CHAPTER - VIII

CRIMES IN VILLAGES IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA:-

India is predominantly a Rural Country as 74.3% of its population lives in the rural area.\(^1\)

In Maharashtra State Rural Population is only 61% in about 40,412 Villages. Rural Population 482.95 and Urban Population is 305.43 (In-lakh)\(^2\)

There are 33 Cities in Maharashtra having more than 1 Lakh population. The main business in the rural area is agriculture one. Therefore, the crime in rural area are usually Theft, Robbery, Dacoity, Unlawful-Assembly, Riots, Hurt etc. are more than the violent or other Urban Crimes. Female ratio in rural area is more than Urban 972:875 per 1000 of males. The literacy rate of rural area is very less than urban. Maximum people are farmers and labours and they are uneducated and poor. Role of police in these areas is very sensitive and co-operative one, because in the villages only police patil and kotwal are assigned by the police department through which the beat Jamadar (Head- Constable) is supervising the areas of group of villages. They have to report the crime to their police station and supply the intelligence of happening of any cognizable crime; in future and to take preventive action.

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1. Crime In India, 1993, p.119
2. Govt. Diary, Maharashtra-State-1996, p.21-22
In some villages there are Village Defence Parties constituted by the superintendent of police U/s. 63-B of the Bombay Police Act. The requirement of village policing may be broadly classified as follows:—

i) Maintenance of peace and order.

ii) Protection of life and property.

iii) Safe-Guarding the health of Villagers from epidemics etc.

The village police are required to prevent offences like riots between party functions in the village, keep watch over the bad characters from village itself and also those who come from outsides, They should report the incidents of any crime, accident and deaths to the concerned police station. They should give aid to the sick and helpless persons. Village policing is mainly based on police-patil and kotwal. Village defence parties are practically defunct and they are exists only on the paper.

CRIME & CAUSES:— In villages the main causes of crimes are poverty, illiteracy, rivalry, local politics, money lending and urban trend in the environment. The early ideas of causes of criminality were the behaviour undesirable from the point of view of society. But now it is the universal belief that those who committed crime did so out of their own free will and as such, They were responsible for their action.

The property crimes in the village are more than all other violent crimes and white collar crimes. There is no statistics of village crime is available but it can be seen from the small districts in different region in Maharashtra State having less urban area. The crimes under different heads in the districts - Yavatmal, Beed, Dhule, Ratnagiri, Satara, for the year 1993 can be seen from the following table for comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>CRIME HEAD</th>
<th>RATNAGIRI</th>
<th>SATARA</th>
<th>DHULE</th>
<th>BEED</th>
<th>YAVATMAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Att. to Murder</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Culpable Homicide</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kidnapping &amp; Abduction</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Dacoity</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Preparation of Assembly for Dacoity</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>1011</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>1359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table Contd..Next Page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
<th>6.</th>
<th>7.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Riots</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Criminal breach of Trust</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Counterfeiting</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Other IPC Crimes</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>2350</td>
<td>2059</td>
<td>2770</td>
<td>2876</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Total Cognizable Crimes under IPC</td>
<td>1436</td>
<td>3584</td>
<td>3967</td>
<td>4081</td>
<td>5111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 17. | Gambling | 347 | 986 | 2773 | 292 | 2598 |
| 18. | Prohibition | 3174 | 2395 | 4923 | 1116 | 8780 |

Table No. 8.1

It is apparent to note from and the above table that property crimes and crimes under gambling and prohibition are more in the village area as compared to the other crimes.

II) PRESENT ROLE OF POLICE

Present system of village policing is governed by the Maharashtra Village Police Act-1967. The administration of the village police throughout each district shall under the control and direction of the State Government. Village police in each village is under the charge of police patil and he is acting under the orders of Executive-Magistrate within the local jurisdiction.

Duties of police patil are very vast as enumerated in S-6 & S-8 of The Mah. Village Police Act-1967. But the main duty of police patil is to collect and communicate the intelligence of probable crime to the police and take the precaution to prevent the crime like Robbery, Public nuisances and bring the offenders to the notice of the police station officer.

As per S-63 (B) of The Bombay Police Act, the District Superintendent of police may constitute village defence parties for protection of the security of property and public safety in the villages. It is the very effective scheme in the preventive activities but unfortunately it is still on paper. Therefore its result are not come out in picture. Police are still doing the general ways of preventing activities in villages during the festivals like Ganapati-Utsav, Moharrum etc. They are maintaining record as mentioned in Chapter-III of the Bombay Police Manual 1959. The present activities are required to be change with the change of time and society and to make more effective ways of preventive activities.

FUTURE ROLE OF POLICE:-

Preventive measures assume special importance in villages, where there is no immediate aid of police or security is available, in the situation of serious threat to public order or security. The increasing trend in the occurrence of atrocities against the weaker sections of the community, particularly in the rural areas.

Hindu-Harijan friction, Hindu-Muslim communal riots are happened despite of timely preventive measures. The communal clashes resulting in heavy damage to life and property accompanied by acrimony and bitterness all around. The National Police Commission observed that now the time is come that the administration will have to be in constant preparedness to deal with the problem of communal violence which has shown no signs of abating.

The major bitterness in the individual and in community in villages are due to political activities and elections. Inter-groups conflicts during election mostly lead to violence. Poverty, growing unemployment, exploitation of labours, child labour and education are the main causes of crimes, are required to be remove from the village. The goondas and money lenders i.e. muscle power and money power persons are necessary to be identify by the police and shall have control over them. In the villages still some potential personalities are having public faith and and belief, therefore police should take benefit of those persons.

In every police station level there shall be one, "village peace, security, aid and advise committee" under the Chairmanship of Executive Magistrate. Police Station officer becomes the executive officer and Secretary of the committee. Police prosecutor being the Ex-Officio- Vice-Chairman, Ex-Officio members are Local M.L.A. or M.L.C., member of Zilha-Parishad & Panchayat Samiti, Block Development Officer, Education Officer, Sarpanch & Police-Patil. The appointed members should be the potential leaders from different castes; agriculture labours, women, Advocates, Doctors, Businessmen, teachersn, etc. In the same way there shall be sub-committees of these committees in every village headed by Naib-Tahasildar and Vice Chairman is Sarpanch and Secretary is beat Head Constable with other appointed members from different classes.

It is the need of time that to potentize our village Defence Parties in the different manner. In my opinion S-63-B of The Bombay Police Act-1951 is to be amended by adding following amendments in Village Defence Parties:-

1. Every member is to be called as Gram-Rakshak or Village constable.

2. Age of recruitment - 20 to 30 Yrs.

3. Total members- Equivalent to the members of Grampanchayat. Out of which Male-2/3 and Female 1/3 if available.

5. Appoint and allot the work to the educated unemployed persons who are taking remuneration.

6. Training - appropriate to their duties.

7. Weightage in recruitment of police force.

8. Rewards for better work. 9. Patrolling duties by night in group on the cycles with lathi.

10. To control and regulate the traffic and removal of the encroachment etc.

11. There shall be a Head Village constable being head of village Defence Party and it also be guided and supervised by the police patil for implementation of the provision of Maharashtra Village Police Act-1967.

12. The Head Village Constable will be a full time functionary with monthly remuneration, or salary.

13. The statutory powers of arrest and seizer of property and inform to the police with their Telephone.

14. Village Defence parties. may be utilised for service of summons and securing presence of witnesses for investigation & trial.

15. Office, Telephone, Cycle, Weapon like lathi should be supplied by Govt.

16. Members of V.D.P. shall be deemed to be the public servant under I.P.C. They shall be provided with badges and identity cards. (No.12 to 16)
17. Members of V.D.P. shall be paid with minimum remuneration given to a educated unemployed person and they should be paid T.A. & D.A. if called for duties, outside their native village.

It will create more employment to the unemployed for the time-being and preference in recruitment of Police to these volunteers induced them to do better performance in their duties.

These persons being from the local residents they can collect more intelligence effectively and inform to the police department. Villagers also having personal faith in them and can have better communication with them. In the words of Rev. Dada (Pandurang Shastri Athavale) "the basic method of communication is man meeting man, life confronting life." He further guided that, "to reorient individual's perspective towards life and collective existence that builds self-esteem and self-confidence. Without this, one can neither achieve individual development nor ensure a healthy community life."

In this way there will be the community village policing i.e. the policing from the persons of the village itself. The Village Defence Parties empowered with law will play a effective role in the prevention of village crimes with the interaction of police administration and supervision.

of village peace, security aid & advice committee at the sensitive occasions.

These Village Defence Parties should help the administration in the situation of natural calamities and disasters. They should help the villagers in the epidemics, sickness and with their co-operation do the social activities like tree-plantation, storage of water, pure water for drinking, cultural activities etc.

They should keep close contact with cultural, educational, voluntary organisations Grampanchayat and Senior Citizens. thereby they can create a good band between police and the villagers. These activities can reach to the grass-root level of the causation of crimes. If this scheme is effectively performed with multi-dimentional view of police community relationship and crime prevention activity with co-operation of villagers then it will definitely gave positive results.

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