**ANNUAL REPORT & AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2005 2006**

During the year under report COMMON CAUSE received a severe seismic jolt in the form of death of its Founder-Director Padma Bhushan H. D. Shourie It is virtually impossible to fill the void left by visionary pioneer of common causes. Nevertheless, President, Chief Executive and other members of the Governing Council resolved to carry on the work relating to redressal of problems of common people and carry forward the good work done by Mr. Shourie.

Your Society continued to pursue its activities for seeking amelioration of grievances of the people by writing to the concerned authorities and/or through intervention of Courts. There are a number of cases which were filed from the platform of COMMON CAUSE and which continue to pend. We continue to pursue these cases, namely:

**SUPREME COURT OF INDIA**:

* APPOINMENT OF LOK PAL AND LOK AYUKTAS;.
* POLICE REFORMS;
* AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION RESERVATION IN GOVT. JOBS;
* FAKE UNIVERSITIES AND BOGUS INSTITUTIONS;
* NON-PERFORMING ASSETS OF BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS;
* CRIME AND VIOLENCE ON T.V.;
* SLAUGHTER HOUSES POLLUTION;
* MAINTENANCE OF ACCOUNTS AND SUBMISSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS BY POLITICAL PARTIES.
* LARGE SCALE ADVERTISEMENTS;
* FUNCTIONING OF SOME AIRPORTS;
* ROAD ACCIDENTS;
* HOSPITAL WASTE DISPOSAL;
* PENDENCY OF CASES IN COURTS; AND
* EUTHANASIA;

We also filed a fresh Writ Petition on the issue of APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES IN DIFFERENT STATES:

The Parliament passed Constitution (Ninety- first Amendment) Act, 2003 restricting the number of Ministers to 15% of the total number of Members of the Legislature of a State. With a view to circumvent the provisions of the Act, the State Governments started appointing Parliamentary Secretaries with ministerial perks to provide office of profit to a large number of members of the ruling party The matter has been taken to the Supreme Court by the Chief Parliamentary Secretary of Himachal Pradesh challenging the decision of the Himachal Pradesh High Court quashing his appointment.

COMMON CAUSE learnt that the Haryana Government was also considering to amend Haryana State Legislature (Prevention of Disqualification ) Act, 1974 to facilitate appointments of Parliamentary Secretaries. It was considered necessary to file a Writ Petition in the Supreme Court of India seeking directions to quash the appointment of Chief Parliamentary Secretary and Parliamentary Secretaries in Haryana. Though the matter related specifically to the Government of Haryana, it was considered necessary to take the matter to the Supreme Court as other States were also reportedly indulging in similar acts of appointing Parliamentary Secretaries to circumvent the provisions of the Constitution (Ninety- First Amendment) Act, 2003.

**HIGH COURT OF DELHI**:

Writ Petitions filed on the subjects of MENACE OF STRAY CATTLE, DOGS & MONKEYS and deplorable conditions in BURNS WARDS OF HOSPITALS continued to be monitored by the High Court of Delhi itself. Our Advocate, Mrs. Meera Bhatia is one of the members of the Committee constituted by Delhi High Court for provision of infrastructure and other facilities Burns Wards of Hospitals.

We also filed two fresh Writ Petitions in the Delhi High Court:

**1. DEMOLITION OF ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS/ENCROACHMENTS**:

The High Court of Delhi had issued directions to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi for removing illegal constructions, encroachments of public land and commercial establishments from residential areas. It was noticed from the media reports that the MCD was only carrying out cosmetic demolition, harassing the middle class owners while sparing the unauthorized properties of highly connected persons, including politicians. There were also allegations that MCD officials who had earlier allowed such illegal constructions by taking heavy bribes were again making money for sparing such illegal constructions.

COMMON CAUSE filed an Intervention Application (IA) in the High Court of Delhi seeking such directions as to ensure that demolition carried out by the MCD were neither selective nor cosmetic. Our IA No. 589/2006 was heard alongwith the pending Petition on 18.1.2006. The Hon'ble Delhi High Court, inter alia, directed the MCD to take action against illegal constructions belonging not only to common people but also of influential persons. It was also observed by the Hon'ble High Court that "if action is taken against big fish an impression will gather ground that it is not the common man alone who is being targeted and that the Law is being applied to all concerned uniformally. An impression will also get created that it is the rule of law and not the rule of jungle"

**2. SUPPLY OF UNDERWEIGHT LPG CYLINDERS**:

Cases of supply of underweight LPG Cylinders have been reported by the Media intermittently. It was observed from newspaper reports that the Department of Weights & Measures, Government of NCT of Delhi detected a large number of underweight LPG cylinders in the godowns of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC). The officials at the bottling plant of the IOC were, however, let off with a meager fine despite the malpractices being of grave nature. It was felt that officials should have been persecuted to serve as a deterrent for others. Accordingly, the matter was taken up with the Controller (Legal Metrology), Govt. of NCT of Delhi. The reply received from him was not found to be satisfactory. A Writ Petition (.4048 of 2006) has accordingly been filed in the High Court of Delhi. The Petition has been admitted and notices issued to the Respondents, namely, Govt. of NCT of Delhi and Indian Oil Corporation.

**OTHER ISSUES**:

**SCARCITY OF POTABLE WATER**: The Members from Delhi are very well aware about the scarcity of potable water in the city. The situation is further worsened due to defective distribution system and the alarming leakage and pilferage which is estimated at about 40 percent of the total availability. At times of crisis the situation prevails in the city. The matter was accordingly taken up with the Union Home Minister and Minister of State, Ministry of Urban Development vide letters dated 14 th March, 2006. It was. inter alia, suggested that the Government may form 4 6 Task Forces (preferably headed by serving Army Officers from the Engineering Corps), each with a compliment of technicians and with magisterial backing and Police support where necessary, to stop leakage and pilferage within a specified period.

**MASTER PLAN OF DELHI 2021**: The preparation of Master Plan 2021 should have been taken up well before the year 2000 when the existing Plan was to complete its term. However, it was only in 2004-05 that bits and pieces of what was contemplated by the DDA started appearing in the news media. COMMON CAUSE objected to this approach and requested for supply of documented details to the RWAs and others to enable them to submit their comments. On receipt of details COMMON CAUSE submitted its detailed comments vide letter dated 30 th March, 2005. These were further supplemented through another Note dated 18 th January, 2006.

**FINANCE & ACCOUNTS**: Audit Report on COMMON CAUSE SOCIETY and COMMON CAUSE TRUST for the year ending 31 st March, 2006 has been received, its main portions i.e., balance sheet and income & expenditure statements are attached. Consolidated balance sheet and income & expenditure statements of the Society and the Trust are also attached.

During the year an amount of Rs.1,79,740/- was spent on publication of Special Memorial Issue as a tribute to Mr. H. D. Shourie FNST who had been reimbursing the expenditure on publication of our quarterly Journal did not reimburse this amount. As a matter of fact, they have stopped paying any grant. However, it will be observed that the overall expenditure during the year was Rs.19.42 lakhs against Rs.17.73 lakhs last year ; the income was Rs.28.69 lakhs against Rs.27.12 lakhs during the previous year. Thus, there was an overall surplus of Rs.9.26 lakhs during the year against Rs 9. 39 lakhs last year. The financial results are quite satisfactory.