CHAPTER IV

NATURE OF DACOITY
Dacoity is not a uniquely Indian characteristic. It has existed in some form or another, in all parts of the world. Yet, the recorded history of central India is evidently pointed out that the area has been the happy hunting ground of Thugs, Pindaries, Budnath dacoits, Frontier robbers and free booters for ages. The professional thieves and criminal tribes like sonorias, Chanderburies and kanjars found in Bundelkhand and nearly regions for a long time. The people of Chambal, Doab and Bundelkhand including adjoining areas of these regions have a long history of rebelliousness against the Delhi, Agra, Gwalior and Awadh rulers. They continued to rebel against the authority of these states but with no success, with the changing circumstances and time the spirit of revolt has been converted in the life style of a brigand or Baghi.

This history mix has given a peculiar prestige to dacoity and it is probably in this tradition that dacoits are referred to as bagnis (revels) and not daku (dacoits). The long spell of feudal rule in the area has also contributed to the strengthening of the institution of dacoity. Due to the historical origin of the problem outlaws in these regions are not stigmatized in their own communities. On the other hand, they are bestowed the honorific titles of Dau, Raja, Netaji, Mukniya, Mama, Saba, Dasyuraja or Dasyusmarata etc. 1 Long before Devi Singh in Bundelkhand had the same Robinhood reputation

the reinforcement of influence of dacoits.\(^1\) Besides it, the remote villagers in ravines and jungles have no alternative for their security except to provide the food and shelter for dacoits. This societal acceptance help the dacoits to reign over the area with the result that the long arms of law can no harm to these outlaws. As Kapoor observes about the law and order situation in the ravineous villagers, "The villagers in this tract are mostly inaccessible, no doubt, for this very reason, the long arms of law often fails to reach the law breaker."\(^2\)

Organised Crime: In the present context recent concern over the rising volume of daring daccities accompanying violence and wanton destruction of life and property, has caused considerable anxiety to the people as well as to the state Governments of central India. Mass murders committed by organised dacoit gangs with ferocious rapacity ominously present in the countryside once again a sudden spurt in crime. The days have gone, when banditry was considered eulogised profession for some of warrior races inhabiting the Chambal region or nearby area, now the people have taken to dacoity as a whole time as well as part time profession.

A dacoit gang rules the roost by violence and terror. A gang makes its criminal debut by a savage display of cruelty, molesting women, ransacking whole villages and leaving behind

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1. See, The Incident of Badanpur, 13.11.79, Mainpuri.
a gory trail of multiple murders.\(^1\) Besides it, kidnapping is becoming the common modus operandi of the present day dacoit gangs. Not only the persons are dragged out of their homes but the school going children, males and females working in the fields and the people going out of their villages are kidnapped for ransom. The job of kidnapping is a favourite and easy tool of dacoits because no one dare communicate to police the substance of negotiations for ransom as the kidnapped person may be killed by the dacoits. The overwhelming sense of insecurity bred in the dacoits infested regions is so profound that men dare not venture out of their homes to run their agricultural pursuits, during evening and night hours.\(^2\)

It is observed that dacoit gangs establish their own code of law over their operational areas, create conditions of awe and terror and even sometimes they commit the heinous crimes to gain notoriety, which creates terror and a nerve shattering fear among the villagers of countryside. Actually, increasing cruelty of a gang is directly proportional to the amount taken of ransom for kidnapping. This helps them to create influence over the mass to extort money also. The gangs terrorise the inhabitants of these areas by swooping down to loot, murder and kidnap individuals for ransom. Travellers, truck convoys of valuable goods and passenger buses on the highways are plundered with impunity and even a slight opposition

is dealt with severe results. It is common practice seasoned dacoits to amputate a victim's limbs, or sever his nose, ears, tongue, and genital organs etc.

Police informers and witnesses are the sore enemy of dacoits. Generally these are met with disastrous consequences. Dacoits try to hostile the witness against the cases of their fellow members in the prosecution. Protection is awarded to those who pay the tribute demanded and provide food and shelter to them. Extortions are generally wrung out from traders, owners of buses and trucks, contractors and businessmen inhabiting the operational area of a dacoit gang.

Institutional Form:- Dacoity is a peculiar crime forming a blight on society of rural India. The menace is very complex and labyrinthine in nature. Many diverse factors account for this perennial problem in these regions. It has features of organised group, having either a definite number of members or specific membership, roles a consensus of expected norms and a leader who supplies logical directions for gang activities. It is harboured and supported from petty criminals to white collar elite - like village leaders. Members of Legislative Assemblies, advocates, and other influential persons who provide a wide range of harbouring in one way or other. Dacoits find in powerful sections of the community if not active support at

2. See, The Mass Massacre of Kunwarpur Village, 2.5.81, Etah.
3. See, Rampura Massacre, 27.6.82, Mainpuri.
least passive sympathy for organised violence and pillage on Harijans. This has had disastrous results in these areas where social attitudes towards crime are already different.

It is a matter of common experiences that to help dacoits yields immediate dividends in rural areas while aid to police is bound to be risky. For a guard can not be posted to protect every villager.

The modern context of organised dacoity is a legacy of an old legend of traditional Indian banditry. Although, much of its traditional content and modus operandi has been lost, the basic structure has remained to great extent intact. We do not only hear and read in the press about armed dacoities being committed almost every day, but also mass massacre frequently. The figures, given in the table XVI do not however, tend to come down despite the best efforts of governmental as well as social agencies.

An analysis of dacoity cases reported in Indian States during period of 1971-73 evidently show that among the Indian states and Union territory, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are highly infested with dacoity. The state of Uttar Pradesh topped the list of dacoity cases in number as well as in volume per lac of population.

According to dacoities reported in Crime in India, there is no uniform distribution of dacoity in the districts of Uttar Pradesh but this is very much striking to note that the districts of Doab - Agra, Etawah, Etah, Mainpuri, Farrukhabad
and Kanpur have a good number of dacoity cases while the region of Bundelkhand does not show the equality in crimes. In this region the districts of Banda, Hamirpur and Jalaun are more dacoits infested than Jhansi and Lalitpur.

**Table XVII**

**Districtwise Dacoity in Dacoits Infested Regions of J.P.**

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Buda</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mainpuri</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Etawah</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Farrukhabad</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kanpur</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Badaun</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Jhansi</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Banda</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Hamirpur</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Jalaun</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Lalitpur</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Crime in India, 1974-78, New Delhi.

To understand the real nature of dacoity system we have concentrated on three main points:

* Individual dacoits, and the process of dacoitisation.
* What stands the more important than the individual dacoits.
  is the structure of a gang and its functioning and,
* Extra and outer relations of a gang.

**THE PROCESS OF DACOITISATION**

The whole process which includes all above points
from the commission of a dacoity to the acquisition of a dacoit
character is a long process which may roughly term dacoitisation
as the term used by Singh. "Dacoitisation is a process where
individuals belonging to a given socio-cultural tradition
resort to outlawry, adopts its criminal values and norms and
reinforce them."¹

It is evidently true that the ravines of Chambal
Yamuna and its tributaries provide the ideal physiographic
hideouts for fugitives from law, but dacoity, as we shall see,
is not a manifestation of ecological or individual character-
istics - biological or psychological. Although a product
of multiplicity of factors including the psychological, it
is by nature, origin and continuance largely a sociological
concern.

 Every society imposes a certain discipline and effort,
a subordination of impulses and self interest to the common
understandings, but there are always temptations and incentives

¹. Singh, R.G., 1981: Terror to Reform, Intellectual Book Corner,

New Delhi. P.13
The highest number of subject 20.98 percent came into dacoity after committing murder and dare not to go for justice. Feuds born of land disputes is the second major reason for 17.95 percent inmate in our sample. Another 13.83 percent gravitated to dacoity due to party politics and factionalism and 11.60 percent by association or close contact with dacoits already in the trade. In otherward, we may say about these respondents are rural outlaws or goondas who would be juvenile dilinquent if they were investigate during their adolescence. Ill socialisation is responsible for 9.37 percent inmates to be dacoits. And remaining 7.58 percent as counter offensive against stronger elements and police oppression is responsible for harbouring and deviant activities.

Insufferable economic factors cannot be lost sight of 5.80 percent of the interviewed dacoits were drawn to this profession because of poverty and unemployment. Lastly, a slight percentage about 4.6 percent of dacoits expressed the reason for this outlawry the dispute on females.

In most of the cases murders are committed emotionally and revengefully on the disputes of land, women, parental rivalries and so on. In the event of any disputes instead going to court the people take law into their own hands and decide the matter themselves at the point of a gun. Actually, it is a known fact that the procedure of justice is delayed and costly game. Everybody can not afford of police, lawyers and witnesses and even then, there is no guarantee of right justice. So generally the first offender absconds.
In somewhat a similar view Khan expresses, "The inhabitants of the valley do not straight way embark upon a dacoit career. It is usually preceded by less serious offences. In most of the cases, when named or checked by the police for some offences which may be mostly a minor one, they, the inhabitant of the valley, find it easier to jump into ravines than to face the court trail and absorb the sentence."¹

The people, who are indulged in property and land dispute and rivalries, feel insecure. Such persons seek some false security to contact antisocial elements. To some extent they get it but with the disastrous result of this closeness they find themselves in the ambit of crime. Whenever they are oppressed by opposite party or inquired by police they abscond and thus, the absconders add the number 66 jangs already in the existence.

By the way an offender is caught and sent to jail, it is very clear that a reverse effect of imprisonment goes on the first hand offender. As Clemmer studies and finds that the inmate social system and culture impinge on the individual offender who is subjected to it.² Partisanship or factional quarrel is a potential cause of conflict in rural society and usually culminates in a chain of murders, factionalism is tanned


by people's search for power also, be it in a village council or in local and general elections, or in public gatherings, functions and meals, or to gain control other labour and the vacant plots of land in a village or by siphoning off the benefits, help and aids available under schemes of the Government at the cost of seeking the police on their opponents and enemies.

Day by day elections at all levels are a major source of wrangle in a village community. Once there was a total hold of upper castes like bramans and Thakura or some other dominant castes on the rural power structure, but after independance and with the abolition of zamindari system, the traditional rural power structure have undergone change to great extent. This results a race for capturing the power. The want to uplift their economical as well as social status through elections, but on other hand the traditional caste system is not too loose to allow them for social mobility. Thus, the race for power generates tension and hostility among the people in the villages. Besides it in contemporary Indian politics there is no respect for moral values or ideology. Singh also observes, "Caste and creed subvert the highest egalitarian principles, and voting puts out in a dice throw in favour of a particular caste pocket".

In some cases different caste voting results into a caste conflict leading to murder and subsequent rivalry and

factional formation. A candidate who wins at the poll seeks the protection of bad elements of his own caste.¹ The magic of the ballot box is responsible for the creation of this type of gamut, in which the anti-social elements and politicians indulge.

Harbourers and police informers are the another source of conflict in the villages where they form faction against each other. It is found specially in the area of Shah, Mainpuri, Sawan and Farrukhabad that some influenced persons seek the help of criminals or even dacoits to suppress their opponent. Singhal observes, "The evil of these gang is not limited merely to the heinous offences. It goes further down to less heinous offences like forcible occupation of other's land, forcible crop cutting and tube well transformer theft by petty criminals whose strength lies not in their own selves but in the fact that they owe allegiance to the gang or police that reigns in that regions. A whole crop of oppressive bullies seems to have sprung up comparatively far off villages who belong to the same cases as that of the gang or who have made it known in their areas that they enjoy the patronage of the reigning gang or the gang leader or are known harbourers of the same."²

Police informers play a positive role in dacoitisation as Shah observes that bullied into a false sense of security

¹. See, Murder case , Saptahik Hindustan, 10 Jan. 81, New Delhi.
by the police, the informers settle their individual and family score with those of the dacoits, and spark off a feud of revenge and attribution which divides the village into hostile camps and ends in a blood bath. ¹ Friends and relations of the dead outlaw take to the hills after ruthlessly exterminating police informer. ²

Caste rivalry is generally believed and adequately considered by previous scholars to be the most prominent cause in fostering this life style. Garg concludes "caste rivalry, property disputes, ordinary village feuds and faulty administration of justice by the police are all contributory factors. ³

A still another cause for caste rivalry relates to gratis bond labour or low wages for manual work etc. After independence many for reaching changes occurred in our social structure. Though the oppressed castes have tried to revolt against the upper dominant castes even during the preindependence days ⁴, but after freedom it has taken violent form. It leads to caste rivalries and caste tension. The major caste group of the village inflict several injustice on the minor caste group.

¹. Times of India, 26.7.83, New Delhi.
². Incident of Naktai Village, 1.3.81, Etah.
It creates enmity which grows on with the increasing harassments. The minor caste group tries to avoid the quarrel in the beginning but when its patience exhausts, a serious fight breaks out. In the fight, sometimes, murders also take place, and the culprits abscond to escape from the clutches of law.  

Singh (1980: 42) concluded a different inference about the relation of outlawry and caste conflicts. He finds, "Caste has also relevance in sustaining the gang harbourer relationship and is of particular help in overriding the inducements of police rewards. But there is no evidence to believe that caste operations and feuds turn people into outlaws. Indeed, parties locked in a feud are quite often of the same caste and family".

\[TABLE XIX\]

Caste-wise Distribution of Sample Dacoits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>No. of Dacoits</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jatav</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Brahman</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kachhi</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Lodhi</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Pasi</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Other Castes</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>99.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our findings, however, indicate that caste plays a dual role in the breeding and feeding the system. There are instances of inter-caste as well as intracaste feuds and rivalries which foster the man to dacoitisation. The figure also countenance the caste oppression theory. In our sample 34.26 percent of sample dacoits came from higher echelons of the caste system while remaining 18 percent and 39.17 percent dacoits belong to backward and lower caste including scheduled castes and tribes. The causes behind the oppression of a recessive caste by a dominant caste are mainly inequality, destitution and social injustice. Often the cumulative outcome of a succession of torturing events take the form of violence that leads to outlawry.

In fact, caste complex still plays an important role in the formation of gangs as well as the commission of dacoity. In the next chapter we will examine how caste sub culture grows and becomes a part of social order in the form of criminal activities which convert crime into an occupation especially among the martial castes.

Similarly on the economic point we find that there are also cases of exploitation by the moneyed may, privileged class of the petty peasants and the landless labourers which make them revengeful. ¹ The spirit of revenge is launched and guided against the exploiting persons as symbol of social rebellion and since it is never organised enough, organised it is, but

¹ Subbarao, S.N.; Swatantra Bharat, 15 July, 1982, Lucknow.
in a narrow sense of fulfilling certain desires, furthering vested interests, gaining wealth for themselves in the process gains in upper hand, once the process of revenge starts hence, it can never converge as a class struggle, too in India due to the various factors causing it - act as deterrent against common uprising rather it tends to remain as an individual's act of violence and violation in a organised form. It is fact that as a matter of revenge then these higher castes strike back with equal cruelty instilling fear and terror and so the menace continues and continues to grow and grow and gain wider proportions.

We find that economically, there are two categories of dacoits - one who are at lower economic level. These dacoits are illiterate, poor, unemployed and belong to low social status. Second category of those who came from relatively high economic level. Dispute over land and property sent them careening into dacoity. Most dacoits in this category are from the higher castes where the pressure was higher on each earning member. Moreover, the standard of living, which is high, has to be maintained whatever the cost. While it is true that they own property, the accumulation of mere wealth is necessary if they are to ride their hobby horse of traditional supremacy, power and prestige over their members of their own caste and those of others. Their exclusive dependence on property to the exclusion of labour makes them profoundly property conscious, which sparks off rivalries often with their own kin, the co-sharers of their property.

Instead of assuming that dacoity is only a product of the oppre-
ssion of a recessive caste by a dominant caste, it would be more prevalent to look for the causes in inequality, destitution and social injustice.

Violence as a way of life is often the cumulative outcome of a succession of unfortunate events that push like tides against a man’s inner defences. They wear him down by degrees, till the fractional pressure of another acts as the proverbial last straw and launches him into a career of crime and destruction. Savour the cases of Man Singh, Panchan Singh, Janak Singh, Deesh Raj whose families were destroyed by rival groups.

RATIONALISATION

Merely a reason or a set of reasons does not drive a potential deviant to commit infractions unless he has not also found some mental justifications for his lawlessness. As Block and Geis, (1962:161) observe, "Among the most significant attributes of the professional criminals is an elaborate system of rationalisation, a system that is made up of verbal justification for a way of life that elicits disapproval from a large segment of society". In the first place, as suggested by sykes and Matza (1937: 292-299), "A deviate attempts to neutralise the preexisting normative constraints, legal or moral with the argument. A large number of anti social people masquerading as civilised citizens harm society more than I/we do." Moreover,

he would perhaps insist, "we limit our attack to those who
deserve it, while the so called fathers and law makers infringe
more laws than we do." 1

It would, however, be wrong to believe that violence
by a dacoit signifies a revolt against, or total rejection, of
the existing normative structure. It is rather an act of under-
mining the moral pressure of society and to underscore the fact
that violence, under certain circumstances, if not right and
legal, is unavoidable and therefore justifiable. Briefly, a
dacoit rationalises his act on the following grounds:
1. Some potential dacoits state that the way we have adopted
   is not that of a coward, it is consistent with and even
   empowers my sense of honour and self respect.
2. Force of circumstances compelled me to become a dacoit.
   There was no other way of securing redress of my genuine
   grievances. There is a question of my existence. If we do
   not protest against our opponent by force and violence then
   they killed us. So we have to do violence for the sake of
   violence.
3. After committing the crime if we returned to our home we
   had to face double force of the opponent and the police.
4. Some dacoits who had served army or police, argued that
   when a man like a soldier is surrounded by odd circumstances
   and pressure exerted by enemy and finds no way to escape,
   then he fight with motive of do or die.

1. Sykes, G.M. and Matza, D: "Techniques of Neutralisation:
   op. cit. p. 46.
5. There is no justice with poor in the society. Might is right. Those who enforce justice in the society are themselves not just. There is practically no justice for the underdog in the system. Nobody listen to poor, where we should approach for justice?

6. A small percentage of inmate dacoits accepted that it is better to commit robberies, dacoities and similar offences rather than die of starvation.

Of the major factors that insulate the dacoits from public criticism, condemnation, and self-devaluation are their isolation and their power to inflict hurt. Their contacts are limited largely to their own men - members of their gang or those shelter them in the time of trouble or those who consive at their acts. A common villages, on the other hand, has nothing to do with them as he is neither troubled nor benefited by their operations. But like others, the fear of reprimal keeps him from condemning them even convertly.

This makes abscondence morally defensible. And, as discussed earlier, the availability of physical hide-outs, the existence of gangs to train and provide arms and shelter, and the passive acquiescence of society, make more and more people look upon dacoity as a career. In short, deviation is not the result of initial social conditions nor of individual factors alone. As Buckley (1967: 61) observes: "It is deviation amplifying operations between the personality system and the situation that has generated the deviant out-come".

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Generally, no body incurs a risk for himself by joining a gang simply because of the lure of the system. Before finally deciding to adopt dacoity as the means of attaining his aim, a person passes through a period of intense thinking. When he is thus in a state of mental tension and is wandering to turn deviate or not, there usually occurs some event which rooses the underlying impulse in him and has-tens him along the way of crime. Thus, most of the dacoits accepted that some situations in their life worked as catalysts in causing a violent act which led them to deviate. Normally a person, even though involved in a feud with others, does not choose to be a dacoit until he murders his rival enemy or until he feels so insecure as to consider revenge unavoidable.

As is apparent from the table XVIII makes it clear that for a large majority of dacoits (30.98%) murder was the stepping stone to dacoity while 17.35 percent gravitated to it to work out their revenge. A smaller percentage (6.69%) join either because they have been marked by the police for harbouring a gang, or have had the police implicate them under false charge, with stepped up psychological pressure that involved the burning of their crops and harvests the destruction of homes the seizure of their cattle and properties. And then, there is that small minority of 2.67 percent who joined a gang as a last resort to have a particular dispute on females.

Finally, barring those who were not known either to
a gang chieftain, or to any member of the gang, or to a harbourer
the others (81%) had been lured into the system by the social
system itself: while (19%) were either members of the family,
neighbours, close friends, relatives of a dacoit or his chief
or harbourers.

Thus, we have already mentioned, people turn into
dacoits and seek admission into gangs from different motives.
Some join for the purpose of gaining monetary profit, others in
order to be able to take revenge, and yet others in search of
status, power and prestige. In answer to a question, it is reported
that powerful dacoit chieftains and core members of a gang had
fulfilled their aspirations. They had deserted the family of
their real enemies.

Most of the petty dacoits accepted that they could
not secure any significant gain or fulfill their aspirations.
On the other hand they were charged falsely by their enemies.
From the view point of labelling, we find that about 7 percent
of the dacoits took up dacoity when they were harassed by police
in order to get informations that might help in apprehending
the dacoits who were either harbourered by them or were their
friends.

Thus, the maximum number of dacoits were one time har-
bourers who were in the profession because the police was privy
to their role and was closing in on them, or because they had
committed a murder and were on the run, or more simply for
revenge.
Ramji: I am Ramji S/O Kanaaji dacoit belongs to village Hindupura, P.S. - Kurra in district Mainpuri. My father himself was a dacoit. He trained me the ethic of dacoit. Later on, I came into the contact of notorious dacoit, Kasni Ram, Aheer. Actually all these dacoits were harboured by my father. I was a core member of Kasni Ram. We organised the gang after the death of Kasni Ram.

We came into the lime light when we planned to plunder a blacksmith's family on 23th July, 1977. Kasni Ram managed some extra weapons and set off for pilage. On 26th July, 1977 at about 8 p.m. we looted the family of 'Samar'. The villagers opened fire against our gang. We ran away from the village. Our three gang members wounded whose names were Bhura, Shivrul and Manharaj Singh. Later on, Bhura was killed in an encounter with police.

Our gang was armed with one thirty carbine rifle, one 315 bore, one 303 bore, one 12 bore and some single barrel 12 bore and country made pistols. In beginning the total gang members in our gang were thirteen.

Mool Chand S/O Saiyaddeen Chamar: I belong to village Sakin, in Jalaun District. I have 7-8 bighas land of my father, but it was not sufficient for the sustenance of our family. I used to earn money by illegal means instead of hard labour. I was a gang member of Vijay Singh gang in which I had to vigil the bag and baggage of the gang members. I fled away during the

Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Uttar Pradesh, Agra.
encounter took place in the forest of 'Nivahana' and concealed the arms in the forest. I was in the search of some new gang.

The gang was harboured by the local influential persons as well as poor ones. Arms and ammunition was managed by the gang leader. Every gang has oil and ragged clothes for cleaning the arms. Usually our gang marched in the night between 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. in the morning. There were separate watch on kidnapped person and gang but during day time, generally, a single gang member vigilated either by a good night or from a tree.

In our gang each member had a bowl for taking food. Polytin sheets were used for sleeping and to prepare the food. Besides it, dild, soap, mirror and transistor were kept in a bag. In morning, after having bath we cooked our food combinedly near a mullah or riverside. Sometimes reliable person also used to serve the cooked food. All gang members were non-vegetarian.

There was strict prohibition on gambling and drinking in our gang. If a gang member refract the rule he was punished for hundred rupees. The gang leader had illicit sex relations with the women of Nalanas or Kawats.

Maniram S/O Maharjua Kumhar, vill. Kathpurwa, Jalaun (U.P.)

I myself surrendered on 20th October 1982 at Shind court in Madhya Pradesh. I remained four years active member of different gangs. I am illiterate I used to plough before absconding. My brother-in-law Valwana was the member of Mustkaem gang who became dacoit due to the conflict with Thakurs of his village. He was

Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Uttar Pradesh, Agra.
killed in an encounter due to informing police by the villagers of Champa. To take revenge I absconded with my nephew and joined the gang.

I was the member of Hasteem gang when I shot 6 Yadavas and a policeman in an encounter in Jatwa District. Later on I left the gang of notorious dacoit Hasteem. In our gang, the gang leader managed the arms and ammunitions. One gang deserts the other gang when inter gang conflicts arise. If a gang member wants to leave the gang, he has to surrender the arms to gang leader.

Our gang took refuge in the forest of the Chakarnagar, Jagannath, Dawas, Saranpur, Jognoun, Kaliya, the riverside of Panaj, Sayonaka Dang, Markwan, and Watangarn ki mata. I have no illicit sex relation with other women. I had to vigil the gang during the rest hours.¹

Hussain Saiyad: Hussain and Saiyad surrendered themselves on 16 July 1981. Exploitation by the money lender was one main cause for making them dacoits. The money lender who lent them sum money was not repayed by them. So money lender deprived them of their lands and that's why the money lender was murdered by them. Then, they absconded in to the ravines. For organisation of a gang they needed money, arms and weapons so they committed dacoities and kidnapping for ransom.

Normally first offender absconds because he fears that justice would not be done with him.²

¹. Anti Dacoity Cell, Uttar Pradesh, Agra.
CASE HISTORIES

1. Sadashiv Alias Fauji:— Sadashiv alias Fauji was born in 1947 in a Chamar family in a village, Sakin Anwan S.P. Baberus in Banda, (U.P.). He got his education upto eighth standard. He was an intelligent boy. He has served in Home Guard in 1964. Thereafter in 1963, he got recruited in Army. His criminal career started when in 1972 his brother Ram Ratan was murdered by a Thakurs. After the murder of his brother, his wife was raped. He came to his village on two months leave and thereafter became deserter and started indulging in heinous crimes, to take vengeance upon his enemy. The gang is known to have as many as 28 members. The gang is armed with modern automatic weapons like sten gun, rifle, double barrel gun, 32SL guns and hand grenades.

The gang leader Fauji and some other members usually commit rape while committing dacoities. He protected Harijans and admitted them in his gang. He gave seven thousands of ruppes for buying motor cycle to campaign elections to a local leader.¹

2. Raju Bhatnagar:— Twenty four year old Raju alias Rajkumar Bhatnagar was born in Rath Tehsil of Hamirpur, (U.P.). He completed his graduation from Govt. College, Datia (M.P.). After crossing his teenage he came into the contact of antisocial elements. He joined the gang of dacoit Suresh Soni. After the arrest of Suresh Soni he was proved a notorious kidnaper who used to kidnap the persons of elite class. He was arrested in a posh colony in East Kailash, New Delhi.²


Pan Singh Tomar

Pan Singh Tomar carrying an award of Rs. 10,000 on his head, the broad faced and sturdy former athlete was the dreaded dacoits in Chambal. Implicated in a dacoity in June 1973, two years after 22 years honourable service in the army absconded. But the transition from the tartan tracks of racing to the tarturous terrain of the Chambal was not intentional. Like most dacoits, the 49 year old former army subedar was the victim of social injustice. Earlier, Pan Singh had to fight a court case when he was in service. Some persons of his village Under Sohania police station in Murena district, filed a case against his possession of the licensed rifle.

But Pan Singh's troubles did not end here. Also their relative, Babu Singh, encroached upon his land. When he resisted, he was beaten up and his nubile daughter insulated and her ornaments looted. He was snubbed by police even refused to register his complaint against Babu Singh who, instead, managed to lodge a false complaint against Pan Singh because of his influence. Even the Panchayat's decision against Babu Singh failed to get Pan Singh's land vacated. Frustrated Pan Singh gunned down Babu Singh in broad day light in March, 1979 and took refuge in the ravines. His elder brother Matadeen, a former army havildar and his nephew Hanuman, then joined him. The rugged athlete now headed a gang of 15 desperadoes. Pan Singh shot two of Babu Singh's sons in August, 1979, later on he lost his brother in a police encounter.

Pan Singh, who mostly indulges in kidnapping for ransom, is reported to have collected Rs. 1 lac as ransom from a village surpanch and a teacher.

Phoolan Devi, vill. Shekhurgaraha, Kanpur (U.P.)—Like other female dacoits she also came from lower socio-economic strata. She belongs to a mallan family. Even she could not bloom and got married at the early age with a widower of above forty. As she crossed her teenage her husband Putulal deserted her life. In meanwhile she was charged a case of theft on 16th January 1979 by her cousin due to land dispute. She had to pass 15 days under police custody and to satisfy the animal lust of rascals.

Thus, the story of Phoolan is not different from other female dacoits like Putul, Hasina, Kamalia, Maya, Kuntala, etc. During the course of her tension, she came into contact with a boy who was the friend of dacoit Vikram. When Vikram came to know about her he insisted her to the adventure, thrill and romance of banditry. After all she joined the gang of Vikram and became the cause of Vikram’s death.

Alvar 3/0 Godhan Ahar, vill. Balipura, Mainpuri—From the very early age Alvar, the notorious dacoit, was the man of perverso mentality. After the death of his parents he was left completely free. He plundered even his sister to secure her jewellery and murdered her. He also killed his brother-in-law Nepal Singh who got him arrested. Actually, his love for wine and woman had caused a lot of dessension. His Master, Chieftain German was a notorious dacoit. He fathered a number of dacoit chieftain like Pothi, Anarsingh, Manavira and Chhabiram. His gang took refuge in the forest of Kalinadi, in the forest of Pinjari and Saronth. He generally used local gang members in committing dacoity.
This notorious dacoit swooped down on the police station armoury of Pandokhar (Gwalior) like a hurricane and looted the 15 rifles 303, one 12 bore, a revolver, one stengun and some 1200 cartridges. His brother, Shiv Singh was a constable who was posted at police station of Pandokhar. He belonged to a poor family and could not be socialized well. On December 11th he absconded from Bhind District Jail and organised a strong gang with his brother.

Potni Ram S/O Chironji, vill. Behati (Kalan) Shahjahanpur (J.P.):- Potni belonged to a criminal family. His father was a murderer and his brother was encountered by police. In beginning he was arrested in cattle theft. After completion one year sentence he was discharged. Burning with rage he absconded and shot his brothers enemy Badshah Singh whose son was a witness in the above case. He had illicit sex relations with women.

Badshah Khan S/O Nawab Khan, vill. Sadpur, Mainpuri (J.P.):- His father deserted his mother in his early age. Hence he had to pass his childhood like or orphan which finally compelled to join the company of anti social elements. He began his early career with small theft and on 6th August 1977, for the first time, he committed a dacoity at Burhanagar in Ferozabad in which a person was killed. Therefore, he absconded but he was arrested on 15th December. Later on he jumped on bail in April 1981.

Bhagwan Kachhi S/O Mula Kachhi, vill. Khargatipur (Etah), J.P.:- Dacoit Bhagwandeen's mother had illicit relation with a Thakur. When he came to know that he was not the son of his father and
his mother had dual sex morality, he could not tolerate it and murdered the Thakur. Now he was sentenced for three years rigorous imprisonment. After completion of his sentence he was released. Again he was charged under section 25 on 3rd March 1972. And it was here in the jail he came into contact of various hardened criminals who gave finishing touch to his criminal talent.

Jagata Kachhi 3/O Ramphal Kachhi, vill. Changu, Agra (J.P.)---

Born in 1950 Jagata Kachhi had two brother and two sisters. He had a small piece of land. His family was facing severe financial crises which forced his brother to take part in anti social activities. Later on he became a dacoit. After his brother's encounter Jagata also adopted the same way of life. In 1977 he was arrested on the spot in a dacoity with arms. After one year he jumped on bail.

Brajwasi 3/O Ramiset Jatav, vill. Nagshulli, Etawah (J.P.)---

Born in 1945 Brajwasi Jatav had to pass his early life as an orphan after the death of his father. He had no means of livelihood. Dacoity perhaps appealed to him mainly for its financial rewards. He came into contact with a notorious thief named Pyare who had a long experience of dacoity. With his help he committed a dacoity on 16th March 1970. He was tried and convicted. In 1973 he was released on bail. He transferred his property in the name of his brother-in-law and absconded. In 1974 he was again arrested but in 1977 he managed to run away. He organised his own gang which took refuge in the villages of Yamuna ravines within the police circle of Jaswantnagar.
his mother had dual sex morality, he could not tolerate it and murdered the Thakur. Now he was sentenced for three years rigorous imprisonment. After completion of his sentence he was released. Again he was charged under section 25 on 3rd March 1972. And it was here in the jail he came into contact of various hardened criminals who gave finishing touch to his criminal talent.

Jagata Kachhi S/O rampal Kachhi, vill. Chongali,agra (J.P.):-

Born in 1950 Jagata Kachhi had two brother and two sisters. He had a small piece of land. His family was facing severe financial crises which forced his brother to take part in anti social activities. Later on he became a dacoit. After his brother's encounter Jagata also adopted the same way of life. In 1977 he was arrested on the spot in a dacoity with arms. After one year he jumped on bail.

Brajwasi S/O Naileet Jatav, vill. Jagdishuli, Etawah (J.P.):-

Born in 1945 Brajwasi Jatav had to pass his early life as an orphan after the death of his father. He had no means of livelihood. Dacoity perhaps appealed to him mainly for its financial rewards. He came into contact with a notorious thief named Pyare who had a long experience of dacoity. With his help he committed a dacoity on 16th March 1970. He was tried and convicted. In 1973 he was released on bail. He transferred his property in the name of his brother-in-law and absconded. In 1974 he was again arrested but in 1977 he managed to run away. He organised his own gang which took refuge in the villages of Yamuna ravines within the police circle of Jaswantnagar.
Dacoity is an organised violence when five or more persons conjointly commit or attempt to commit a robbery. In dacoity robbery and violence go together. Similarly, a dacoit gang comprises of at least five members armed with lethal weapons who by means of violence, or threats of such violence engage in theft, extortion, kidnapping, murder and collection of tribute from people in the area under its way and influence.

The dacoit gangs may be classified in many ways on the basis of operational area, size and strength, nature of gang membership etc. Generally gangs are listed by police according to their operational areas:

1. **Inter District Gangs:** These gangs operate in a limited area, generally, from one district to another district in a state. These gangs have limited members and firearms. If these type of gangs pass its evolutionary period successfully, they develop into big ones.

2. **Inter Range Gangs:** These gangs are rather big in size and strength and move from one range to another range in a state. These gangs are considered more powerful and resourceful. During the course of time they develop in to inter state gangs.

3. **Inter State Gangs:** Relatively, these gangs are major gangs, consisting of about twenty to fifty or more members and equipped with modern weapons. This type of gang is capable of demolishing
any resistance that may be offered them in their raid or during public encounters. Such gangs possess a strong intelligence, plentiful firearms suppliers and a number of harbourers in different areas of operation.

On the tenure of gang establishment and membership as a whole there are two types of gangs: permanent and local.

Permanent gang: These gangs are organized under chieftain on a relatively permanent or regular basis. Almost all the members of such gangs are on the identifications file of police records. The gang has its own well-defined structure, working procedure and code of conduct besides an auxiliary body for intelligence, arms and ammunition suppliers, and paid harbourers in the villages and nearby police stations. On the basis of its power, resources and men at command, a permanent gang may be further subdivided into three categories:

(a) Major gangs consisting of about fifty or more members under more than two subchieftains.

(b) Medium sized gangs with twenty or more members and relatively less resourceful than the major gangs.

(c) Minor gangs comprising roughly of ten or more members and relatively poor in capabilities and resources than the other two.

2. Local Gangs: The intermittent gangs are not organized.

on a regular basis. The members of these semi-organised gangs live inconspicuously in their local community. They take a banditry as a part-time occupation. Occasionally they assemble, move out together, plunder and disperse after distributing the booty. Khan (1981: 141) refers "Kanjars gangs are of lucid illustrations of this class."  

Actually, sometimes the permanent gangs also employ some local harbourers as plumbers at villages and whenever they need of them they are called for. Dacoit Untari in Alwar, Chhabiraham had this type of gang members in their operational areas. 

It is found that in Doab region the organisation of dacoit gangs is influenced by the pattern of Chambal dacoit gangs. While in Bundelkhand the size of gang small and poor in arms and ammunition.

The Structure of a Dacoit Gang:— The dacoit gangs have been of different size. The man power and strength of the gang often depends on circumstances, the will of gang leader and management. Generally, in minor gangs the member strength ranges from ten to fifteen. In medium sized gang this strength may be extended upto twenty five while in big one the strength may be in the range of 25 to near about 100 members.

Besides it, a big gang employ a number of local gang members temporarily at villages in the area of operation. The contemporary gangs show a tendency towards the medium sized

gang organisation, specially in Bundelkhand region the main-
tenance of big gang like Malkhan, Mohar Singh and Madnav Singh
or Chhabiram as gang, is rare. Generally a model gang's stren-
gth reported by surrendered chieftains has been between fifteen
to twenty including casual members.

Almost in all dacoit gangs at the top of the pyramid
is the chieftain who rules like an autocrat. The chieftain is
found predictably self appointed with proven or supposed resour-
cesfulness, courage and ruthlessness. In major gangs, however, there
is also a council of advisor consisting of core members to help
the leader of the gang. This council assist the leader in matter
of recruitment and advise him on the plan of action and mode of
operation. Nevertheless, the decision of a chief is in all
matters final and binding. Disobedience is dealt by with severely
and is sometimes punishable by death.

It is also found that in some major gangs such as
those of Chhabiram, Malkhan and Mustkeem were composed of two
or three divisions. Each division consisted of about twenty
five members under a subchieftains who exercised little autonomy.
In Bundelkhand region such type of division is not found. There
is only one subchieftain under the gang leader.

Besides leader, subchieftain and members, the big
gangs usually employ a fourth category of members, that of workers,
who are often new comers on probation. They undergo a short
period of training, ranging between few months to a year in the
use of arms and military strategy. At the same time they are
also assigned some menial works, like collecting wood, fetching water, carrying load and watching the kidnapped. These tasks are mostly prescribed for the indigent low castes who have neither arms nor the technical know how of using them. In most cases they approach a gang in search of employment or shelter.  

Exceptionally co-leadership is also seen in some prominent gangs like Lalaram - Sriram at present in Uttar Pradesh, Mauni-Ram-Sahay, (surrendered in 1972) Kala-Putli (Chambal), Hasina-Khilawan (Samuel Khand) etc. are the example of such type of gang leadership.

While discussing organisational aspects about the gang of adolescent thieves, Shukla (1970) has offered a useful typology. He observes, that in a gang there are leader, core members, peripheral members and fringe members in descending order.  

**Functions:** Usually the gang leader assigns the duties and functions among the gang members. A leader holds all major responsibilities, from overall control and enrolment to punishment for disloyalty. He arranges for food, clothing, arms and ammunition, controls the intelligence system, keeps accounts and distributes the profits amongst the members. A part from internal administration, a dacoit gang's chief is conscious of maintaining the security of his organisation from external pressure, both legal and moral. Which requires him to scout the ground for the more venal police officials and public leaders.

who would lend him ready convience for a consideration. More
he fixes the harboursers and receivers.

As a rule the chieftain of a major gang lays down
the plan of attack. The process of decision making in matters
concerning the gang and its activities is, no doubt the prerogative
of the leader. He may give due consideration to the views expres-
sed by the core members or the trusted lieutenants as Khan
(1981: 143) observed. In big gangs during the operation course
he waits at a safe distance with some gang members to counter
any emergency. The other members may carry out a raid simulta-
neously or be deployed more strategically. The chief joins a
farray only if it is a major one requiring his skill and guidance.

A subchieftain evidently assists the leader in all
matters besides those delegated to him, like leading his
division on operational raids, pakar (kidnapping) loot, and
repraisal against police informers. Also, a subchieftain assigns
task of routine watch to members and acts the middleman between
the chief and the harboursers. He has detailed besides requisitioning
food and other necessary articles for the gang.

They lay members functions as masseurs to the leader
and perform the work of cooks and attendants whenever needed.
Caste hierarchy plays a dominant role in the assignation of
duties. Menial tasks, for instance, are still the preserve of
the lowly.

Gang Administration and Control: — Many of the rules are practised in order to maintain security and organisation of the gang. These rules are designed by gang leaders who have real experience and knowledge of dealing with critical situations. In any case a member of gang is failed to follow these rules, he would be dealt with severe punishment. In some gangs, gambling, drinking and molesting women during dacoity operation are strictly prohibited. Still a gang member indulge in such activity, he may be shot dead for serious offence. In the situation of mutual disputes or misbehaviour among the members of a gang, the leader decides the matter, but if there is a serious matter, which poses a threat to the well being of a gang, the whole gang takes decision. Moreover, each member living with the others in the gang learns the code of conduct and unquestioned fidelity to the gang.

If a gang member wants to leave the gang, he has to surrender the gang’s arms. Without clearing the dues of prior gang, a member can not join the other gang also, otherwise his family members or mediator will be compelled to compensate. The breach of trust in any gang is punishable even by death. The gang leader is ready to silence him for desertion.

**Code of Conduct**

Dacoits, although, they earned their livelihood by loot and murder observed a definite code of personal ethics. A gang’s survival, as also its strength not only depends on the
unity and loyalty of its members, but on its code of conduct prescribed for its members. The dasyu, unlike present day dacoits, had their own moral code which they rigidly observed, and steadfastly adhered to. Although these dasyu indulged in looting the property of others, they did not commit physical violence like angulimal or present day dacoits gang which makes its criminal debut by a savage display of cruelty molesting women or ransacking whole villages. It was not common practice to cut a victim’s limb or sever his nose, tongue and genital organs. They respected the chastity of women as Kapoor (1960:4) mentions Col. Sleeman’s statement about the code of conduct of these gangs, “In all my enquiries into the character, habits and conduct of these gangs, I have never found an instance of female having been disgraced or molested by them”.

Actually, in olden days, they had their own self respect and respected sanctity of things hallowed by rites and custom. Their moral code included the following:

1. Not to kill the vanquished.
2. Not to Molest a woman.
3. Not to touch the property of Brahmans and priests.
4. Not to deprive the looted persons of all their belonging and property.
5. Not to touch virgins.
6. Not to overrule and to govern the villages after committing a dacoity and plunder there.

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2. Ibid. ....... ........ p. 33.
Unlike dasyu present day dacoits differ in many respects. Generally, the fear of death and unhappening make them religious outwardly. Most of the dacoits accepted that they worshipped goddess Kali or Durga. (The goddess of power). Some of them also worshipped the local deities which are popular in their areas. Some prominent dacoits like Malkhan bore the expenditure of a temple construction. They used to contribute donations too for marriages of poor girls etc. All these activities are done to win over the public confidence in their favour.

Most of the gang leaders assert that they never tried to disannour women folk, as it creates hatred towards them. Brutal rapes are certainly exterminated then, by the people themselves. So they try to maintain existing social rules of behaviour. But actually it is found that there is no rigid fair attitude towards women. Sex morality is generally found defective. Most of the dacoits are attached with women illegally. It is found that gang leaders have their concubines. Alwar, Mahabira, Pothi, Anarsingh, Chhabiram and Bauji, all of them had illicit relations with women.

Though in some gang, prostitution is also prohibited but there is no rigidity about sex immorality. Some times the gang pachasas gang-purchase females to gratify their sexual appetite. The dacoits do not make any distinction of caste and creed in matters relating to sex. It is also found that there is no strict restriction on gambling and taking liquor.

Besides the above moral code there are some rigid norms
which the members are expected to uphold:

1. No gang member would conceal the looted property, before or after the dacoity operations.

2. During encounter gang would try to carry away both its wounded and the dead members.

3. In case of arrest, it is expected that one a gang member would not break and betray the gang to the police. In some cases the gangs try to arrange financial assistance to defend the arrested member at court.

4. When a gang member leaves the gang he has to surrender the gang arms.

5. An unwritten code among the dacoits bars the entry of those dacoits who have absconded from any gang with firearms or other disputed articles.

6. Distribution of booty is a delicate matter in gang, and, to a great extent, sets the pace for the gang unity or discord. So every gang leader tries to distribute the snare fairly according to gang’s rule or contact.

7. A chief usually avoids intervening in any dispute unless his own men are involved or troubled. If, however, he does intervene, or express an opinion either way, it is binding on both parties. If either of the two parties demurs against the chief’s judgement, he/they are severely punished or liquidated.
CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION

There are hardly a few cases who voluntarily joined
the gang of dacoits, otherwise most of the dacoits came in this
profession after committing heinous crimes as discussed in
the process of dacoitisation. Any person who wants to join the
gang is brought before the chief after some preliminary investiga-
gations. Admission hinges mainly on a candidate’s ability and
capacity to lead a dacoit’s life and his morality for loyalty.
Together with such physical requisites as good health, smartness,
fearlessness, and courage, trustworthiness is an indispensable
condition expected of a neophyte. If the chief is confident
of the integrity and loyalty of the new comer, he may grants
him entry without insisting on any security. Generally, admi-
sion into a gang is granted by the chief, although others may,
if consulted, give their opinion.

A fugitive from law may approach a dacoit chief either
direct or through intermediary. In our sampling, most of the
newcomers joined the gang through some intermediates. These
persons had to furnish adequate security before admission in a
gang. A relative, or friend of a trusted neighbour of the leader
or any member of the gang, may stand surety for a new comer.
Briefly, recruitment into a gang is based on the previous history
of the recruit, his family background, his relations and his
relation with police, the area from which he comes, the weapons
he possess, the motives actuating him to seek admission, the
security he furnishes and, above all, on the possibility of
his future loyalty to gang.
Preference is usually given to those who possess firearms or those who have already committed a murder or two. Besides these, the bail jumpers are also easily absorbed. Singhal finds, "not withstanding the fact that every single member of any organised gang is more often than not, 'a bail jumper'. Indeed there are several of them who have jumped bail twice or more times."

Though, the dacoits understudy came from different strata in the criminal hierarchy as given in the table XX, but the highest percentage of dacoits (49.54%) were those who had committed dacoity with murder or both separately. This synthesis shows that murder is the stepping stone to dacoity. Besides it we found that the highest percentage (20.08%) was of those dacoits who committed murder and joined the gang.

**TABLE XX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>No. of Dacoits</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Undertrial</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>45.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>395/396</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>395/397</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Dacoity with other offences</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(More than two sections)

Members who have not committed a murder are required to do so on joining for obvious reasons. In the first place, it strips off their inhibition and inners them to the sight of blood. Secondly, it ensures their loyalty, because murder brands them fugitives from justice—people on the run.

Besides a sturdy and rugged physique, a measure of smartness, shrewdness and the ability to take quick decision, it is essential that the novitiate be young. Old age and ill health are liabilities that are best avoided. There are very few cases of adults of above forty who are admitted into the sodality if they have the requisite strength and acumen. In our sample most of the dacoits were young at the time of admission into a gang.

Table XXI

Age of the Sample Dacoits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>No. of Dacoits</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Below 20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>48.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 224 99.97

Although those in the age group of twenty to thirty years show a singular range for the profession. Infact, this is an age when a man is geared to top physical conditions. He has the grit, the stamina, the brashness (to take chances), the immaturity, the violence and vindictiveness and animal cunning.
required of all potential gang members. Another striking characteristics we noted was the steady declination of the negative aptitude of persons towards dacoity after the age of thirty. The inference is that relatively fewer people in the higher age group show any predilection for deviance. In the entire sample studied by us there was only a few case where men turned to dacoity at the age of above fifty. These, of course, were those who had been charged falsely in the section of dacoity.

**PROCESS OF ADAPTATION**

The informations collected in this regards reveals that a dacoit becomes at least physical committed to the profession the moment he enrols in a gang, he has no other choice. In most of the cases when a man commits a murder he is afraid of caught by police or killed by his rivals. Besides it, behind his abrancy from law and joining a gang works to revenge with his rivals. Above all in the process of conditioning him to the dacoits belief system, a gang also takes upon the task who subjected to it. First, they mitigate the pains of his deprivations of liberty, security and possession of property etc., then individual offender automatically adopts the process of dacoitisation.

There is no formal training of arms and ammunition for new comers in small gangs. They learn more from experience than planned training. In some cases the novitiates possessing
a prior experience with the armed police or the army need not to train about arms. But totally freshers go under the training of weapons as well as dacoity tactics in big gangs especially.

The novitiates not only learns the use of arms and the technique and strategies of brigandage, but is also honed into the fearlessness, cruelty and brutality. Moreover, living with others in the gang, he learns their code of conduct and assimilates criminal values and norms such as reliance upon violence, the efficacy of terror, loyalty to the gang and respect for gang’s core members. Other major values inculcated upon a trainee are the familial ties with each gang member, secrecy, revenge and inclemency. Revenge against police and informers of police is particularly emphasised.

The thing which binds them with each other that they are sufferer of common torturing and cruelty of society so they live with more common sympathy and revengeful spirit in a gang like the birds of the same feature flock together.

In beginning of the career the new entrants are assigned the menial jobs like watching the kidnapped persons, to carry on the gang’s bag and baggage, cooicking etc. Later on he is absorbed into the gang with full status of gang member. Actually adoption of a new one differs from man to man. All these things depends on the personality, caste, prior experience and the crime committed by him.¹

**GANG SURVIVAL**

A gang’s life span mainly depends on two factors -

physiographic conditions of the regions in which it operates and its organisation. As regards the physiographic hideouts, it is observed that the topographical factors play an important role in providing safe shelter for dacoit gangs. The existence of sprawling ravines and dense forest make excellent hideouts has permitted long like span of the gangs in Chambal area and to some extent in Bundelkhand while in Doab where indo-ganggetic plain is not helpful except a few patches of Ganga-Yamuna and other river side, forest. Though, the professional tenure of dacoits vary from a few months to period extending two to three decades until they are encountered, arrested or surrendered, but a gang, generally, survive a shorter span of time in comparsion of individual dacoit.

A gang's survival, as its strenght, depends mainly on the unity and legality of its members. Which requires each member to be faithful, cautious and alert. Besides, its leader's personality, gang intelligence, the quality of arms and ammunition are also accounted to the survivality of a gang. Generally a cunning gang leader tries to avoid encounter with police. The gang of Maikhna Singh never repeat the mistake of encounters.

GANG SPLIT

The conflicts in different form and degree persist in all gangs, and when they take an alarming shape they are emicably resolved by the leader or gang man. Although the internal organisation of most gang is strongly knit, there
have been many instances of schisms within them.¹ The major reasons for a split are found given below:

1. One of the major reasons for the split into a gang is the unfair distribution of looted booty among its members.

2. The ambitious gang members are also responsible for breaching the unity of a gang. When a member earns enough money to secure and keep arms and men under him he may be tempted to form a separate gang, serving his contacts with parent gang. In Uttar Pradesh Anar Singh, Potni Ram and Chnabiram Ram gangs were the offshoots of Alwar gang. They divided to gain name, fame and money and above all, independent power. They helped each other in operation and police encounter and scattered for their interests.

3. It is also observed that a woman is the major cause for a split into the gang. Most of the gang leader confessed that a gang Chieftain must avoid the entry of female dacoit into the gang. There are many examples of such gang which subjected to split or directed due to females. Lalaram Grazil gang's conflict with Phoolan and the death of Vikram and later on the mass massacre of Behmai is the best example of intra gang conflict.

4. A gang may variously suffer a split because of a chief's uncompromising nature or it may be brought about by a transgression of the moral code which the members are expected to uphold.

5. Lastly, after the death of a gang leader, there are many

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¹ Behmai Massacre, 14 Feb., 1981.
subconscripts who claim for the post of leader. Most of the new gangs are originated from the old one after the death of prominent gang leader. Man Singh, Devi Singh (Bundelkhand) German (Etah), Alwar (Etah) and many other gangs produced a number of new gangs.

**INTER GANG RELATIONS**

It is observed that inter gang relations found cooperative and conflicting both. Inter gang relations are given utmost consideration. They are governed by informal norms developed in a long course of interaction between different gangs operating in the area. Thus as observed by Singh (1980:61), an informal code of conduct is accepted unconditionally by all existing gangs. Some of the basic tenets are: non interference in the specific area of operation where one gang exacts its tributes, immunity from harm to a nimbler, or person, who has offered tika to a gang.

Some times one gang hand over their kidnapped persons to other one especially when the police pressure is tight. It is also seen that small gang sells or hand over their 'Pakar' to big one on a fixed ransom. Besides it occasionally one gang helps with their force to other one as in the case of Chhabiram's encounter with police. The Behmai massacre was perpetrated by Pnoolan with the help of Mustkeen gang. Notorious gangs of Chhabiram, Potniram and Anar Singh which occasionally combined but otherwise worked in splintar groups.
On the other hand, inter gang conflicts are frequently seen. Any infraction of the informal code triggers of rivalries and bloodshed between the two gangs. It mostly occurs when the interests are exclusively incommensurate between two gangs. The conflict between Lakhan and Roopa gang is well known enmity. In Bundelkhand Chatte Raja was a sworn enemy of Moorat Singh. The Behmai massacre perpetrated by dreaded Phoolan against Lalaram Sriman gang’s harbours is the example of inter gang conflicts also.

GANG OPERATION

The synthesising of dacoity operation require talents and its commission also. A dacoit gang operating in a area looks out for a favourable situation in terms of police movements, arms and ammunition possessed by the victim, and the way they can escape after the commission. A planned operation may be highly sophisticated crime requiring unique creative capacities. A gang leader must have a sense of organisation, timing ability to take into account of unforeseen events etc.

Generally before the plan of operation the gang leader prefers to have direct communication with informar than he will consult his fellowmen. The process of decision making in matters concerning the gang and it is no doubt, give due considerations to the views expressed by the core members or the trusted


tenants yet it is he, who ultimately takes decision. Previous experiences of members are given due recognition.

Prior to any dacoity a more flexible arrangement is used with assignment shifting dacoit to dacoit. The financial differentiation depends chiefly on what talents are available, however, the temperament of individual partners also may enter as a determinant.

As far as in the regards of village and raiders as a rule the gang leader of major gang lays down the plan of attack and conducts operation from a safe distance where he waits with a strong division of men to counter any emergency. But in small or minor gangs the gang leader himself takes initiation and lead during operation.

The successful completion of a dacoity operation depends mainly on the coordination of various task that must be completed. Through coordination and specialisation of roles of participants in dacoity not only assures more protection to itself but adds a measure of efficiency and shock in quickly overtaking the victim by a show of disciplined terror.

Broadly, there are two types of operation planned and unplanned. Dacoities that fall into the first category are well planned and well structured where all aspects are carefully delineated in the gang. At times, there may be rehearsals so that all possible conditions are taken into account.

Ambush type of dacoity is least planned. A gang attack on establishment in guerrilla fashion and attempt to obtain whatever might be found in cash or kind. There is almost randomness in the selection of victim, with no thought as to what conditions might be present in the situation that may affect the outcome of operation. It is also the type of dacoity where the chances of violent encounter are high.¹

The content analysis of dacoity events revealed some facts about gang operation. The commission of dacoities vary with the seasonal variation. There is an upward trend during the cold winter and the hot summer. The rainy season is not suitable for dacoity excursions. Sticky mud and rainwater, flooded rivers and ravines obstruct their movements.² It is also found that the night hours are most favourable for their excursion, plunder and raids, etc. as the Singh and Zatar also support the fact, "victimisation is found to be the highest during night hours provide better chances of hiding and less chances of identification."³ In 80 percent cases of dacoity the victims could not identify the gangs.

A well operating gang needs only have 10 to 15 dacoits. Generally, a group of such strength appears to be most tactfully effective. In big gangs additional members may be added depending on the kind of operation and its felt complexity. An exami-

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² Katare, S.S., 1974, op. cit. p. 55
³ Singh, D.R. and Zatar, D.P., op. cit. 1979, p. 40
nation of the number of dacoits participating in a dacoity reveals that the strength ranges between 5 and 20 members with 5 to 10 members in most of the cases (43%). The greater number of raiding dacoits the less chances of resistance adding up to a situation conductive to the operation.

**Table XXII**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dacoity Time</th>
<th>Gang Identification</th>
<th>Atrocities Committed</th>
<th>Gangs Strength &amp; Dacoity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day -</td>
<td>4.6% Identified 20% case</td>
<td>Rape-7.3% case</td>
<td>0-5 4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night-</td>
<td>84.6% Not Identified 80%</td>
<td>Death-20% &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>5-10 43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening-</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>Wounded-15% &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>10-15 26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>Arms looted-10%</td>
<td>15-20 12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beaten-37.5% case</td>
<td>N.A. 14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 99.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100% 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our findings also revealed that rape was committed by dacoits in 7.3 percent cases and in 20 percent cases a number of persons were killed on being protest or resist the dacoits. Almost in all cases of dacoity the victims were subjected to be wounded and beaten by dacoits. There were 37.5 percent of the cases in which victims were beaten severely. In some 10 percent cases the main target of dacoits was to loot the arms from the victims. Actually motive behind the commission of
atrocities committed by dacoits in most of the incidences is to get money. In order to get secret about the wealth or hidden property of a victim they torture him.

Though, the dacoits launch their operation after getting the situational information from local informer still the chances of encounter with police or villagers may repulse the attack of dacoits killing and arresting them. In such a situation the engaged gangs returns the fire and lays a counter ambush. Often they succeed in baffling the opposing persons by their tactful strategies. The topographical factors, and the settlements dusk or dark, site of settlement facilitate the escape.

It is fairly common that carnage during plunder - raids and in the process of kidnapping is inevitable but the mass murder incidents committed by dacoit gangs are not 'show off killings'. A tentative conclusion based on the motives behind the mass murder incidence may be provided: (a) there are at times dacoits kill the policemen, police informers and prosecution witnesses because these are the sore enemy of dacoits, (b) similarly vindictive killings are also committed by dacoits to protect their caste and kinsmen, and close friends and harbourers, (c) besides it, old enmities are also fulfilled by committing mass murders to create the emage of invincibility, in the minds of rivals.

Inter gang conflicts, occasionally, harm the defenceless inhabitants. During the caste conflicts the indulgence of dacoits of that area is very common in these regions.
A gang has to fall back on society for all its needs. Without the active help, collision, shelter and security of some elements within the social set up and administration, no gang can survive for long. By extending his cooperation a harbourer is responsible for perpetuating this vicious system. Katre (1972:168) rightly observes that a harbourer is a pivot of dacoity system. This is a known fact that persons help the dacoits by providing them food, shelter, daily usable articles and informations for their safety, but after a incubation period the harbourers themselves jumps into dacoity due to police pressure or other causes. Thus, in this process not only dacoits harboured but the total system is also survived.

Singh (1980: 61) defines, "A harbourer is, in fact, a white collar criminal who functions under the guise of a law abiding citizen and is decidedly a blight on society." Broadly we may say that a person who directly or indirectly helps the dacoits can be termed a harbourer. The harbourer vary from the poor and the rich, from close relations to ordinary citizens and friends. The gamut is large enough to include Government officials and public man in the revenue, police and sometimes, even in the legislative assemblies.

All kinds of harbourer may be classified into three broad categories:

1. Suppliers of Arms and Ammunition,
2. Informers,

1. Suppliers of Arms and Ammunition: Those who provide arms, ammunition for the gang’s arsenal and keep an eye on its maintenance. The whole area including Chambal was once governed by feudal lords, when there was no restriction on the purchase and collection of arms, almost all members of the aristocracy, as also the entire upper strata possessed arms, while the lower orders either purchased, pilfered or looted them from the lords and their men. Easy availability of arms is one more factor which made dacoity and murder very frequent and common crime in the district of Doab. Before Independence the foreign rulers had denied their subjects the elementary right to bear arms for self defence, but the state lords allowed their public to have even the firearms. For instance, in the state of Gwalior no licence for possession or purchase of even firearms was necessary.¹

The second major source of easy availability of arms and ammunition are army and police armouries. It is a known fact that the inhabitants of Doab and Chambal regions since long have been joining the police and military services. Having contacts with their family members, intermediates or direct with

outlaws, some of them continuous try to pass the arms and ammunition to the gangs. The persons employed in forces come to their homes on leave and supply arms and ammunition illegally to the outlaws which is a major handicap for police to check.

An illicit traffic in arms also obtained in the border area. Large quantities of arms and ammunition were smuggled out of the operation areas. The arms abandonned by the army, especially during the Indo-China and Indo-Pakistan and Bangla-Desh war, were sold through some intermediaries to the dacoit gangs. The report of Bhind Crime Situation Inquiry Committee of 1953 had drawn pointed attention to these sources and to the fact of the easy availability of arms.¹ Nargolkar (1974:206) reports, "The name of Lal Singh, who was an armourer at Babina (Jhansi) in Indian army, had once become notorious as smuggler of arms from the army arsenal."² Thus, the easy availability of all kinds of weapons and ammunition has made the problem of dacoity complex.

When we consider the ammunitions the gangs reportedly use during the course of their operations and which are recovered following the encounters or arrest, we can see the significance of the question of supply of such material. For instance see the recovery of firearms during anti-dacoity operation since first January 1982 to thirty first December 1983, (Table XXIII) actually, the massive scale of military hardware in the form

2. Ibid. p. 206.
of automatic and semi automatic weapons, ammunition and hand
grinades find its way to outlaws is a matter of grave concern.

The acquisition and replenishment of arms and ammunition by
the dacoit has been constantly baffling the authorities. No
weapon from country made piston to powerful telescopic rifle,
from hand grenade to light machine gun, is found beyond the
reach of the dacoits. Scores of 303 rifles and hand grenades
and dozens of L.M.Gs and T.M.Gs have been recovered by these
organised gangs supports the suspicion that the gangs received
unauthorized arms and ammunition from army and police sources.

An arrested dacoit in Uttar Pradesh accepted the fact
that some military officers sold the arms to Chhabiram gang.¹
Another arrested dacoit also accepted that he has managed a
number of rounds from military for ten thousand rupees.² Actually,
an illicit traffic in arms is an age old problem in these dacoits
infested regions. In an interview with Giriraj Shah (S.P.)
ex-dacoit chief disclosed that there are some forty white collar
criminals (businessmen) in only Chambal area who provide or
manage the arms and ammunition to outlaws.³ In the same way
the gangs also manage to procure the stolen arms and ammunition
from the police and military armoury.⁴

The main problem is the supply of versatile country made weapons. Their manufacturing centres have been located in rural area as well as industrialized cities. A number of weapons have been seized in dacoits infested areas from time to time and manufacturers arrested, but this is no permanent solution to the problem. If we can control the supply of ammunition, the presence of such country made weapons will stand defeated. Actually, these country made pistols or Kattas which fire not only 12 bore ammunition but also bullets of different bores by simple expedient of fitting adjusters inside the barrels of these Kattas. The manufacturers of these pistols are generally local technicians who repair and prepare them.

It is found that there is some sort of fascination among the people of these areas for possessing arms. A gun is in a way a status symbol. Today a gun is not only the means of safety or a symbol of power, behind its glamour there is a commercial use of these licenced or illegal arms, as most of the dacoits chieftains accepted that they also managed the arms from harbourers on hired price which depends on the quality of arms.

1. (a) In the village Meerapur P/S Shivpur, Varanasi, an illegal arms factory run by a dacoit was captured. The factory owner accepted that till now he had supplied some two thousand country made pistols. (Jagaran, 18th May, 1982, Jhansi).

(b) A Illegal Arms Factory in Lucknow, Bhaskar, 18.12.81, Jhansi.

2. Illegal Arms Factory with Technicians was Captured, (Aaj, 24th February, 1982, Kanpur).

II. Informers—Every gang develops into its own network of informers. The informers are mostly public men. They may be government officials, members of police department and others from civil and state departments. Generally in remote villages the poor men also help the dacoits providing informations, about police operations. These informers receive regular rewards, a share of loot and gratifications for services rendered to the gangs.

On the situation Singhal comments, "To make matters worse, whether it is for reasons political or mercenary or even plain fear, the fact remains that the gang gets the information of police movements with vastly greater accuracy and promptness than what the police manage to get in respect of the gangs. The police thus function under a perpetual handicap vis-a-vis the gang."¹

A gang likes to be fed information on these matters:

(a) the movements and plan of the police,
(b) movements of police informers,
(c) Information about wealthy persons and their property,
(d) Information about kidnappes.

The informations about the movement and plan of the police generally, leak through policemen and persons related to police circle, policemen and even Chaukidars feed the information about police operations to the gangs.

Singhal comments on the role of police in harbouring the dacoits. "The police too like the rest of society have their share of totally unscrupulous, dishonest and depraved individuals. Instances are not lacking where not only station officers but even senior police officers up to the rank of an S.P. (in one particular state) have been having not only links with these organized gangs but in some cases, have been even sharing their loot and ransom money also." ¹

A core member of Chhabiram gang, Nathura Singh also support the fact that in Etah district a police station in-charge was connected with the gang. This fellow supplied a dress of S.P. for nine hundred rupees. He also confessed that some policemen of Yadav caste supplied some secret informations about police to the gang.²

The involvement of police with dacoit gangs is so deep that some corrupt policemen do not only furnish the secret informations about police movement but also give their acquiesce to plunder. Singhal (1982 : 28) also finds, "There are also instances where understandings have been arrived at by some unscrupulous police officers whereby the gang is granted a free from free asylum in their area on the understanding that they shall commit depredations only in other police circles and make sure that their own circles remain free from their depredations." ³

Generally, on the other hand the police informers are corrupt and antisocial elements who are forced to witness in all kind of trials on behalf of police. Hence they are protected by police, so they also indulge in antisocial activities which catapults hostility in rural environment in these areas. In spite of false security of police such persons could not be saved from the attack of dacoit gangs. Their murders are frequently committed by outlaws.\(^1\) Recently, dacoit gangs chieftains Natola raided a police informer, Mannalal’s house with some forty men and cut off the head of the police informer with snouting - 'See one and all, this is the fate of police dalal'.\(^2\) This gruesome display by gangs of bandits is meant to instil a sense of fear among those who informed the police about their movements. So, to help the police is bound to be risky.

Informations about the wealthy persons and their property are generally furnished by the professional harcoursers, poor servants, weaker party of a village; the influential persons of village, rivals and the aristocrates who feel frustrated by having lost their privilages. For such persons aid to dacoits may yield immediate gains.

As the most of dacoit gangs have changed their modus operandi, they prefer kidnapping instead of dacoity.

\(^1\) Aaj, 6th June, 1982, Kanpur.
iii. Suppliers of Essential Articles:— Supplies of essentials provide food, clothing, medical aid, shelter and other items of daily needs. Besides it, they manage the purchase and sale of looted ornaments and other articles. They also take care for the family, property and agricultural pursuits of dacoits.

Those who provide informations or work for the intelligence circuit belong either to the poor strata of society or are the graft takers from the higher and lower ranks of the police and administrative set up. But those working under this third category generally come from the upper sections of society, and play a vital role in the maintenance of gang.

This class of harbourers includes influential landlords of the area who use their power and resources to help and protect the dacoits and their families. Although the police as much as the people, of the area know of this, they dare not oppose, intervene or put obstacles to this gamut, in as much for fear of reprisals as for their own sense of obligation to the dacoits for favours granted.

These harbourers, either directly or through their agents, attempt to buy off the police and other departmental officials by graft. Official who deny to take bribes and connive at these criminal activities are victimised by departmental intrigues in which the harbourers get them implicated in false charges.

A gang leader maintains direct personal contacts with harbourer or through intermediaries. Most of the dacoit chief-tains excepted that they preferred to avoid intermediaries.
CASTE AND KIN PROTECTION

People become dacoits because of querrels, fights and feuds among members of their own caste and kinship groups as well as intercaste conflict and rivalries. But once a person becomes a dacoit, it is mostly from his caste and kinship circle that he gets support and assistance.

However, it is not of much importance as to who and for what reasons one become dacoit. What is more important here is the social hideout, cushion or shelter provided for their absorption, making them strong and sustainable. It is this section of our society - harbourers - which in the grab of good citizenary comes forward to share with dacoits and the booty and spoils of bloody business of dacoity. As stated earlier, it is comprised mostly of the people of the upper strate - the rich Brahmans, Rajput, landlords and the people of middle caste like Kachhi, Yadav, Lodhi, Kurmi etc. who are directenants. The evolution of Zamidari system have profited to these middle caste people. But on the other hand, the fortunes of upper caste have been threatened by the advent of the new era of economic changes and social transformation. This contradiction has created many troubles among the people of rural villages. Hence, by creating a reign of terror through dacoity system, these caste some how have been succeeded in gaining their social and economic interests by making the gangs their instruments.
The mass massacre of Jhadhopur, Phulrai, Kunwarpur, Jakh, Deoli and Ujhai Pakirpur evidently show the fact that caste protection to dacoit gangs is common in dacoit infested regions in Uttar Pradesh.

Besides it, the next of kin bask in theglary and sunshine of the outlaws. It is common for relatives of dacoit to exalt in their closeness. This is the reason that most of dacoits have their geneology from the old gang leaders. In a single case of chieftain Janak Singh, it is found that there are seven relatives of him who have surrendered with him at Bateshwar (Agra) in 1976. Most of the dacoits chieftains have accepted that their remote relatives helped and provided protection during the dacoity span.

**POLITICAL PROTECTION**

If we throw light into the political protection of dacoit gangs, we find that the organised gang of dacoit exercised their influence in general elections which take place time to time. In remote rural areas contesting candidates take helps to win the elections. Gang leaders are reported to be taking keen interest in the elections. They coerce and compel people to vote for the candidates they endorse. Garg mentioned that during the elections of 1952 Chambal valley dacoit gangs terrorised to cast their votes in favour of a particular candidate, which was assented by another dacoit gang.²

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1. See, Mass Murder Incidences.
Its also fact that elections are over, the winning candidates are often obliged to them and have to show consideration. They provide protection at the time of trouble. A senior police officer disclosed the fact in an interview to Dharmayug that dacoit Chhabiram stayed at the Royal Hostel (Vidhayak Niwas) in Lucknow in the month of May - June 1981.¹

Instances are not lack when these notorious dacoits give money and other helps for election campaign.² Beside it, the scandal of Latori Singh (M.L.A.) and the murder of Satish Sharma (M.L.A.) is a well known example of dacoit politician aligance.³

DIVISION OF LOOTED SCOUT

A gangs major sources of income are loot, ransom, levy (Chouth) and tika or najar etc. It is reported by daily News Papers that dacoits collected levy from the villages of Banda Districts (Daily, 'Aaj' 1.9.82, Kanpur and Dainik jagaran, 25.12.80, Jhansi). Besides it, extortions are generally wrung out from businessmen, contractors of forests and mines, owners of buses and trucks serving on high ways that fall within the area of a dacoit gang. Income derived by a gang from all the above sources is deposited with the leader of the gang.

The distribution of income is a delicate matter in a gang. So they adopt some conventional method in distributing the

looted booty. It is found that first of all the general expenses are met out of the total income. What remains is distributed among the active members. In small or unorganised gangs there is no provision for intelligence or welfare budgets specially in Bundelkhand region but every established gang makes a provisions for the following items before distribution of loot among its members:

(1) Gang Expenditure:-- This includes all the expenses from food, clothing, and other necessary articles required for the gang in the maintenance of it. Besides it, there are several type of small expenditures are also charge to this account.

(2) Commission to Harourers:-- The commission paid to harourers is also charged before distribution the loot and ransom money. The leader of a major gangs maintain a network of informers whose commissions depend on the kind of information or services rendered to the gang. Besides it, some money has been kept to exploit the venality of police authorities occasionally. Actually, this depend on the pressure of the police and other factors.

(3) Donation and Welfare Budget:-- In established gang some money is donated to perform religious activities. As a rule the dacoits are deeply religious. Worshippers of Durga, Kali and local Deity and Shiva, the symbols of bravery and success, they perform religious acts and sacrifices regularly. This is a old tradition that in almost every gang some money is kept apart for defraying the expenses of punya. Some money is paid to poor ones and for the families of those who have have sacrificed their lives or have been disabled in the service of a gang. This
ensures the loyalty of the existing members of gang.

Now, the remaining income is distributed among the members of the gang. The member who has not got the status of an active member of gang, generally, has no claim except food, clothing and some pocket money from the general budget. During the field work discussing with some surrendered dacoit leaders it is found that in Doab region the division of looted booty depends on the quality and availability of weapon. This rule is also exercised in Chambal area as Singh (1980:57) and Khan (1981:160-63) mentioned. According to this rule each member, including the leader has a share. Besides it, the rest of amount is the distributed according to the following scheme: (i) Automatic gun: 4 shares, (ii) 303 rifle or louser: 3 shares (iii) 12 bore: 2 shares; and (iv) ordinary gun or a dacoit without a gun: 1 share.

In Doab and Chambal regions arms and ammunition are managed by the gang leader. Owing to this convention the gang leader gets more than the usual shares. In Bundelkhand region the gang leader generally does not exploit the gang members on the renting of arms and ammunition. It may be that the gang leader may take a big share but generally the gang members are treated equally in the matter of share. It is sure that the price of a gun is realised from a member in instalments.

In answer to a question it is reported that there is no fixed income in this profession. Most of the gang leaders excepted that the income depends on the chances and favourable conditions for operation. If police pressure is tight, we
sit calm and cool. When resistance is weak dacoity is high.

Violent reaction of police affects the movements of dacoit gangs.

**UTILITY OF THE PROFESSION**

It is known fact that utility plays an important role in perpetuating and determining the system. Dacoits and the harbourers have a vested interest in strengthening the dacoit gangs and the system to reap more profits and benefits out of it. At individual level a man joins the gang for revenge, for shelter, for life evocations, jobs or for money. On the other hand there is a section of society who works for gangs outside. The corrupt officials, local leaders, people of dominant caste in villages who harbour the gangs have their vested interest in perpetuating the problem.

Under the influence of dacoit gangs, some of the people succeeded in getting forests contacts for roads and canal constructions, quarrying in the ghats, and stone mines at nominal rates in remote rural areas. Singhal (1982 :27) finds, "No other contractor or party dare quote a rupee higher than the bid quoted by the 'blessed' nominees. The auctions in these areas are a sham. Even if anyone dare to quote higher, he soon realises to severe cost in terms of life and money that he cannot function at all." These blessed persons also indulge in open smuggling business in the bordered area and also dealing in contraband. Thus, dacoity has assumed the stature of a well knit industry with multifarious interests.
It is evidently fact that utility, monetary or otherwise is what gives dacoity its near permanent tenancy right in these regions. People of police and army who indulge in gun running also receive and dispose of looted property. Their business would come to an end if dacoity perishes. Therefore, these people would always cry to create a situation to perpetuate dacoity.

Why some of the gangs enjoy political protection and police finds it difficult to arrest the harbourer of these gangs. The gangs back the local politician as well as member of legislative assemblies. Dacoits and harbourers work as their political agents during elections. With the help of criminals a reign of terror is created to cast the votes in the favour of a particular candidate. Besides it, these people gain monetary profits from dacoits. On the grave situation Kothari comments, "But in the recent past, links have been established between the dacoit and the policeman and between the dacoit and the politician. For regular payments, depending on status and loot, the police offer protection. They turn a blind eye to the presence of a dacoit gang in their areas."  

Has there been no gain from dacoity, for both the protagonists and their harbourers, it would not have been able to survive successfully so far so long. Singh (1980) concludes, "The gamut of the utilitarian function is large and includes protection, shelter, a quick vengeance, employment, adventure,

security and money gains that out bid the stray demands to scotch the system and bring it to naught.\textsuperscript{1}

In fact, those who work for the gangs directly or indirectly they either receive handsome rewards or use the power of their association to raise their own status or to achieve other objectives.

\textsuperscript{1} Singh, R.G., 1980: op. cit., p. 94-95.
1. Incident of Jadhopuri, P/S Khudil, Etawah (U.P.):- The village has about 47 families living, out of which 17 are of Chamars, 10 of Ahirs, 4 of Carpenters, 1 of Nai, 9 of Gadarias, 4 Kori and 2 of Dhanuk. The victims of gang were all Chamars who lived in one and of the village except a Kori who was also accidently shot dead. On 9th October '79 at mid night the gang of Gesam Gadaria killed total 12 persons and also set fire to 10 houses and huts.

The motive for Gesam's wrath is that in January 1977 his gang committed a dacoity in the house of Chanak Lal. His two sons sleeping nearby room got up and caught hold of Gesam on the spot. He was badly beaten by Chamars at that time. His four fingers of right hand had also smashed with a spade. One SSBL gun was also recovered from him in that encounter with the villagers. Gesam was convicted to 7 years. On bail from high court in December '79 he was out of jail and took revenge from his enemies. In the village Gesam was harboured by Gadarias.1

2. Incident of Naktai Village, P/S Aliganj, Etah (U.P.): 1st May '81: In this case the only enmity which had come to light so far was that ex. M.L.A. Satish Chand Sharma's dead body was recovered then Bachho Singh gave information to Aliganj police about the location of Mahabirapothi gang and also accompanied the riding police party.2

3. Incident of Badaipur, B/S Ochha, Mainpuri (U.P.):- The gang of Chhabi Ram attacked the village at about 10 p.m. on 13th Nov. '79.

2. Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Agra (U.P.).
they were about 25 men. They shot dead six persons sleeping outside the house of Mangulal then they dragged out five persons from the house and lined up and shot them. In this mass murder, the only enmity which has come to light so far is that Mangulal has been leased a portion of land to cultivate on behalf of Govt. For the possession of this land there was a dispute between Mangulal and Anar Singh. A relative of Anar Singh was in the gang of Chhabi Ram. Anar Singh approached him to help.\(^1\)

4. Incident of Sewa Nagla, P/S Aliganj, Etah (U.P.):-- After striking at village Naktai on 1.5.81 the gang of Mahabira - Potni moved to Sewa Nagla at about 9.30 p.m. They asked Suraj Barahai, who was at his home shot dead. The only point of enmity is that about 3-4 years Suraj’s niece was married to a person belonging to a village of Mahabira. Mahabira wanted this girl and took away. With the help of the villagers the girl was recovered and Mahabira was handed over to the police. After being released from jail he turned notorious, and took revenge.\(^2\)

5. Murder Case of Satish Sharma (M.L.A.):-- Mr. G.L. Sharma (S.P.) Farrukhabad in an interview told that it was Phoolshri who carried the policeman to that field in which the corpse of Sharma was lying buried. Behind this brutal murder Latoori Singh Yadav (M.L.A.) played his role. He had contacted notorious dacoit Mahabira Yadav to slay down Mr. Sharma due to political rivalry. This murder was committed on 17th November, 1980.\(^3\)

6. Kunwarpur Village, P/S Jaitara, Etah (U.P.):-- This is a village of complete Jatavas population between 400 to 500. At about 8p.m.

\(^1\) & \(^2\) Anti Dacoity Cell, Agra(U.P.).

the gang of Mahabir reached the village and assembled the villagers at a central place for a panchayat. They managed line up 10-13 Jatavas and asked them to catch their own ears and become 'Murga'. Then, they shot dead eleven Jatavas including a lady. Before this wrath, the gang's ultimatum said that Jatavas of this village have been informing the police and getting the Ahirs of the area harassed by the police.

7. Behmai Massacre, F/3 Derapur, Kanpur (J.P.): - The village Behmai is located on the bank of Yamuna and is 125 Kms. away from Kanpur. The village population is dominated by Muslim.

On Saturday afternoon of 16th Feb.'81 the gang of Phoolan armed with and dressed in police uniforms reached the village under the leadership of Mustkeem dacoit. They surrounded the village and searched for dacoit brother Lalaram-Sriram with loot and pillage but she could not trace out these dacoits. Inkised Phoolan ordered the villagers to assemble before her. She roared, "If you could not produce both of them, I would gun down all of you." All the assembled people nodded their head negatively. They told that they knew nothing about them at this Phoolan ordered her gangmen to derive and told that she would teach them such a lesson, as they would never forget it. Dacoit gang derived some thirty people out of the village towards the riverside.

She again asked about both the dacoits but all of them expressed their helplessness. She lined up all the people and ordered to shoot the rescaled. Some 20 men died on the spot. With the slogans of Jay Durga, Jay Mustkeem, Vikram, Phoolan etc. the gang departed from the village.

1. Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Agra (J.P.).
Phulrai is located at a distance of 25 kms. from Etawah and 5 kms. from Jaswantnagar, and is hardly half a km. from Etawah-Agra national highway. Village has approximately 100 houses, 90 percent of which are jadarias. Dacoit Geetam's village is also located at about 4-5 kms. from the place of this incident.

On the night of 2nd December, 79, Geetam gang went to the house of Bare Lal Dhobi and asked him to produce his wife. On reply of Bare Lal that she was not there, the gang personally searched the house. But the dacoits could not see her. Geetam also went in search of her to 'Pradhan's' house where she was said to be present. Geetam dragged Barelal to accompany him to Pradhan's house, while near the Pradhan's house Bare Lal managed to escape and run away which is ..... Geetam and his gang. Thereafter they raided the house of Rani Ram Dhobi and his mother and looted ornaments of Rs. 3000/- while going to Bare Lal's house again they shot up Bachan Singh Thakur who got up by chance.

On reaching the Barelal's house they set it on fire where his two little children, one nephew and mother all were burnt to death. Motive behind this case seems to be a case u/s 376 IPC of 1977 in which Bare Lal had lodged a complaint against some jadarias of the village Phulrai. Bateshvari is one of the associate of Geetam whose against the case was filed.

The most important part of the entire incident is that none of Gadarias came out to help Barelal's family and even to

Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Agra (U.P.).
see what had happened. None of the villagers even went to P.S. in the morning.

Geetam searched Bare Lal’s wife because she is a complaint of a case of rape (crime No. 132/77 S/s 376 IPC dated 1.7.77 of P.S. Jaswant Nagar) against four villagers of the same village who are Gadarias by caste and one of whom Bateanwari is a member of Geetam’s gang.

9. Incident of Jakh, District Mainpuri:—October 15, 1980:—

Jakh is a village in the district of Mainpuri. Almost all castes live in the village but Thakurs and Yadavas are dominant caste. Long ago a dispute on female gave birth to the conflict between Yadavas and Thakurs in which Snagwan Das Yadav was murdered. Enraged with this the people of Yadav caste contacted with some Yadav gangs of dacoits in order to become superior and powerful. Meanwhile Kunwarpal Yadav, a member of Yadav gang was murdered by a Thakur and another Yadav Raknpal was also shot dead. This situation enraged Yadavas and they attacked on 31st July 1981 on Thakurs and made them points of their guns. Even some bad elements raped their females also. Again, in this connection Anarsingh Yadav gang made a plan to attack on Thakurs on 9th May 1981 which resulted into killing of six policemen including a sub police inspector who were appointed for the defence of Thakurs.

In fact in this region the Yadavas like Thakurs sought help from dacoits of their caste even in establishing illegal possession on the land of other landowners. Motive behind the above wrath is the inter caste conflict.
Rampura Mass Massacre P/S Skka, Mainpuri (U.P.): The incident which took place on 17th June 1982 was reported to be supported by Dularai Naut and Surendra of Rampura village and was committed by Bhura gang. After making deep investigation two facts were disclosed which were held to be responsible for this mass massacre. The present massacre is related with the incident of dacoity committed on 29th July 1981 in which 19 houses were plundered by dacoits and Shyamal Jatav with his wife was murdered. First Information Report was lodged against some twelve persons by their names including Lal Chand Brahmans with his relative Devendra. Both of them surrendered at court. Out of twelve three persons identified by the villagers which was the root cause of enmity between the parties.

The second important fact is that members of Shyam Lal's family were the witnesses for the case of 29th July 1981. Before the trial day they were murdered.¹

Deoli Mass Massacre P/S Ochha, Mainpuri (U.P.): The most tragic mass massacre took place on 15th November, 1981 in a small village, Deoli. The village Deoli is about 40 kms. from Agra, and consists of 35 Thakur families, 16 Muslims, 16 Dhobies, 15 families of Jatavas, 4 Valnikes and 16 Khatis.

Though, there was no enmity between other caste except Thakurs and Jatavas who were the rivals of each other. The dacoit Radhe and Santosh belong to Thakur caste. They managed to gun down 13 Jatavas including 7 ladies. According to available information the root cause of the mass massacre was caste rivalry.

The other aspect of the massacre, reveals that some Jatavas also had their free hands in dacoities and pillage with Radhe and Santosha. Later on they split into factions on some issue. In some trial cases related to the gang members of Radhe and Santosha gang the Jatavas were the witnesses. Enraged with these regions Radhe and Santosha committed this massacre.

Dastampur Massacre P/S Derapur, Kanpur (J.P.):— The village Dastampur is located some 60 kms. far from Kanpur on Kanpur—Rura-Derapur road. On 27th June, 1982 the gang of Muslim reached the village by Matador. They were about twenty in number armed with automatic weapons. They surrounded Shivaram’s house and started gunning. They shot down ten persons including 2 children and a newly married woman, then they plundered the village.

The motive of Notorious dacoit Muslim behind the wrath is to take revenge of his cousin, dacoit Mustkeem’s death. When Mustkeem was going to Dastampur on 4th March 1981, he was caught hold by a police inspector but he knocked him down. It was a matter of chance that Shivaram and Ganga Charan Yadav were on the spot who freed police inspector from the grip of Mustkeem and helped in making arrest the dacoit.

CASE HISTORY

Vikram S/O Kanhai vill. Guhani (Kanpur):— Vikram was a boy of sturdy physique and arrogant nature. In his early life he professed rowing and assisted his father in the business of green grocer. His father owed some money which he could not repay the debt. That’s why he was beaten and insulted by moneylender. Since he was not of bending nature, some influential person tried to sub due him by framing false cases against him. The result of this harassment was that he murdered a man and absconded to the yawning ravines. During their wandering he came into the contact of some disappointed and tortured fellows. They made a gang and began to commit crimes. Police had to open the history sheet on 17th January 1978 (90A). Before it, he was arrested on 18th August 1979. After the release on bail he became dacoit.

Khudushan alias Ram Kishore; Village BagFirstname, Banda:— His early education started in Resin village, Karvi and Atarra. But he could not receive his education properly, due to poor economic conditions. The habit of spending lavishly with economic hardships made him petty criminal. His family background facilitated him to be an outlaw. His uncles Ram Sajivan and Ram Chandra were notorious dacoits.

The whole area is dominated by Karmis, who have given protection. In July 1973 he was arrested under arms act 25 and section 64. Then, on bail he committed a dacoity in Patenganj area and organised a strong gang. Due to police pressure he surrendered at the court in 1979 with his gang. The people did not dare to identify him. After three months he came out on bail and murdered a man in broad day light. Now he absconded and became a terror in the forest of Chitrakut. He was killed in 1981.
Mahavira S/O Ramprasad, Swargadhari (Patiala) Utah (J.P.):—

Mahavira belonged to a poor family. His early life passed like an orphan due to the death of his father. His brother is blind. His father had a small piece of land. He was employed as an agricultural labourer. Due to economic hardships he could not get his education properly. He was charged under section 25, arms act twice. Ill habits and poor economic conditions motivated him to be an outlaw. His gang was harboured by his castemen. He was contacted for the murder of Mr. Satish Sharma (17.11.80) by Latory Singh Yadav a M.L.A. of that area.

Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Uttar Pradesh, Agra.

Chhabiram S/O Niranjan, Vill. Marnagour, Mainouri (J.P.):— Thirty nine year old, a man of sturdy physique, Chhabiram was known as Netaji in his area. He was the murderer of some 40 policemen and above hundred persons. He belong to a poor peasant family. In beginning of his career he used to give food and shelter for German and Alwar gangs. His antisocial activities came in the light in 1969. He was very cunning dacoit. When police pressed him, he absconded and join the gang of dacoits. Later on he himself made a strong gang.

He adopted tactful strategies during the police encounters. Most of the gang members in his gang were Yadavas. He was protected and harboured by his castemen and local political leader. Due to strong political support he convinced for surrender even by police personnels. He lavishly spent the money to build his 'robinhood image' in his area.

Source: Anti Dacoity Cell, Uttar Pradesh, Agra.
Notorious dacoit Ramaautar was born in a poor and backward family of Mallah caste. He possessed a good physique. He was bold and fearless. Due to its sociocultural impact, he came into contact with dacoit Vikram, because Vikram had a relation in his village. In an encounter with police on July 17, 1979, he was arrested by police and sent to Urai Jail from where on bail he came out and joined again the gang Vikram. Later on, when Vikram was murdered by his gang man he made a separate gang. He committed heinous crimes in dacoit infested area of Uttar Pradesh.¹

**SELF STATEMENT**

Vijay Singh S/O Babu Singh, Vill. Padari (Kolpi) Jalaun(U.P.):-

I belong to a village name Padari. I am literate. Before becoming a dacoit, I was a tractor driver. I surrendered myself at the court in dacoity case in 1972. I was acquitted due to lack of evidence in identification. Still, I kept the contact with some gangs. I was an active member of Mustaksen gang and the gang of Ghan Sanyam. Later on I made a separate gang. Most of the harbourers of my gang were the Thakurs of Jalaun District.

Behind my dacoity career the main reason was that I was trapped in false case of murder due to enmity by some Brahmans and Thakurs. At the same time my employer told me that my name had listed for encounter by police. Therefore I had to abscond and besides it, to join a gang through a relative.²

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Malkhan's Hostages—Interviews with some of the kidnappers who prefer to remain unidentified and diary of Malkhan recovered by the police revealed certain interesting facts about the Modus Operandi of the gang. Malkhan prefers to keep his gang confined to ravines. He never comes out in the open before dark. Malkhan, who himself bears an S.P.'s uniform and keeps with him three weapons round the clock, does not sleep for more than three hours a day. The gang covers a distance of 30 to 40 kms. a day.

The food for the gang is cooked on the spot where the gang takes a breach. The kidnappers are the first to get the meals. Thereafter the gang members and hardcore members have their food along with Malkhan. The gang had two transistors. Gang members loved to listen songs. Malkhan never misses any news bulletin broadcast. Malkhan maintained a very strict discipline in the gang. Almost as a routine the gang members assembled in the morning for a P.T. and cleaning their firearms.

He had a lot of printed letter heads and always carried pen with him. Malkhan who is practically an illiterate, took the help of Ram Prakash Kawat, the treasurer of the gang for writing messages, at times demanding money for ransom for a kidnappee. The letters were given to the contactmen often villagers who delivered the letters to the right men.

Malkhan at times behave like feudal lords. He is fond like the ancient kings of verses written and sung in his praise and glory. For this purpose he had kidnapped a poet of sorts and made him compose an innovative 'Allha' which records the courageous deeds of Malkhan during encounter, said the kidnappers. The diary containing the 'Allha' and gang budget was recovered by police. (Source: Pioneer, Lucknow, April 12, 1981).