**COMMON CAUSE**

**Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on November 12, 2013**

The Executive Committee of Common Cause met on November 12, 2013 at 11.30 A.M. at Common Cause House. Shri Vikram Lal, Dr. Divya Jalan and Shri Kamal Jaswal attended the meeting.

The Committee deliberated at length on the proposal to bring out an Annual State of Policing Report (ASPR), which was mooted in the meeting of the People’s Police Campaign Strategy Group held on June 3, 2013, but could not be pursued because of the priority accorded to a social media campaign.

It was felt that the ASPR will provide a firm statistical foundation to the advocacy for police reforms and generate time series data on the satisfaction levels of the citizens to monitor the impact of police reforms on the ground. It was too important an initiative to be deferred for want of support from other members of the People’s Police Campaign. The Committee agreed that Common Cause should assume the responsibility for conceptualizing and implementing the ASPR project with or without the assistance of our coalition partners.

The Committee requested the Director to prepare a concept paper on the ASPR, outlining its objective, scope, methodology and resource requirements. The paper may be discussed with experts in the domain and the project concept refined in the light of the inputs received from them. The following initial observations and suggestions were made in this context.

* While the ASPR may focus on citizens’ perception of the quality of policing, it may also factor in quantitative parameters and determinants of police performance, such as success rates of investigation and prosecution, representation of women and minorities in the police force, education levels, time taken to respond to distress calls, and disposal of complaints against police personnel.
* Experiences at the interface of the vulnerable sections of society with the police may be given due weight in the ASPR.
* The geographical coverage of the ASPR may be expanded in a phased manner to cover the entire country. In the first phase, the Report may cover at least one representative, fair-sized state with a mix of urban and rural populations, and Delhi, because it is important to policy making at the national level and also because the control of the Delhi Police vests in the Union Home Ministry.
* Utmost care should be taken in selecting the agency for undertaking the satisfaction survey and preparing the ASPR. If it is to have a real impact, the executing agency must have the highest credibility and a deep understanding of the issues involved; the methodology must be technically fool-proof and robust; and the exercise should be repeatable year after year.

The Director made a mention of the depletion of the research strength of Common Cause. The Committee assured the Director that resource constraints would not be allowed to come in the way of attracting and retaining the best available talent.

The Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

 (Vikram Lal)