi, a renowned law scholar, observed that “the colonial police survived decolonization; it simply changed masters”, highlighting the continuity of the colonial policing system even after India attained independence. The police structure, methods and legal framework largely continued to reflect the colonial model, mainly based on the Police Act, 1861, which was primarily designed to maintain order, control the population and protect the interests of the ruling authority, rather than to function as a citizen-oriented service. Thus, although the British rulers were replaced by an elected Indian government, the basic institutional character of the police remained substantially unchanged. Hence, all the stakeholders contribute their respective support to change the overall existing police

[8]2026 SCC Online SC 865

structures from the colonial phase to people-centric policing in the larger interest of modern Indian and turns into Democratic policing, which means a system of policing in which the police exercise their powers within the limits of law, remain accountable to constitutional and democratic institutions, and respond to the legitimate needs and rights of the people.

27. In considered opinion of this Court, after perceiving the overall facts and circumstances of the core issue in the present batch of cases, police are entrusted with the responsibility of protecting life, liberty, rights and public order, but they are not an authority above the people. Police powers are conferred by law and must be exercised fairly, reasonably and proportionately. Thus, the police must act as guardians of the constitutional principles, rather than as rulers exercising unchecked authority over citizens. It is significant to note the dictum of the Supreme Court held in ***Prakash Singh vs. Union of India,***[9] which plays a pivotal role in our Indian police reforms. Apex Court, through its thoughtful consideration, formulated seven (07) directives in the Prakash Singh's case so as to strengthen the existing policing into more professional, accountable and independent from unnecessary interference from other quarters. Eminent legal personality Sri Solij Sorabjee, who was the chairman of the Committee, contributed to formulate the Model Police Act, 2006 (MPA), which was a model draft legislation prepared by the Government of India and circulated to the respective State Governments for enact or amend the existing Police legislations. It seems only some State Governments

[9] 2006 (8) SCC 1

have passed their local Police laws inspired by the MPA, 2006. It is also apt to note that subsequently, the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs also forwarded its Report mentioning subsequent developments on police training, modernization, and reforms by taking note of previous Police Reforms Committees etc.

28. In essence, when the police interfere with the rights of parties, without any lawful or jurisdictional authority, such interference can have serious and far-reaching consequences, not only on larger societal interests but also the very functioning of the police too. Hence, clear boundaries of functions of law enforcement agencies and judicial functions should be maintained.

29. All in all, from the overall facts and circumstances coupled with statutory regime as well as well-settled legal principles by the Supreme Court and other constitutional Courts, it is unequivocally settled that the police have no jurisdiction to adjudicate upon or determine the civil rights of parties *inter se*. The determination of civil rights is within the domain of Civil Courts and other legislative-conferred forums only. Accordingly, the core issue is answered.

30. Accordingly, these Writ Petitions are disposed of as under:

i. Respondent-Police are directed not to interfere or adjudicate or determine or settle the civil rights of the parties, without legal cause.

ii. Respondent-Police personnel to follow the guidelines issued by the Director General of Police, Andhra Pradesh, *vide* Communication No.76/DGP's Peshi/2025 dated 24.10.2025 in its *stricto sensu*.

iii. Likewise, it shall be open to the respective parties to work out their legal remedies before the appropriate Civil Courts or competent forums, in terms of the law.

iv. It is hereby clarified that, if the police made out any cognizable offences against the petitioners, they are at liberty to proceed in accordance with the law;

There shall be no order as to costs.

Interlocutory applications, if any, pending shall stand closed.

JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

Date: 06.10.2026
PSA

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE MAHESWARA RAO KUNCHEAM

WRIT PETITION Nos: 17052, 16432 and 10836 of 2026

Date: 06.10.2026

PSA