



POLICE REFORM: AN EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES FROM SOUTH ASIA

23-24 March 2007

Qutab Hotel, Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi
A Round Table facilitated by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

AGENDA

The Objectives of the Round Table are to provide a forum for:

- the exchange of experiences of police reform;
- examining current challenges and debates in the region;
- analyzing existing mechanisms for police accountability and
- creating a plan to catalyze and track police reform processes in the participating countries of South Asia

Day 1 Friday 23 March 2007

9.00 – 9.30 Registration

Opening session: The Discourse on Policing

Session Objectives:

1. Provide an opportunity for participants to table their key concerns about what needs fixing in policing.
2. Raise awareness about the concept of democratic policing

Session Moderator: Ms. Maja Daruwala

9.30 – 9.45 Welcome remarks

Mr. BG Verghese (Chair, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative)

Mr. Verghese will speak about the work of CHRI and set the context for this conference.

9.45 – 10.05 Inaugural Address

Mr. Shivraj Patil (Minister, Home Affairs, India)

Mr. Patil will welcome international guests to India and raise the significance of police reform to good governance in democratic nations.

10.05 – 10.45 Introductory Exercise by participants on ‘What ails policing in the countries of South Asia?’

Facilitator instructs participants to introduce themselves to their neighbour and talk to them about either (1) the key causes of problems in policing, or (2) their 3 main complaints about the police, or (3) the main constraints police face in doing their job. All three aspects will be discussed by sections of participants. Participants’ observations will be shared with the whole group, with the facilitator scribing responses and drawing out themes and commonalities.

10.45 – 11.00 Hallmarks of Democratic Policing

Ms. Maja Daruwala (Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative)

Ms Daruwala will speak on the concept of democratic policing, and her vision for the police we have and the police we deserve.

11.00 – 11.15 Morning Tea Break

Session 2: Police Reform Initiatives in South Asia

Session Objectives:

1. Examine the commonalities in policing concerns among South Asian countries, whilst acknowledging the individual differences.
2. Understand the political context and its impact on current police reform processes
3. Get an overview of police reform initiatives in the region and impediments to their success

Session Moderator: Ms. Maja Daruwala

11.15 – 12.40 What's happening in South Asia?

In this session, representatives from each participating country will make a 15-minute presentation on:

- the political context in their country vis a vis policing concerns
- police reform initiatives currently underway
- blocks hindering the reform measures from being realised

Bangladesh: Mr. N. B. K. Tripura, (Addl. Inspector General, Bangladesh Police)

India: Mr. Prakash Singh (Indian Police Service, Retired), Ms. Swati Mehta (CHRI)

Maldives: Ms Aminath Najeeb (Human Rights Association of Maldives, registration denied since July 2004)

12.00 – 12.10 Q & A

Pakistan: Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali (Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives)

Sri Lanka: Basil Fernando (Director, Asia Human Rights Commission)

12.40 – 1.30 Open Floor Discussion

Ms. Daruwala will then moderate an open floor discussion on the challenges facing policing and police reform in the participating countries vis a vis their specific political contexts.

1.30 – 2.30 Lunch

Session 3: South Asian Experiences of Police/Executive Relationships

Session Objectives:

1. Understand the nature of police/executive relationships in countries of South Asia
2. Identify if and how this poses problems in police functioning
3. Generate discussion on reform measures to address these problems

Session Moderator: Ms. Maja Daruwala

2.30 – 4.00 Police-Executive Relationships in the countries of South Asia Panel

Each panelist will make a 15-minute presentation on:

- How the police-executive relationship is defined in law;
- What happens in practice?
- Whether there have been any government commissions or committees to review relationship;
- If so what suggestions have they made? Have any of them been implemented?

Bangladesh: Prof. Ishrat Shamim (President, Centre for Women and Children Studies)

India: Mr. Kamal Kumar (Indian Police Service, Retired)

Maldives: Mr. Mohamed Jinah (Police Officer, Maldives)

3.15 – 3.30 Q & A

Pakistan: Dr. M. Shoaib Suddle (Director General, National Police Bureau)

Sri Lanka: Mr. J. Thangavelu (Deputy Inspector General, Sri Lanka Police)

4.00 – 4.30 Open discussion [**Tea served at the table**]

Session 4: Getting the Balance Right – International Experiences

Session Objective:

Reflect on international experiences and models of healthy police/executive relationships

Session Moderator: Ms. Maja Daruwala

4.30 – 5.00 Ingredients for a healthy police/executive relationship

Prof. Philip Stenning, School of Criminology, Education, Sociology & Social Work, Keele University, Staffordshire, UK.

Prof. Stenning will make a 30-minute presentation on the ingredients required for a healthy police/executive relationship, with reference to international good practices.

5.00 – 5.30 Interactive Discussion

5.30 Close of Day 1 Proceedings

Day 2 Saturday 24 March 2007

9.00 – 9.15 Review of proceedings

Session 5: Who Polices the Police? A Discussion on Police Accountability

Session Objectives:

1. Examine current police accountability systems in South Asia
2. Debate the reasons for the gap between intent and practice and ways to narrow the gap
3. Explore through case studies, the role/effectiveness of specific police oversight bodies.

Session Moderator: Ms. Maja Daruwala

9.15 – 10.30 Focussed discussion based on session objectives.

10.30 – 10.45 Morning Tea

10.45 – 11.15 Have police oversight bodies in South Asia been successful in holding the police to account?

Each presenter will detail in a 15-minute presentation:

- the structure and mandate of the oversight body
- the extent to which the body has satisfied its mandate
- challenges faced in fulfilling its mandate

National Police Commission: Sri Lanka
Ms. Kishali Pinto Jaywardane (Senior lawyer)

Human Rights Commission: India
Mr. Chaman Lal (Former police officer and special rapporteur, National Human Rights Commission)

11.15 – 11.30 Questions and Discussion

Session 6: Civilian Oversight of Police – International Experiences

Session Objectives:

1. Reflect on the Northern Ireland experience of civilian police oversight bodies
2. Learn about international examples of effective civil society intervention in police reform

11.30 – 12.00

Ms. Maggie Beirne, Director, the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Northern Ireland.

Ms. Beirne will make a 30-minute presentation on the Police Ombudsman of Northern Ireland and share reflections on the role played by the Committee on the Administration of Justice in the police reform process.

12.00 – 12.30 Interactive Discussion

12.30 – 1.30 Lunch

Session 7: Police Reform ... treading the path from rhetoric to reality

Session Objectives:

1. Identify the value of civil society input in police reform processes
2. Map strategies to catalyse and track police reform in participating countries

1.30 – 1.45 Civil Society – Integral or Marginal to Police Reform?

Ms. Patricia Mukhim (Journalist)

1.45 – 1.50 Allocation of Breakout Groups and focus questions

Ms. Maja Daruwala (Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative)

1.50 – 2.45 Breakout groups

The participants will be divided into 6 small groups – one per country, with the Indian participants being split into two groups, one for police officers and government members and one for civil society. CHRI staff and the International Guest Speakers, Phillip and Maggie will be assigned to each of the small groups as facilitators. The focus questions the small groups will deliberate on are:

- From which quarters have we encountered resistance to police reform or are likely to do so?
- How should this resistance be addressed?
- How do we progress police reform, both within our country and in solidarity?

2.45 – 3.45 Spokespersons from each group to present deliberations to large group

3.45 – 4.00 Tea break

Session 8: Collective Action

Session Objective:

Collectively draft a conference statement for release to the media and to form the basis of communiqués issued in participating countries

4.00 – 5.00 Working as a group on the adoption of a Conference Statement

5.00 – 5.20 Valedictory Address

Mr. I.K. Gujaral (former Prime Minister, India)

5.20 – 5.30 Vote of Thanks

Ms. Maja Daruwala (Director, CHRI)