Community Policing Wing

Community policing initiatives are being undertaken by Kolkata Police with a view to make the people believe and realise that, the community can also play a vital role directly or indirectly in problem solving and crime fighting. Here, the police will not only act as law enforcers but also as advisors, facilitators and supporters of the new community based Police supervised initiatives. It also aims to provide proactive policing to serve the people in more sensitive and friendlier manner. Kolkata Police through its various Community Policing schemes has been constantly striving to improve its relation with the citizens of Kolkata and ensure highest level of public safety and welfare for them.

Kolkata Police organizes a number of community-oriented projects and plans to reach out more sections of society to make the common people participate to work with police. To befriend the community, police forces all across the country and across the world have been devising new techniques and procedures. Community policing initiatives of Kolkata Police covers the entire section of the society. **'Nabadisha'** an educational and health care project of the under privileged children of the city of Kolkata, '**Probaho**' a yearlong blood donation camp organised by Kolkata Police, '**Friendship Cup football Tournament'** for involving members of the local clubs of the city, '**Kiran**' a computer Training project for the financially backward youth students, '**Pronam**' for the elderly citizens of the city, '**Kolkata GOALZ'** a project for young people in difficult areas, an initiative that uses the power of football and appeal of professional football clubs to engage young people who may otherwise be difficult to reach, '**Sampark**' for the school students, '**Dial 100'** a live phone in programme airing on Television to generate direct communication between Police and public Where senior officials answers all the queries /complaints weekly, '**Jano Sanjog Sabha'** constitutes a forum where community members and police discuss local problems where local residents can share their views. Such sabhas or meetings are attended by beat officers i.e. one Sub Inspector of local PS, '**Sukanya'** noble initiative for women empowerment,.

Kolkata police has four main strands of Community policing initiatives – Education, Health, Sports & Security. The activities under community policing wing are discussed in details :

1. <u>NABADISHA – A new Direction</u>:

This is an educational and health care programme for the vulnerable children in the streets of Kolkata. It is a catalytic force that brings together the police, children, their parents and other members of the community, local NGOs, volunteers, corporate sectors – to work together in the best interest of the city's street children.

Under this scheme, a total of 40 schools are run within or around 38 police stations in Kolkata where a total of 2500 odd students receive free education, food and health check-up every month. The children who come to these informal schools are either illiterate or are dropouts. These children here receive education up to a certain level & when they become competent enough, are mainstreamed and sent to local, formal Government Schools.

Health and Personal hygiene is the other important aspect of this project. Monthly health camps are organized for all these children for different ailments. Medicines are provided and surgery done if and when required. Each of these children has their individual health card. Sports & Fine Arts are integral part of their curriculum. They are encouraged and taught to take part in various activities of sports & cultural field.

2. <u>PROBAHO</u> :

This is a yearlong blood donation camp launched by Kolkata Police in collaboration with the help of Central Blood Bank. Weekly blood donation camp is held every weekend in one police establishment where policemen as well as local residents donate blood voluntarily. Probaho is a true example of active community participation. Till now 757 camps have already been held. The donor cards, thus obtained from the Central Blood Bank, remain at the local PS & Control Room for use by the local community.

3. FRIENDSHIP CUP FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT :

Friendship Cup popularly known as Para Football has been one of the most successful and talked about initiatives in building community relationships. This is a replicable model that can be adapted anywhere in the world. In apprehension of its immense popularity, sporting majors such as ESPN-Star Sports, State Bank of India, Indian Oil & Coca Cola and many other corporate sectors have associated themselves with this tournament, thereby dovetailing with corporate social responsibilities. As a furtherance of this, School-Footers, an Inter School Football Tournament and College Footers, an Inter College Tournament comprising Schools and Colleges have been added to the sporting calendar of Kolkata Police and serve as a major means towards improvement of the police-community relationship. This year 755 local teams, 52 Schools and 24 Colleges participated in this tournament'2015 which involved about 14000 local youth between age group of 16 to 25 years and 1800 students participating in a tournament organised by any Police force. This tournament is the largest tournament of the World so far numbers of participation is concerned. Using sports as a means of upliftment, as vehicle of communication, Kolkata Police has been able to involve a large number of people which really indicates wide spread community participation.

Participants of the Friendship Cup football tournament strengthen the hands of police by means of easier information flow about local anti-socials, unwarranted persons and similar activities. Their input helps the police prepare more people-friendly policies & serve as an important feedback mechanism.

4. KIRAN - the ray of light:

Kiran is one of the projects launched by Kolkata Police for imparting 6 months basic computer training to the lesser-privileged children, mainly for minority adolescent boys & girls with the assistance of West Bengal Minority Development & Finance Corporation. 40 Boys & 40 Girls are getting training in each course. 20 centers at minority populated areas at Beniapukur, Gardenreach, Karaya, Jorasanko, Ultadanga, Entally, Tangra, Taltola, Topsia, Ekbalpore, Cossipore, West Port, Narkeldanga, Phoolbagan, Bhowanipore, Ballygunge, Watgunge, Park St, Nadial and Tiljala have started functioning. Till today more than 2500 Boys & Girls have passed out from KIRAN centers.

5. PRONAM :

In a bid to make life easier for the elderly, Kolkata police have started project PRONAM, for providing valuable legal and medical help to senior citizens. Under the project, senior citizens only need to fill up forms giving their address, phone number and blood group to avail the facility through a 24-hour helpline. The elderly will get medical support on priority from 28 hospitals across the city.

These initiatives are open for registering all Senior Citizens living in the city. Senior citizens of the city could find police as their valuable support in their need. They no more feel insecure and unsafe in life. They get legal and mental support at the time of crisis.

Senior citizens are very soft target of the criminals. Taking advantage of their old age, ailment and physical weakness criminals use to get easy access to inflict harm of their lives and property. Their association with police being under the project of Pronam keeps the senior citizens safe and secured. They are no easier targets of the criminals. Till today 12927 senior citizens are registered members of this project. These initiatives are just open for registering all Senior Citizens living in the city.

6. KOLKATA GOALZ

This is an inspirational new project using football to encourage young people from across Kolkata to aim for a more positive future. "Kolkata Goalz" is being launched by the Premier League, the British Council, Kolkata Police, Kolkata Municipal Corporation, All India Football Federation and Indian Football Association (West Bengal). This project is run in association with eight Kolkata Premier League Football Clubs who will directly be involved in the delivery of the project.

Kolkata Goalz is a project for young people in difficult areas, an initiative that uses the power of football and appeal of professional football clubs to engage young people who may otherwise be difficult to reach. The long-term plan of this programme is to set up and deliver a sustainable model in Kolkata, which could then be potentially replicated across the state in collaboration with other police departments, municipal authorities and football clubs. Underprivileged kids from twenty four most crime prone areas as well as kids of target area are benefitted for this project. They are divided in to twelve hotspots to train the particular target group by Kolkata Police. The eight Premier League Clubs of the city have been entrusted to undertake the training programme.

Resource persons (football coaches) and community development officers (club coordinators) from each club have trained to deliver the programme. Initial training for resource persons and community development officers has already taken place, conducted by English Premier League coaches as well as trainers from the UK-based Active Communities Network.

7. SAMPARK :

SAMPARK is an initiative taken up by Kolkata Police to promote awareness among the youth of today about the system of law and order, prevalent in their city. This project was conceived by several conscientious citizens of Kolkata as an attempt to familiarize students with the workings of a public service body.This is an endeavor, among many other social responsibility initiatives, to promote a healthy relationship between young citizens and the Kolkata Police as well as to dispel the many misconceptions that people have about the guardians of the law. Students would generally hesitate to approach a police station for help in case they require it. Selected schools are invited every month to visit the local police station in batches of 80 students from classes IX to XI. They are also taken to visit the Kolkata Police Headquarter.

These excursions are organized to educate youngsters through interactive sessions on the nuances of how to lodge an FIR or make a General Diary, to visit and view the interiors of the police station. They are briefed about the various ranks and caps of the police as well as the history of Kolkata Police. This initiative also serves as an exercise in character building by allowing them to be aware of the way law and order is maintained.

8. DIAL 100

'Dial 100' a live phone in programme airing on Television every week has received overwhelmed response from the people of the state. Senior Officials of Kolkata Police answers all the queries /complaints weekly.

9. JANO SANJOG SABHA

Kolkata Police has crafted a scheme named Jano Sanjog Sabha. As the name suggests these are meetings organised by the police in all police stations with the assistance from the local residents. It constitutes a forum where community members and police discuss local problems, local residents can air their views. Such sabhas or meetings are attended by beat officers i.e.one Sub Inspector of local PS.

There exists a Thana level Advisory Committee comprising of local doctors, lawyers, teacher's, MLA's etc who offer their valuable suggestions, views to the officer-in-charge of the local police station. The discussion ranges from civic problems like property disputes local population has to confront to marital disputes, domestic violence and are informal in nature but purposeful, free, frank. In these Sabhas police officers perform the role of councilors, mediator, arbitrator, Preventative Crime Awareness measure are often discussed in these meetings.

10. SUKANYA

Women safety has always been one of the top priorities of any law-enforcing agency. The nature of women safety related problem has changed with the changing mores and norms in society especially in a overgrowing and over changing urbanization. Law enforcement agencies all over the world are taking problem of offence against women very seriously as offence against women is universal. Be it within the confines of home or in the public sphere, offence against women has been observed, documented and tolerated by societies all across the globe.

Kolkata Police with a view to eradicate and minimize the possibility of commencing offence against women, Kolkata Police has planned to introduce a unique programme for the young girls' students known as SUKANYA. Sukanya is a concept for imparting self defense training programme for the girl students. The basic objective of this project is to build confidence amongst the girl students of the Schools by means of imparting self defense training. This initiative will also give a message to step forward in a positive direction in the society and will carry a message to the offenders that the girls are now capable of defending themselves. Sukanya Launched with its formal inauguration on 24.02.2014 at Khudiram Aushilan Kendra. Initially this programme has been introduced in four Schools from each division. Gradually more Schools will be included after evaluating the initial success of the programme. Basic objective is to train the girls for their self defense and build confidence among them so that they can face and counter any sort of ordeal.

Primarily as a pilot project, thirty-four schools from eight Divisions of Kolkata Police have started with thirty four schools having batch of 20/ 40/ 60 students for the training programme for duration of three months thrice a week, one hour for each class. More Schools and Colleges are planned to include under this project. For imparting them such training, already eight reputed Martial Arts training agencies have been selected those who had already associated with Kolkata Police in the earlier occasions.

CONCLUSION

A major grass root movement is in the making through these initiatives. Kolkata Police has been able to reach out to a larger section of underprivileged youth, destitute children & respected Senior citizens.

We believe that we can perform render our services better if the community co-operates & supports us. In order to gain community support, we must develop & maintain good relations with the community.

We learn a lot from our interaction with the people of Kolkata, and enjoy the experience.

We are proud of serving them.