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The Nigerian Police Force and the Task of Policing Democratic Nigeria: Issues and Problems

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ABSTRACT States established Police Institution to fulfil the core responsibility of security provision. Being the agency mandated to enforce law, the police is empowered to use force in discharging its duties. In a bid to minimise abuse, national constitutions, international conventions, police codes, oversight institutions and other institutional and structural mechanisms are deployed to regulate the conduct of national police. This notwithstanding, instances of power abuse within national police, especially in developing states remains a challenge. Recognising the security threat that police abuse poses to Nigerians, this study examines the crisis of policing in Nigeria under democratic rule. The study is anchored on the political economy explanation. The study adopts qualitative method and uses secondary data sourced from Nigerian newspapers, journals, books, chapters in books, reports and other material sources from the internet. Deploying these data, the study discussed brutality, extortion and violence by personnel of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). The study recommends sweeping reforms that are directed at decentralising the management of the force, instituting credible and effective internal and external oversight of the force, training, enlightenment campaigns and improve funding for the institution.