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Emerging Trends of Crimes in Urban India

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THE URBAN area is generally recognized as a breeding ground for the criminals, and prone to higher incidence level of crimes compared to rural areas. Criminals brought up in such an environment are known to indulge in crimes as a way of life. The unchecked and unplanned growth of cities as well as large floating population–are major contributing factors for urban crimes. Criminal propensity is also known to be higher in urban industrial areas. The crimes in urban areas are peculiar and have shown a consistent rise parallel to the population increase, during the previous few decades. Worldwide, urban violence is estimated to have grown by between three and five per cent a year over the last decades, although there are large variations between nations and between different cities within nations in the scale of urban violence and in the extent of its growth. Violent crime includes murder, infanticide, kidnapping/abduction, kidnapping for ransom, assault, rape and sexual abuse and domestic violence and it now makes up between 25 and 30 per cent of urban crimes in many countries. Poor, illiterate people having roots in a simple environment consequent to migration suffer emotional instability in the urban setting; the problem of unemployment is yet another compounding factor. These migrants are easily lured into theft, robbery, smuggling or even terrorist activities. Crime and development therefore are intrinsically linked.

High levels of urban crime and perhaps especially of violent crime have brought major changes in the spatial form of many cities and of their built-up areas and public spaces. Cities are more prone to violent crimes resulting in feelings of distrust, intolerance, the withdrawal of individuals from community life, and in some instances, violent reactions. The increase in violence, insecurity and fear have changed the city's landscape and the patterns of daily life, people's movements and the use of public transport—as crime and violence discourage people from using the streets and public spaces altogether. Streets where children used to play, where neighbours used to congregate and where it was common for people to stroll are now much less used. Increasingly, higher-income groups are living, working, shopping and spending their leisure time in what are essentially fortified enclaves

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and do no longer make use of streets or public spaces which are abandoned to the homeless and the street children. Similar developments are evident in many cities around the world as middle- and upper-income group people travel by private automobiles between apartment complexes, shopping centres or malls and office complexes each with sophisticated security systems and their own secure car parks so there is little or no necessity to walk on the streets or to use open spaces. High levels of crime and fear of violence have helped to push shopping malls, office complexes and leisure activities to suburban areas and in some cities, this has reached the point where it is increasingly rare for middle- and upper-income groups to visit the city centre. High levels of crime can have a very serious impact on the economy of neighbourhood or city centre.[1]

Crimes in Mega Cities

The term 'Mega City' here refers to cities having population of over 10 lakh (1 million). The number of such cities has increased from 23 in 1991 to 35 in 2001. Mega cities are facing increased criminal activities on account of a number of socio-economic factors. The actual census population of these cities for the year 2001 is used for calculating the crime rates in the absence of mid-year population estimates for the year 2010 for these 35 cities from the Registrar General of India Office. The population of these 35 mega cities constitutes nearly nine per cent of the country's total population. 27.8 per cent of population lives in urban areas as per 2001 census. The present analysis does not aim at complete urban crime pattern in the country but restricts to only 35 mega cities representing nearly 37.8 per cent of total urban population (1078.8 lakh out of 2853.5 lakh as per 2001 census). The present analysis on mega cities is restricted to 22 major specified crimes under Indian Penal Code IPC and 21 specified crimes under Special and Local Laws. The major crime pattern of IPC crimes and SLL crimes in 35 mega cities are discussed below.

Crimes under the Indian Penal Code: (IPC) According to *Crime in India* published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, a total of 3,68,883 cognizable crimes under the IPC were reported in 35 mega cities during 2010 as compared to 3,43,749 crimes during 2009, thereby reporting a rise of 7.3 per cent. There was an increase of 4.9 per cent in IPC crimes during 2010 over the previous year 2009 at the national level. The urban agglomeration centre have accounted for 38.8 per cent (57,268 out of 1,47,475) of the total auto theft cases in the country followed by 34.4 per cent counterfeiting cases (890 out of 2,589) and 25.9 per cent

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cheating cases (20,428 out of 78,999) of the nation's total IPC crime. The cities of Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai have accounted for 12.5 per cent, 8.7 per cent and 9.2 per cent respectively of the total crimes reported from 35 mega cities. Kochi city has reported significant increase of 193.7 per cent IPC crimes as compared to previous year (2009) while in 20 cities, decline in crime rate has been reported.

Table 1 revealed that crime in mega cities is comparatively high in comparison to their domain states. Average crime rate of the mega cities is 341.9 and only 187.6 was of the domain states which indicates a great variance in both of them. Comparative data of the five years indicates that there is a great increase in last five years of crime where IPC crime rate was 302.6 in 2006 but in 2010 it has reached at 341.9.

TABLE 1: INCIDENCE AND RATE OF IPC CRIME (MEGA CITIES)

Year	Incidents	Rate
2006	3,26,363	302.6
2007	3,36,889	312.3
2008	3,47,153	321.8
2009	3,43,749	318.6
2010	3,68,883	341.9

SOURCE: 'Crime in India' (2010) published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

The average rate of crime in urban agglomeration centre at 341.9 was much higher than the national crime rate of 187.6. Kochi reported the highest crime rate (1897.8) among the mega cities in the country followed by Indore (868.2) and Bhopal (823). The crime rate for each city is compared with the corresponding crime rate of the domain state in Table 2. Crime rate (IPC) in cities was generally higher than the corresponding crime rate of domain state. The crime rate was lower than that of the respective state in case of Dhanbad, Chennai, Kolkata and Madurai. The crime rate at national level increased by 3.4 per cent (from 181.4 in 2009 to 187.6 in 2010), however, the crime rate in cities has increased by 7.3 per cent (from 318.6 in 2009 to 341.9 in 2010).[2]

Incidence of IPC Crimes in Districts and Big Cities: There were as many as 744 districts in the country (including Railway Police Districts) during 2010. Twenty three districts of these have reported more than 10,000 crimes annually, while 101 districts have reported crimes between 5,000 and 10,000 and a bulk of them, i.e. 620 of them

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TABLE 2: IPC CRIME RATE—MEGA CITIES VS DOMAIN STATE

S.No.	City	Rate of Crime (IPC)	
		Mega City	Domain State
1	Agra	363.5	87.5
2	Ahmedabad	474.5	200.1
3	Allahabad	187.9	87.5
4	Amritsar	181.3	134.4
5	Asansol	168.7	143.7
6	Bangaluru	566.0	242.0
7	Bhopal	823.0	297.2
8	Chennai	169.2	274.5
9	Coimbatore	289.1	274.5
10	Delhi	359.6	279.8
11	Dhanbad	94.5	125.7
12	Faridabad	466.4	240.4
13	Hyderabad	317.1	215.7
14	Indore	868.2	297.2
15	Jabalpur	555.5	297.2
16	Jaipur	719.3	242.8
17	Jamshedpur	247.9	125.7
18	Kanpur	250.8	87.5
19	Kochi	1897.8	424.1
20	Kolkata	117.3	143.7
21	Lucknow	455.1	87.5
22	Ludhiana	252.5	134.4
23	Madurai	223.6	274.5
24	Meerut	283.4	87.5
25	Mumbai	207.3	189.2
26	Nagpur	364.0	189.2
27	Nasik	389.2	189.2
28	Patna	528.2	131.1
29	Pune	362.1	189.2
30	Rajkot	401.6	200.1
31	Surat	264.2	200.1
32	Vadodara	358.7	200.1
33	Varanasi	175.7	87.5
34	Vijayawada	577.0	215.7
35	Vishakhapatnam	535.1	215.7
	Total (Cities/ All India)	341.9	187.6

SOURCE: 'Crime in India' (2010) published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

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have reported less than 5,000 crimes annually.[3] The Police Districts which have recorded more than 10,000 IPC crimes during 2010 along with the incidence are given in Table 3.

TABLE 3: POLICE DISTRICTS REGISTERING ABOVE 10,000 IPC CASES IN 2010

S.No.	Name of the District	Incidence
1	Mumbai	33,932
2	Bangaluru	32,188
3	Ernakulam	25,735
4	Ahmedabad	21,442
5	Indore	18,473
6	Hyderabad	17,549
7	Hyderabad	16,348
8	Kolkata	15,510
9	24 Parganas South	15,299
10	24 Parganas North	15,151
11	Patna	14,036
12	Bhopal	13,711
13	Pune	13,602
14	Murshidabad	13,094
15	Lucknow	12,454
16	Ernakulam Rural	12,225
17	Kollam	11,879
18	Thrissur	11,420
19	Gwalior	11,337
20	Chennai	10,869
21	Palakkad	10,449
22	Raipur	10,360
23	Ghaziabad	10,217

SOURCE: 'Crime in India' (2010) published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

Mumbai has reported the highest incidence of IPC crimes (33,932) followed by Bengaluru (32,188) during 2010. The crime head-wise analysis of districts revealed that Patna has reported the highest number of cases in murder (304), and dowry Deaths (95). Highest

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number of attempt to commit murder (620), rape (526), molestation (609) and cruelty by husband/relatives was reported in Murshidabad West Bengal. Mumbai has reported highest incidence of burglary (3,059), theft (3,195), criminal breach of trust (482), counterfeiting (76) and hurt /grievous hurt (4,487). Bangalore has reported highest incidence of cheating (3,073), kidnapping and abduction (513), dacoity (66) and preparation and assembly for dacoity (246). Highest number of deaths by negligence was reported in Ghaziabad (1,166). 24 Parganas (North) of West Bengal has reported highest incidence of importation of girls (5) indicating human trafficking and cases of not amounting to murder (179). Highest number of robbery was reported in Ahmednagar (805). Highest number of riots was reported in 24 Parganas (South) (1,238). Buldhana has reported the highest number of cases, arson (70) while highest number of sexual harassment was reported from Hyderabad (1,257) and Andhra Pradesh.

Special Local Laws: According to 'Crime in India' (2010) published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi Mostly the Central Acts on special subjects which are applicable in the whole country are considered for the purpose of crimes reported under SLL. Local Acts are clubbed together in 'Other SLL' crimes. A total of 45,25,917 SLL crimes were reported in the country during 2010 accounting for a decrease of 0.6 per cent over 2009 (45,53,872). Ten year and five year trend analysis showed 33.2 per cent increase from 2000 level and 21.9 per cent increase over the average of last five years (2005 - 2009). The rate of crime has also shown a decrease of 2.0 per cent as compared to 2009 (389.4). It is observed that the 21 specified crime heads accounted for 19.3 per cent of the total SLL crimes, while the remaining 80.7 per cent were clubbed as 'Other SLL crimes'. The "Prohibition Act' and 'Gambling Act' though enforced only in a few States, share 12.0 per cent towards total SLL crimes. Next in order were the 'Excise Act' (3.9%), and 'Arms Act' (1.7%).

Crimes under Special and Local Laws in 35 cities: 35 cities have reported 11,19,621 cases registered as crimes under Special and Local Laws as compared to 8,91,576 in 2009. The incidence under SLL during 2010 showed an increase of 25.6 per cent in cities as compared to decrease of 0.6 per cent observed at National level. 35 urban agglomeration centres have significantly accounted for 64.9 per cent of the cases registered under Antiquities Treasure Act in the country, 37.4 per cent of the cases (934 out of 2,499) registered under Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act and 25.6 per cent cases (2,017 out of 7,889) registered under the Copyright Act in the country (Table 4).

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TABLE 4: INCIDENCE AND RATE OF SLL CRIME IN MEGA CITIES

Year	Incidence	Rate
2006	6,61,600	613.3
2007	7,53,760	698.7
2008	6,38,986	592.3
2009	8,91,576	826.5
2010	11,19,621	1037.8

Source: 'Crime in India' (2010) published By National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

The crime rate in urban agglomeration centre (826.5) was 2.7 times more than the National average (381.7). The highest crime rate of SLL crimes during 2010 was reported from Vishakhapatnam (7096.5) followed by Lucknow (6,680.2). The crime rate in 35 mega cities has shown a mixed trend.

Data of Table 5 reveals that cyber crimes have been increasing very rapidly in the country. In 2009, total 42t) cyber crime cases were registered under IT Act wherein 2010 it was just more than double as 966, which shows a great variation within two years. 276 cyber crimes were registered under Indian Penal Code in 2009 while 356 cyber/ cases were registered in 2010. In the year 2009 and 2010, Karnataka was the state where the highest cyber crimes were registered while on the other side Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura, no case of cyber crime was registered. Assam was the only state where there was a great variation in IT Act registered cases in 2009 and 2010. Only two cases were reported in 2009 while in 2010 number was 18. Due to lack of awareness, many cyber crime cases were registered in other sections of Indian Penal Code and not in cyber section. Cases of cyber crimes registered in 2010 under Indian Penal Code show a big difference in Andhra Pradesh in 2009 and 2010. Eight cases were registered in 2009 while in 2010 this reached to 66 which indicates that there is a great difference within the two years of cyber crime cases in the country.

Recently a survey has been conducted in Gurgaon city on girls and women aged 16-29 years. Survey done between March 16-18, 2012 after the recent cases of abduction and gang rape show that women avoid going out of home after sunset. These respondents also answered that men have less respect for women, 40 per cent of the respondents replied that women should not venture out alone after 7 PM. While on

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TABLE 5: INCIDENCE OF CASES REGISTERED UNDER CYBER CRIMES IN VARIOUS CITIES DURING 2009 AND 2010 AND PERCENTAGE VARIATION

	State/UT	IT ACT			IPC Section		
		2009	2010	% Variation	2009	2010	% Variation
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
36	Agra	3	7	133.3	1	6	500.00
37	Ahmedabad	10	8	-20.0	14	18	28.6
38	Allahabad	4	1	-75.0	1	1	0.0
39	Amritsar	4	10	150.0	3	0	-100.0
40	Asansol	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
41	Bengaluru	97	40	-58.8	0	9	@
42	Bhopal	6	10	66.7	6	0	-100.0
43	Chennai	2	10	400.0	13	15	15.4
44	Coimbatore	6	12	100.0	3	5	66.7
45	Delhi (City)	5.	41	720.0	12		-100.0
46	Dhanbad	6.	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
47	Faridabad	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
48	Hyderabad	0	51	0.0		5	@
49	Indore	5	5	0.0	0	4	@
50	Jabalpur	0	0	0.0	0	0	0
51	Jaipur	0	27	0.0	0	0	0.0
52	Jamshedpur	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
53	Kanpur	1	3	200.0	0	1	@
54	Kochi	6	3	-50.0	1	7	600.0
55	Kolkata	0	3	@	6	10	66.7
56	Lucknow	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
57	Ludhiana	5	10	100.0	0	1	@
58	Madurai	0	1	@	0	0	0.0
59	Meerut	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
60	Mumbai	4	8	100.0	35	41	17.1
61	Nagpur	2	5	150.0	2	0	-100.0
62	Nasik	4	14	250.0	68	0	-100.0
63	Patna	0	1	@	0	0	0.0
64	Pune	5	32	540.0	3	26	766.7
65	Rajkot	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
66	Surat	2	3	50.0	0	0	0.0
67	Vadodara	3	10	233.3	0	0	0.0
68	Varanasi	0	2	@	0	0	0.0
69	Vijaywada	4	0	-100.0	0	0	0.0
70	Vishakhapatnam	0	30	@	0	1	@
	Total (Cities)	178	347	94.9	168	150	-10.7

Note: @ indicates infinite percentage variation because of division by zero.
Source: 'Crime in India' (2010) published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

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the hand 60 per cent replied that women should not venture out alone after 8 PM. Sixty eight per cent of the respondents told that they avoid going to movies and pubs after 10 PM. Respondents replied that pubs and other entertainment public places' are crowded with the youths from neo-rich families from nearby villages and their friends from far off areas. So you cannot expect them to conform to standards of public behaviour, more so when they get drunk. Survey respondents suggested that greater police presence and deployment of PCR vans, besides adequate outdoor CCTV surveillance, will help improve women's confidence. They also suggested that early closure of bars and pubs, and vigil on secluded/ lonely stretches will make the city safer for women.[4]

In an Interview DCP (east) Mahaswar Dayal commented on the problem of crime against women that one has to understand that the police are also working under many constraints. There is a shortage of staff, due to which there are many policemen who are putting in many more hours than they are required to. He also took initiative of deployment of women's police in urban areas where women should not feel any kind of hesitation in approaching them. They have been directed to handle rape cases sensitively.[5]

The industrialization has, in fact, brought into existence a number of fairly large cities, where police organization have failed, by and large, to keep pace with the rising urban problems of crime, including white-collar crime and juvenile delinquency, traffic regulation and law and order situation.

Rapid urbanization has brought manifold problems and today industrial towns are major industrial problem-oriented cities which pose various types of criminal problems. The massive industrialization has not been able to cope with the population explosion which in turn has given birth to manifold problems like increasing lawlessness, riots, floating population, overcrowding traffic problem and so on and so forth. All these problems have became a part of city life and have created havoc. Although there is a huge police organization for prevention and detection of crime but situation is very alarming everywhere in the country. To control these crimes effectively police machinery is required in urban settings because many types of the crime are new and severe in nature which need immediate action. Actually police machinery has been facing the problem because emerging crimes are not properly listed in Indian Penal Code which was formed in 1861 and these crimes were not committed at that time but now it has become the need of the hour otherwise police machinery will feel handicapped in controlling and

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registering crime in the cities. Although crime prevention is the responsibility of the police administration but people cooperation is also required to make the police's endeavours successful. Criminals come from among the common people therefore their cooperation is essential to find out the criminals and they can also help in the investigation of crimes at every level.

Emerging trends in crime can be checked only if the socio-politico and economic environments are changed in such a way that crimes are not encouraged or tolerated. Creating more employment opportunities, fighting against poverty, encouraging literacy programmes, controlling population, discouraging politicization of criminals, avoiding criminalization of politics, developing civic sense and citizens' responsibility among people, eradicating communalism, condemning fundamentalism, warring against terrorism and insurgency, capturing economic offenders, initiating legal action against organized criminals, providing opportunities for the young to come up in life, establishing healthy police-public relationship etc. can and do help a lot to curb down the extent and intensity of crimes especially group crimes in society.

Footnotes

[1]Mishra R.C. (2002) Crime Trends in India, Author Press New Delhi.

[2]Crime in India' (2010) Published by National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

[3]Ibid

[4]Times of India, 22 March 2012, p. 6.

[4]Times of India, 20 March, 2012, p. 2.