



Dial Your SP - PPPP Tool of Governance

Dr. A. Ravi Shankar, IPS*

Objective

WITH a strong urge to reach out to the poor and needy for easy grievance redressal, taking a citizen centric justice delivery channel, this effort was aimed to bring about a social catharsis through an easy communication channel. Communication of Police with the citizens and listening to their woes has been the biggest casualty in the emerging law and order situation with 3/4th of the country being plagued with Maoist and insurgent activities. Thus, gap between Police and Administration on one side and people on the other is widening, thereby in a way we were playing into the broader strategy of the outlawed groups.

Why This Program?

Public have no channel to vent out their grievances without spending money, traveling, engaging a Lawyer, foregoing a day's wages, applying casual leave, taking help of a powerful politician, known broker, mediator, going to Press or Media for investigative journalism. In Maoist-affected areas, people visiting Police Station ran the grave risk of being branded as Police informants and getting killed. Touch with remote and rural areas was getting blurred in the eyes of Administration and Police. Visiting villages/remote areas regularly carried a lot of risk even for Police and the administrative machinery. Corruption, lack of transparency, no feedback on complaints, no time-bound response, no checks and balances in Police response, delay, role of mediators, effort and time involved in seeking justice, was leading to disillusionment. It was an imminent felt need of Police and demand from public to bridge the widening gap.

In SP's office, it is observed that most of the complainants are coming from remote areas of

District to express their problems in person to SP leaving the day's work, day's earnings and, to their utter dismay, sometimes find the SP not there at Headquarter. The general complaints are that the local Police are not listening and responding to their grievances with care and respect, acting partially, supporting wealthy and upper caste people, influenced by the local politicians, shielding rowdy and antisocial elements, demanding money to register cases, remove and include names in the FIRs and charge-sheets, accept bribes to release the accused on station bail, not executing the pending warrants/summons, high-handed behaviour.

Method used: All the calls are received on a particular telephone number with a speakerphone switched on to enable the Press, Media and Policemen seated to listen to the caller. Based on whether the calls are emergency or non-emergency, these are responded accordingly. The phone has the caller identification and recording facility, so that the caller's telephone number along with the particulars are noted in a separate register, as he is calling and the complaint given is reduced to writing. The complaints are further analyzed, discussed at Headquarter and directed in writing to the concerned Police Station or in case of special complaints, acted upon by Headquarter staff within the same week. The action taken is intimated to the caller telephonically on the contact number or address furnished. A Press release of success stories is issued in the form of responsible report summarizing compliance to all the preceeding week's complaints, one day before the "next dial your SP" program. Thus, the positive actions of the Police are highlighted and public gets to know about the good work being done by the Police. It's real time SMART delivery system as it is SIMPLE, MORAL, ACCOUNTABLE,

Keywords

Communication
Catharsis Dial
Grievances Complaints
Maoists Insurgents
Expenditure
Governance
Crime mapping
Law & Order
Phone Call
Partnership Linkages
Press Media Police
Interference Discipline
Analyzed Public Weaker
Sections Vices Women
Widows

* DIG of Police, Karimnagar Range, Karimnagar (Andhra Pradesh).



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Abstract

Communication of Police with the citizens and listening to their woes has been the biggest casualty in the emerging law and order situation with 3/4th of the country being plagued with Maoist and insurgent activities, and the gap between Police and administration on one side and people on the other is widening, thus in a way we were playing into the broader strategy of the outlawed groups.

Public have no channel to vent out their grievances without spending money,

RESPONSIVE AND TRANSPARENT. Press, to some extent, plays the role of policing the Police and as a trusted partner in projecting the good work done by Police to reach out to the public. Monthly crime mapping is done and analyzed for trouble spots and station-wise nature of complaints for making tactical and strategic decisions.

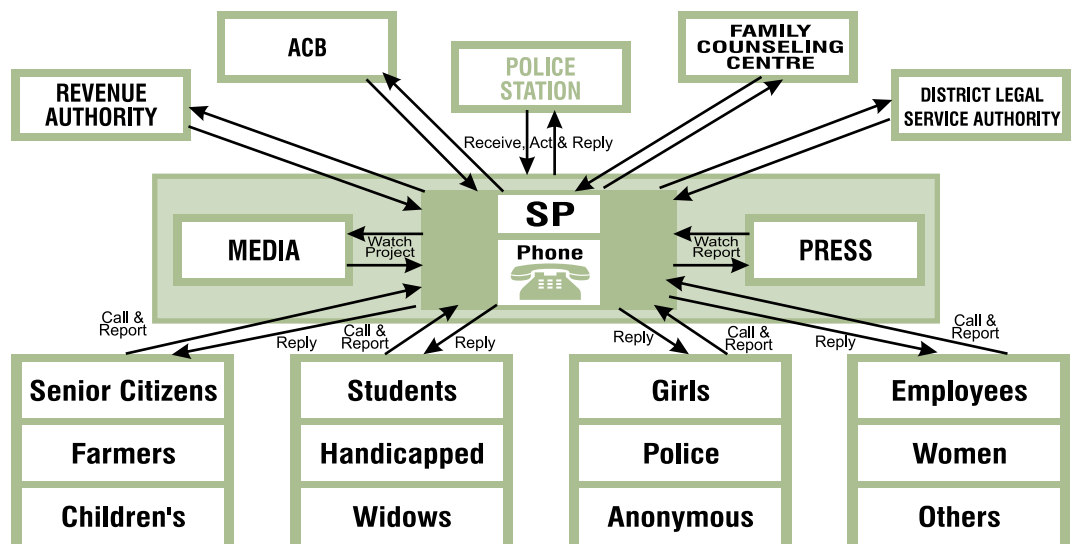
It's a tremendous force multiplier and governance tool to combat Maoist and insurgents as it is a dynamic and real-time communication with the masses, followed by definitive results. This doesn't mean that rest of the time, the SP is not accessible or available on phone. This is a focused program with responsible participation of Press, Police and Public Partnership (PPPP Model). When a phone call is made ordinarily at any time to control room, SP or any other officer, although they are always available, what transpires is known only to the two and the action, if at all taken, is not transparent, time bound or recorded and an element of subjectivity is there unlike this program where there is participation of Media and Press apart from voice recording of complainants, which is done to have an effective check and balance on the SP as well, as he has to ensure compliance to the preceding week's complaints. Otherwise, the same caller will call up again and complain in front of Press of inaction on the part of SP. Thus, SP can play a major role in shaping the public opinion in

partnership with the responsible role of Press and Media. In this programme, the grievances against Police, Politicians, Government employees, are fearlessly and easily made.

Forward Linkages: Complaints received based on contents are forwarded to the following offices and replies obtained in a week and communicated back to complainant:

- **Jt. Collector and Municipal Commissioner** are addressed for land-related complaints and get compliance within a week.
- **District legal services authority** with District Judge as Chairmen are addressed for free legal aid and followed up.
- **President of the District Journalists Union** (Press and Media) for responsible approach to publications on this program.
- **Family Counselling Centre** for domestic violence and family disputes for pre-litigation Counselling consisting of Lawyers, Psychiatrists, Retired Police Officers, Psychologists & Social Workers (NGOs).
- **Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB)** – Complaints against Public Servants of inaction, corruption were forwarded to the ACB-DSP in the district for necessary action.

Public, Police, Press Partnership Model of Communication and Grievance Redressal





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Program Data Analysis

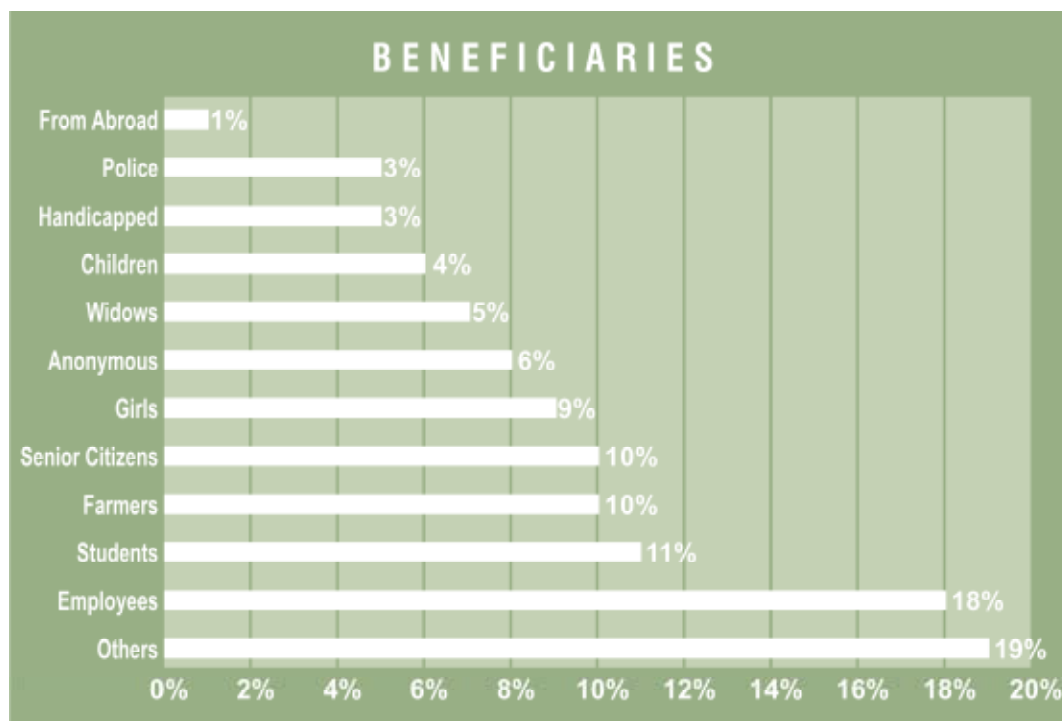
The programme was successfully tested and tried in Nizamabad and Guntur districts for 3 years. Total complaints received in Nizamabad and Guntur district over 3 years were 3,273 out of which 95% of the complaints were disposed of in the stipulated one-week time. The calls were received from within the district, AP State, other parts of the country as well as from abroad. Average number of complaints received was 18 per program.

Call by Men	= 63%	Urban Calls	= 43%
Call by Women	= 37%	Rural Calls	= 57%
Emergency Calls	= 4%	Non-Emergency	= 96 %
		Calls	

Action Taken

FIR was issued in 79 cases out of 3,273 complaints received and reconciliation effected in remaining cases amicably, apart from prompt remedial Police action on petty issues, Disciplinary action was taken against 43 Policemen for various acts of proven misconduct. Preventive action was taken in many trouble brewing spots.

It was also replicated by the Join Collector, Guntur district for revenue-related matters, also by SP Karimnagar and SP Khammam districts in Andhra Pradesh.



Outcomes and Impact Analysis

- Citizens participation and interest in law and order maintenance increased.
- Crime mapping helps to identify the hotspots well in advance, in the form of some trouble brewing in some Police Station limits and helps in advance tactical and strategic planning.
- Repeated complaints against subordinates, enables SP to take appropriate administrative decisions after due verification.
- Assured and reduced redressal time, low cost of service delivery, improved quality &

traveling, engaging a Lawyer, foregoing a day's wages, applying casual leave, taking help of a powerful politician, known broker, mediator, going to Press or Media for investigative journalism. In Maoist-affected areas, people visiting Police Station ran the grave risk of being branded as Police informants and getting killed. Touch with remote and rural areas was getting blurred in the eyes of Administration and Police. Visiting villages/remote areas regularly carried a lot of risk even for Police and the administrative machinery. Corruption,



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lack of transparency, no feedback on complaints, no time-bound response, no checks and balances in Police response, delay, role of mediators, effort and time involved in seeking justice, was leading to disillusionment. It was an imminent felt need of Police and demand from public to bridge the widening gap.

Under these demanding circumstances “Dial your SP” program was conducted in Guntur and Nizamabad districts by giving wide publicity about the day, time and contact number. Making it convenient

dedicated availability being the hallmark of this program, improved Police credibility.

- Many grave incidents, communal clashes, suicides were prevented. In many cases, FIR was issued based on complaints and arrests affected. Apart from the above, useful clues regarding crime detection also poured in.
- **Government employees** need not apply CL and come to SP for grievance redressal.
- Police corruption and high-handedness related complaints and petitions came down drastically from 5 per week in the beginning of the program to 1 in a month.
- Fear among subordinates that misdeeds like high-handed behaviour, illegal detention, harassment will reach SP's notice and it will appear in the Press and Media, whereby everyone will get to know, brought in internal discipline in the Police Force.
- **Check on SP**, as he is bound by Media, Press, Police to act on the complaint and give compliance to Media/Press and the common man and thereby keep his house in order and not be whimsical.
- Spread to Revenue Authorities and other departments as they saw the fruits of the program and the Joint Collector B. Venkatesh, IAS, SP Karimnagar, SP Khammam districts started the same program.
- With the help of the forward linkages of this program like the district **legal services authority**, family counselling centres, revenue authorities, pre-litigation counselling, etc. many heinous crimes were prevented, burden on the Court and Police reduced, faith in the Criminal Justice System improved.
- **Social vices** like gambling, matka, single digit lottery, ganja, drugs trafficking, prostitution, eve-teasing came down in both the districts and enforcement work improved automatically as housewives, children passed on information fearlessly. Negative Media-Press reports declined and positive balanced reporting about Police picked up, boosting Police image.
- **Political interference** in policing, came down drastically as the opposite party would call up the SP and inform about the role played by the broker! politician in collusion with the local Police in any particular case. The attendance of the politicians, mediators and brokers at SP office drastically reduced from an average of 2 per day to just about 2 in a week. This gave time for SP to make strategic planning and stay focused on core priority areas.
- Corruption not only in Police, but also in other departments declined as complaints of inaction and corruption in other departments, started pouring in and were enquired and checked into by ACB.
- This led to a dynamic and **sustained interaction** between the public, Revenue, Departments, Police, Press and Judiciary as many problems raised in the calls had interdepartmental linkages. This led to lot of synergy and enhanced output of the entire administrative machinery, which hitherto were functioning in isolation.
- Only officers with clean and unblemished record can stand the barrage of questions before the Press, Media and Police raised by public. It brings about lot of transparency and internal discipline within the Police Department.
- Its shared leadership and responsibility by all stakeholders – Public, Press, Media, Police.
- Those who fear to give complaints against the rich and influential to expose their wrongdoings did it time and again fearlessly as this program keeps their identity anonymous at their request.



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- Stern and exemplary action against malafide and false complainants coupled with rejoinders in the Press and Media clarifying some such issues added credibility to the program.
- Thus, this program supports the good officers and exposes the corrupt and bad officers.
- In the naxal-affected districts, where weaker sections and poor were getting more and more alienated from the Police and Administration, this channel of communication (cheap and best) brought in a lot of hope.

Conclusion

The initiative is self-sustaining as there is no

financial implications, no legal wrangles. It's just a rupee's phone call for justice. This initiative is system-driven with checks and balances from Press and Media. Grievance redressal for the poor employees, senior citizens, whose children have gone away for greener pastures, handicapped, the widows, women, girls who think twice before going to the Police Station, and were silently suffering got a easy path for grievance redressal. Women and girls coming to Police Stations is still a taboo in our society. Keeping these ground realities in view, this program was launched and pursued relentlessly. The Supervisory Officer is thus continuously in touch with the grass-root level common man and his grievances and is able to act as a Police Complaints Authority in responsible and collaborative participation with Press and Media as the role of mediators! brokers was no more required.

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for common people to bring their problem to the notice of SP/ DSP directly through a telephone call from anywhere, when the SP is dedicatedly available on phone for one full hour, every week exclusively to listen to complaints of the public in front of Press, Media & Police and solve their problem without the complainant running from pillar to post at the District Headquarters. Action taken is intimated to the caller; A Press note on action taken on all complaints is also issued before the next program.