State Police Chief’s Guidelines to improve Police Performance

State Police Chief Loknath Behra has issued guidelines to improve the Professional Standard of the Police and their activities. The decision was taken following a meeting convened in the presence of the Chief Minister with Senior Police Officers recently to review the functioning of the police.

Under the leadership of the Station House Officers, all Police personnel of the police station should try to have a clear understanding of various issues in their jurisdiction. They should understand geographical characteristics of respective areas, attitudes of the people, relationship between the people and the police and past history of the area. This will help the police to rectify the problems that are likely to arise in the area.

Police Headquarters, Government and Human Rights Commissions have repeatedly issued guidelines on how to treat the people in police custody. All officers of police stations shall fully adhere to the provisions of this Guidelines.

All Police officers must take an unbiased stand throughout their service. When dealing with the issues, it must be with open-mind, without prejudice and beyond the caste, religious and political thinking.

Notifying the complainant about the progress in the investigation of his grievances at regular intervals will enhance their confidence. The officers
concerned should take care to provide information to the complainant directly, through phone or SMS messages.

If any allegation of misbehavior is raised against a Police officer, it is the responsibility of that police officer to prove his innocence. If such complaints arise, the head of the unit shall take action to transfer the alleged officer during the investigation period.

It has been reported that some officers are of the habit of responding slowly for emergency calls being received by the Department. It is true that some messages or requests may be false. Action should be taken against those who give false messages. But request for help should be given due consideration and should be handled properly at the earliest with utmost importance.

It has been noted that common public try to contact Senior Police Officers for complaining, acquiring information and to update progress in various investigation. Failure to meet high officials can lead to false image among the public. All unit heads should make arrangements for allowing appointment to anyone intending to meet a senior officer, as soon as possible. SMS, WhatsApp and other modern systems for communication can be utilized for the purpose.

It has been noted that the complainant has a tendency to be distracted by police stations. This causes them to feel contempt for the police system. Police officers should be able to understand the grief and anguish of civilians who approach police stations as a last resort. Action should be taken against the officers who behave badly and their problems should be cleared with proper intervention and compassion.

Even though communal conflicts and political problems are less in Kerala, police officers should try to find out the root causes and take action for such issues if reported. Issues of law and order should be avoided by taking prompt and vigorous measures in the very beginning of the problems. By judging past actions, it can be seen that many sensational issues could have been avoided if the police had acted prudently. It is
worth reminding that Police also have a history of eradicating law and order problems through vigorous and prompt action.

The police officers investigating various cases should try to solve the case by studying and analyzing the case in detail. The prosecution should try to find the maximum evidence in cases and complete the legal process.

At the police station, subdivision, and police district levels, police officers should, at regular intervals, review their actions and its results. It should be a platform to look back on their past events, understand people's opinions and criticisms, and take corrective measures. News and public opinion should be discussed in such forums. Such meetings should be held every week and they should be converted into a platform for expressing public opinion on the police.

Public cooperation and better intelligence are the mechanisms that strengthen police action. For this the Janmaithri Beat should be strengthened with public cooperation. Any action by a police officer in charge of the beat must be met with this objective. Conducting a variety of events with the cooperation of residents' associations, various organizational representatives and school officials could help the police to gain public consent and bring many issues to the attention of the police. Effective working of School Protection Groups also helps keep children safe.

Kerala Police is in the process of implementing various public utility projects to ensure safety of the community. But often these go unnoticed by the public. The potential of modern technology, including new media, should be tapped properly to make such news public.

All police officers must be punctual and honest. The State Police Chief has stipulated that all police officers be responsible of their actions both inside and outside the office.

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