Chapter-5
Sacred Games
Crime, Violence and Terror in Urban India

*Sacred Games* is truly an epical novel, not only long (of 900 pages) but wide and deep, concerning myriad facets of fast changing urban India. The story goes from the murky world of the Mumbai mafia-style underworld to international terrorism, to the working of the Indian bureaucracy, to the intelligence services investigating Islamic fundamentalism, to the traumas of the partition of Indian sub-continent sixty years ago and so on and so forth.

This is a novel as big, ambitious, multi-layered, contradictory, funny, sad, frightening, violent, tender, complex and irresistible as India itself. There are more than a half-dozen sub-plots to be pondered, but the main events take place between inspector Sartaj Singh and Ganesh Gaitonde. One thing Chandra does superbly well is given a sense of the changes and the continuities of modern India. When we go back to the horrors of partition suffered by the Singh family, it fleshes out and explains why characters became what they are.

With the rapid growth of science, technology and education, the Indian urban society has changed a lot. With the development in every side, the Indian metropolitan cities shine like European cities. This development has brought a huge change in urban society. The modernization and westernization has beclouded the mind of people. Along with the good impact of modernization and westernization, it also gave a birth to so many problems in urban India. The urban society has forgotten its own culture, values and attitude. With the influence of westernization, the society has forgotten the value of relations and the people have become selfish and self-centered. The corruption, robbery, murder, terrorism, violence, rape, embezzlement and extortion, have become part and parcel of town life. India is not what it appears, it shines outwardly but it is full of darkness actually. And in this novel, the novelist is successful in revealing the darkness of urban India. “Vikram Chandra’s keenly anticipated new novel is a magnificent story of friendship and betrayal, of terrible violence, of an astonishing modern city and its dark side.” (Web)

*Sacred Games* is set in present-day Mumbai, in which Chandra portrays the real and murky face of contemporary urban India. This novel is a crime story and the
book is really a passionate tribute to contemporary urban India. The plot is full of intrigue, melodrama, sex and violence that can rival any Bollywood film. The novel deals with the story of a notorious Hindu gangster, Ganesh Gaintonde and the police inspector, Sartaj Singh. Through the lives of these two characters, the writer unfolds so many secrets of urban society and presents the dark side of metropolitans. He touches every bad aspect prevalent in society which tarnishes the glory of shining India.

_Sacred Games_ is a story of conflicts between the police and the criminals. The novel opens with the confrontation between inspector Sartaj Singh, a Sikh member of Mumbai police force and Ganesh Gaitonde, the most wanted gangster in India. Sartaj Singh, who is a middle-age divorcee, is more realistic and his career is as stagnant as his love life. He is a good detective policeman like his father. Sartaj is a good man but lives in a corrupt environment, his colleagues are all in the clutches of bribery. Ganesh Gaintonde is also a fascinating character who spellbinds the reader with information about his own life and subsequently provides the reader a treat of psychology of human mind. His own origins are equally painful and convincing. He has faced many injustices in his childhood and now as a result he has become a criminal. He is victim of wicked circumstances. He recounted how he started his criminal career. He was hungry for position and wealth therefore he committed his first murder. He lives in relative isolation, far from his home, with only a few guns protecting him. Eventually he does get plastic surgery, to be able to move about more freely again but he is always being frightened. He has made a huge success of his life; he has everything what he wants. But soon after the novel begins he is holed up in a shelter from which there is no escape.

One morning, Sartaj is surprised to receive an anonymous tip that the legendary mafia don Ganesh Gaintonde is held up in nearby safe bunker. He wanted to meet Sartaj Singh but he doesn’t know why the underworld don has chosen him. The day before, he had been called to a man barricaded in his bed room whose wife wanted to kill him. She attacks him with knife because he had thrown his wife’s lovely dog out of window of their fifth floor flat.

Sartaj and his colleague constable Katekar arrive at Kailashpade where Gaintonde had disguised himself in bunker. He watches through a surveillance camera and talks to him over an intercom, telling him the story of how he began his life in organized crime. Sartaj remains there, listening to Gaitonde as he tells the story of his
first exploits in Mumbai. He is medium sized person with medium face, neither ugly nor handsome. He doesn’t drink and smoke. He is very health conscious don as he does his exercise every day. He reads *Gita* daily and does yoga every day.

Ganesh Gaitonde is a Hindu gangster who runs vast empire of criminal activities. He runs the essential trades of drugs, *matka* (gambling), smuggling and construction. He is an arrogant and merciless killer with enormous ambition. He is a *bhai* or mafia boss, who rose to power from poverty. He has established his own company named, G-Company. He was twelve years old when he ran-away from his home. Now he has become a very powerful man and he had a great influence on police department, politicians, administration and Film-Industry. He can do everything what he wants. He is the wealthy head of one of Mumbai’s most powerful criminal gangs. He has secretly collaborated with an Indian who helps in an atomic attack that will destroy the city, in order to attribute responsibility to an Islamic terrorist organization that has been created for this purpose. Gaintonde has unwittingly helped in the importation of nuclear material. Later he realizes his mistake and tried to stop the attack, and is waiting in the atomic bunker at Kailshpada, where he will save the city’s destruction in bunker. There is an unknown lady companion with him and they planned to stop the atomic attack, organized by his *Guruji* Swami Shridhar Shukla. On the contrary, Sartaj is an honest Sikh police inspector like his father. He is forty years divorcee who lives in corrupt atmosphere. In his department, every one has indulged in corrupt malpractices.

Gaintonde had disguised himself in bunker and Sartaj was outside the building. He tries to convince Gaitonde to leave the bunker and requests to come out, but he refused as he was terrified because he knew that if he leaves the bunker, Sartaj will arrest him. Eventually, Sartaj called the bulldozer and ordered the driver to demolish the structure. When the bulldozer demolished the building, Sartaj and Katekar entered the bunker and got two dead bodies. Gaitonde had killed himself with gunshot along with an unknown lady. She was wearing tight white pants and pink top; she was beautiful middle aged girl. Sartaj doesn’t know that who was that girl and what was the relation of her with Gaintonde and why he killed her. It had become enigmatic murder mystery.

After the suicide of Gaitonde, Sartaj was approached by K.D. Yadav and Anjali Mathur. Anjali is a RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) agent. She had a round face and smooth and fair skin. She was international secret agent. She meets
Sartaj Singh and wants to get the information about Ganesh Gaitonde. RAW was supposed to fight foreign enemies of the state outside India’s borders. She wanted to know that who was that woman and what was the relation of her with Gaitonde and what she was doing in that house. Second, she needs to know that what Gaitonde was doing in Mumbai- why he was here, how long he had been here, what he has done while he was here. But Anjali urges to Sartaj that the investigation should be kept secretly. So Sartaj starts his journey to get the details about Gaitonde. Through his investigation he brought so many dark aspects of urban society.

In this novel, Vikram Chandra portrays bloodshed, violence and corruption of modern Bombay city. The main story alternates between the third-person account of Sartaj’s investigations and the first person tale of Gaitonde himself. Gaitonde tells about his life to Sartaj when he was in bunker. He was dead when the novel starts. Through the investigation of Sartaj Singh, Vikram Chandra presents the murky face of contemporary urban India. Sartaj is an honest Sikh police inspector and lives in corrupt surrounding his all colleague are in the clutch of corruption. In this story, Chandra presents the real and corrupt face of Indian police. The police department has been become corrupt a lot. Every policeman is in the grip of bribery. They take bribe and indulge in anti-social activities. They are also criminals in police vardi. The whole police department has been coloured in corruption from a normal constable to officers. They torture poor people and do their work in the favour of rich and politicians. The police officers work as the agents of ruling government. The politicians perform a great role to spread the greed of police department. The politicians and ministers give shelter to corrupt policemen, they escape them when they are caught in corruption and other illegal activities, in lieu of that these politicians misuse the police. If any honest policeman tries to go against these corrupt politicians, either he is transferred in remote area or suspended on the false cases. In this novel, Parulkar is a corrupt policeman he started his job from sub-inspector but now he is a deputy commissioner. He works as a henchman of ruling government. He says, “I was too close to the previous government. They think I am a congressman” (Sacred Games 8). Such corrupt policemen misuse their power. They get free services to everyone. In this novel, Mathija is a building contractor and Parulkar takes him free service to repair the station and his personal building. “The DG had a call from the home minister. Mathija has threatened to file a case. He said he was forced to do some work for me. Construction. That’s absurd, Sir. He came himself. How many
time he visited you here. We all saw that. He was happy to do it. Not our wall here. At my home. At your home? The roof needed work urgently. As you know, it's a very old house. My ancestral abode really. Also, it needed on new bathroom.” (Sacred Games 9)

The police spread the terrorism in *khaki Verdi* and torture the common people. Most of the common people avoid to go to police station, they suffer but keep silent because they know they will also torture in *thana* by police. When Mathija threatened to file a case against police, then Parulkar says, “Let him go to court. Let him to what he wants. Let him see what we do to his life here, Sir. At his sites, all his offices…” (Sacred Games 9). Sartaj is a single policeman, who is an honest in the whole police department in Bombay. He does his duty honestly, so he couldn’t get promotion and his career remains stagnant in his whole life. He was forced many times to taking the bribe by his colleagues but he refused. This is the main cause due to that he couldn’t progress in his life. “Others from his batch had climbed past him; he was just pedaling along, doing his job. He looked into his future and saw at he would not achieve as much as his own father, and much less than the redoubtable Parulkar. I’m quite useless, Sartaj thought, and felt very bleak” (Sacred Games 10). This is the agony of urban India in which the honest man can’t survive.

In Indian metropolitan cities, money is the main power. The people have become practical and money minded. Without money a person can’t survive in city like Bombay. If he has money, he can make everything possible. He can also make murder of his enemy by giving money. This money which is given for killing of any person is called *supari* in *Mumbia* language. The murder has become a common thing in metropolitan cities. After killing, the culprits bribe the police and judges and get acquitted from the murder. The whole system is debased. The police, administration, even the judges, all are bought in the big cities. Everyman is in the grip of corruption. “The bitter secret of the life in the metropolis: *Paisa phek, tamasha dekh*” (Sacred Games 11). As Rajendra K. Sharma says:

If a man in city has money and wealth he is respected, no matter how he has earned money. Indeed money can wash clean innumerable wrongs and sins of man in an urban society. Therefore, people in cities are mad after money. They are engaged in pursuit of money by hook or crook. In the pursuit of money, the city-dwellers do
not shirk from adopting unscrupulous means; they even exploit their fellow human beings. Other persons for them are no ends but merely means. All these things add to impersonality and unattachment in human relations. (109)

In Sacred Games, Bahzad Hussain is a slumlord and convicted of murder. He got parole and didn’t go to jail again. He bribed the police and later he was declared refugee. He says to Sartaj:

Inspector saab, you know how it is, I got parole and now it says in my file that I’m absconding in Behrain, Paisa phek, tamasha dekh. Which was absolutely true: if you had money to throw, you could watch the spectacle - the judges and magistrates trapezing blithely, the hoop-jumping politicians, the happy, red-nosed cops. Bahzad Hussain had the grace and good sense to come quietly to the station, and he was very confident, and wanted only a cup of tea and a chance to make a few phone calls. He made jokes and laughed a lot. Yes, he had thrown his money and watched the spectacle. All of this police Jhanjhal was only a slight waste of time nothing more. Paisa phek, tamasha dekh. (Sacred Games 11)

In the influence of western culture, there are so many dance-bars running illegally in big Indian cities like Bombay and Delhi, which give rise to many crimes. Behind these dancing bars, the owners are running the business of prostitution. Mumbai is a city where girls and women come from remote areas and villages in search for employment. “Poverty is among the strongest factor driving them to city. The dance bar offered many women the possibility of hope in their otherwise desolate lives, but not for long” (“Dancing in the dark”, The Hindu). They dance there for their survival, but the owners of these dancing bars exploit these helpless and poor girls and serve these innocent girls to rich people for sex. They bribe the police and do their business of prostitution openly. They send these girls to police also, so they keep silent. Here, Shambhu is a manager of Delite Dance Bar, who gives money to police
to run his dance bar. Sartaj is against the bribe but he is helpless because he is surrounded by corrupt officers:

The station and the Delite Dance Bar had a monthly arrangement. Shambhu and he were merely representatives of the two organizations, dispensing and collecting. The money was not personal, and they had been seeing each other for a year and few months now, ever Shambhu had taken over as manager of Delite, and they had grown to like each other. (*Sacred Games* 16-17)

Dance bars have become the fame of night-life in Bombay, but it has a bad impact on society. And these dance bars are thought to be meeting points for the Mumbai mafia. These dance bars cater sexuality for society. As Shilpa Jamkhandikar reports, “The dance bars operating mostly in cities and towns, employed an estimated 75,000 women to entertain customers. They danced to popular Bollywood numbers and accepted money from clients who showered them with rupee notes. The government ordered the bars to close in 2005, saying they were a bad influence on society and encouraged prostitution” (Web). The dance bars had become a big business in urban India. There are so many girls and women working in dance bars and though it has become a good source for poor and helpless woman yet they are exploited in this profession by the owners. They are propelled in prostitution forcefully. These dance bars have become the essential part of the rich people of big cities. These bars have become the centre point of crime, so the government had banned dance bars on Valentine’s Day, 2005. But in spite of government’s ban, the dance bars are running openly in Indian cities. The owners of these dance bars bribe the police and send girls to them, and are running their business openly. Even the politicians demand girls from these dance bars in order to colour their nights with them. In this novel, Shambhu Shetty, the manager of Delite Dance Bar, bribes the police and sends girls to politicians to keep their mouth shut. Shambhu says to Sartaj, “Bastard politicians. You know how many times I met MLAs and ministers asking me to send girls for private parties” (*Sacred Games* 786). Politics is the main cause to spread the corruption in India. The politicians misuse their power. The whole system, police, Administrators and politicians, all are involved in corruption.
Indian cities shine with glittering shopping mall and sky-touching buildings but behind these buildings there is area which is always ignored by all, this is slums and *Jhopadpatties* which tarnish the glory of Indian cities. The growth of industrialization is one cause for slums and *Jhopadpatties*. Due to unemployment, the workers come towards the cities to search the jobs, they belongs to remote areas and villages. But the cities are very costly to live; the poor people can’t afford the rent of building so they create slums in cities. As S.S. Jha says, “Bombay is the biggest growing metropolis functioning as the industrial-commercial capital of the country, where according to one estimate on an average nearly three hundred new persons arrive everyday in search of jobs and with a desire to settle down in the city. According to the latest figures available more than fifty percent of the city’s population lives in slums of one kind or the other and on pavements. Vast majority of people migrating to the city are from rural areas - its boundary extending to several states the country.” (xii). These *Jhopadpatties* and slum-dwellers live in extreme poverty and they are deprived of all essential amenities. They live without water, light and toilets facilities. They live like animals. In this novel, Vikram Chandra focuses on the miserable condition of slum-dwellers when Sartaj and his colleague, Katekar go to slum area for the purpose of the investigation of murder. They found there everything chaotic:

Everything was smaller, closer, the pathways narrow between the uneven walls of cardboard and cloth and wood, the tumbling roofs covered with plastic. They were well into the Bengali Bura, which was the very poorest part of Navngar. Most of the shacks were less than a man's standing height, and the citizens of the Bengali Bura sat in their doorways, tattered and ragged, and the barefooted children ran before the police party. On Katekar's face there was furious contempt for Jhopatti-dwellers who let dirt and filth and garbage pile up not two feet from their own doors, who let their little daughters squat to make a mess exactly where their son played. There are the people who ruin Mumbai, he had said often to Sartaj, these ganwars who come from
Bihar or Andhra or maderchod Bangladesh and live like animals here. (*Sacred Games* 20)

At present time, slums and *Jhopadpatties* have become the major problem for urban India. As K. Ranga Rao and M.S.A. Rao say, “The phenomenon of slum has come to be regarded as a major problem of urbanization. While no Indian city is free from slums, the problem appears to be more acute in metropolitan cities.” (1). In India, the rich are becoming richer day by day; they don’t have account that how much money they have. And the poor are poorer; they have nothing to eat because these rich people usurp the share of poor. Some poor people have to sleep without food. There is also such class in urban India, who has no shelter to live, they are homeless. “In this city, the rich had some room, and middle class had less, and the poor had none” (*Sacred Games* 79). These homeless people are a blot to the cities as they live almost nude and dirty because they don’t have attires to wear. They spend their whole life like stray dogs, and devour their stomach by picking the left out food from garbage and dustbins. Here, the writer focuses on the poor area of Bombay when Katekar goes to temple with his wife. Katekar Says, “The lane was narrow, narrow enough in some sections the Katekar could have touched the walls on both sides of it with outstretched hands. Most of the doors of the homes were open, for the air. A grandmother sat on her front step, holding her lap, laughing into the toothless pink rosebud of his smile.” (*Sacred Games* 72)

The poor live in extreme poverty. They are deprived from all necessary facilities. Even they don’t have regular water supply and electricity’s connection, they live without light. There is no place for poor in cities. As K. Ranga Rao and M.S.A. Rao assert, “The city is for the rich and the middle classes who can pay for the infrastructure and other urban facilities and luxuries. The city administration safeguards the rights of the propertied class and the corporation or municipality renders service to those who reside in authorized areas and who pay taxes for these services” (101). The government doesn’t pay attention towards this class. This class is totally ignorant. They couldn’t provide the basic education to their children, because they are illiterate and they don’t know the value of education. They are very poor and can’t bear the expenses of their children’s education. Without education they remain uncivilized and don’t know the difference of good and evils, so sometimes they involve in anti social activities. As Yogeshwar N. Tompe says:
It is disturbing that most of the perpetrators, who live in slums, are from that section of society which is deprived of almost all basic social needs. This shows that we are just not paying the same amount of attention to them as we do with those who are more fortunate. As so many youngsters live a life exposed to constant crime, their values are bound to be shaped in the same manner. Those brought up with a lack of morality and accountability towards society is more vulnerable to social evils. *(The Hindu)*

These poor are always ignored by the society and government, so they involve in criminal activities. The policy makers make policies in the favour of rich and the poor are always ignored. These homeless people spend their whole life on footpath, railway stations and bus stands. Some of them dye with cold in winter and some dye in road accidents and their dead bodies get rotten on the road sides for many days. Indian cities are full of beggars, snake-charmers and homeless people which fade away the shining of India.

In *Sacred Games*, Vikram Chandra presents every bad aspect of urban India but he focused intensely on the crime world of Mumbai. Here, there are two mafia dons, Ganesh Gaitonde and Suleiman Isa. Ganesh Gaitonde is a Hindu don. He has established his own company, G-Company. On the other hand, Suleiman Isa is a Muslim don and his company’s name is S-Company. These two companies are the most criminal companies and spread the terror in Mumbai. They have full control on politicians, police, administrators and film industry. They have tamed the gangs of boys, whom they use for crime.

Gaitonde is a most wanted criminal in Bombay, but he leads a king-size life there. His is the most powerful and rich *bhai* in Mumbai and everyone knows him. His life is full of amenities; he can get what he wants. “Gaitonde had been the first man in any of the city’s jails, perhaps the first man in all of Mumbai, to own a cellular phone. With it, safe in his cell, he had run the essential trades of drugs, *matka*, smuggling and construction” *(Sacred Games* 31). Gaitonde has a great terror on the society of Mumbai. Every people scared of him. The police, administrations, politicians, all are acquainted with him. They all work in the favour of Gaitonde. Sartaj says, “I thought you had friends everywhere, Gaitonde. Everyone, everywhere
is a friend of Gaitonde Bhai’s isn’t it? In the government, in the press, even in the police force” (Sacred Games 32). The mafia dons keep great influence on the system of Mumbai. The police work in the favour of these dons and media doesn’t write against them. Even the government also afraid of mafia dons. The film industry keeps good relation with them. The heroines dance in the party of dons and spend their nights with them. This is the reality of Bombay.

Unemployment is a big problem in urban India, in which the youth suffers a lot. In this degraded system, the youth finds itself crippled to get a job despite proper education. The jobs are distributed to rich and those people who have political approach, in which the poor are always deprived. These poor and desperate young men are resented with the prevalent corrupt system, so they do illegal works and indulge in anti-social activities for the sake of their survival. Due to unemployment, the desperate youth becomes the threat to urban society. The poor young men don’t want to be criminals but their helplessness and the corrupt system propel them into criminal world. The same incident happens in this novel, Gaitonde says to Sartaj that he got the application of an unemployed young man, name Amit Shivraj Patil, who is well qualified but unable to get a job, so he has become frustrated and wants to involve in the gang of Bhai. When Gaitonde was in bunker, he recites this application to Sartaj on intercom, what he got from Amit:

“Respected Shri Gaitonde.” Hear that Sardar-Ji? ‘Respected’. So then ........ “I am a twenty-two year-old young man living in Warda, Maharashtra. Currently I am doing my M.Com, having passed my B.Com exams. With seventy-one percent marks. I am also known in my college as the best athlete. I am captain of the Cricket team.” Then there’s a lot of nonsense about how bold and strong he is, how every-one in town’s scared of him. Ok, then he goes on: “I am sure that I can be of use to you. I have for long followed your daring exploits in our newspapers, which print very often these stories of your great power and powerful politics. You are the biggest man in Mumbai. Many times when my friends get together, we talk about your famous adventures. Please, Shri Gaitonde, I respectfully submit
to you my vita, and some small clippings about me. I will do whatever work you ask. I am very poor, Shri Gaitonde. I fully believe that you will give me a chance to make a life.

Yours faithfully,

Amit Shivraj Patil. (Sacred Games 32)

Vikram Chandra focuses on the problem of prostitution in urban India where women are bought and sold like animals. They are considered the commodity of sex. The metropolitan cities are costly to live, so these poor girls and women have to sell their bodies for their survival. In big cities, there are so many secret agencies, which entrap the customers and provide them prostitutes according to their wish. As Puran Batria asserts:

In big cities like Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Banglore, Kanpur etc. secret agencies in posh area have cropped up which when approached arrange all type of girls to suit different tastes. On demand they provide girls to Hotels, Guest Houses and to other persons at their place. Several self seekers, who believe that all means are correct to attain their ends, procure charming girls from these agencies and send them to offices, big and small, politicians and their henchmen and in return get contract, permit and other such favours. Taxi drivers and auto-ricksha walls carry the girl from the agency to the place where she is wanted. (85)

In big Indian cities, there are so many agencies that are running their business of prostitution secretly. These agencies keep contacts with girls and women and ensnare customers for them. They provide girls wherever the customers want, they arrange everything, hotel, guest house, etc. In this novel, Gaitonde tells Sartaj about the prostitution of Indian cities. Once he went to sell his gold in city, there he met with an unknown person who offered him to serve the whore for five thousand:

I misjudged you, Saab. You want something better. You just look a little, you know... But I have the girl for you, boss. He kissed his fingers. Her husband used to work in a bank, was a big Saab, poor fellow, then he
had an accident. Complete cripple he became. Can’t work. So she has to make a living for both of them, what to do? Very exclusive. Only for some gentlemen, you see, in her own apartment. I can take you straight there. You’ll see what a high-class cheez she is, boss. Completely convent-educated. I stopped. Is she fair? Like Hema Malini, bhidu. You touch her skin and you’ll get a current. Like fresh malai.

How much?

Five thousand. (Sacred Games 65)

This is the reality of urban India where women are haggled like animals. Due to unemployment and lack of sources for survival, the helpless and poor women and girls have to select the profession of prostitution.

Indian metropolitan cities are very expensive to live, in which the people who have less earning can’t survive because everything is very costly there. The rising prices of everything is one cause due to that, the people get trapped in corruption and crime. “The money came from secret deals and graft, bribery and embezzlement, extortion and murder, and the managers took care of it with discretion and integrity.” (Sacred Games 86)

Due to migration of people from rural to urban, the urban area has been become more populous. This increasing population has brought so many problems for urban-dwellers. The Indian cities are very much crowded in which everything is very chaotic. There is a lot of traffic in cities and people suffocate in this massive traffic jam for long time. The releasing smoke of these motors vitiates the atmosphere with poisonous gas which gives birth to so many diseases. The cities are very congested, homes are very close to each other but people don’t even know who lives next door, they are totally cut-off from the society. In urban area, the people are rather practical, they have no time to mingle with each-others. The people avoid living in joint-family; they have forgotten the value of relations. The parents live alone, far from their family because their sons avoid living with them. In urban area, the Indian culture has faded-up, the society has been coloured with westernization. But in rural India, the culture is yet preserved. There, the people live in joint-family with their parents and the people live in social bond. Their relations are based on emotions but in urban society, the people are money-minded and selfish and their relations are based on money and
status. The urban India is full of amenities but the people are not happy there, they are tired to live in these congested cities, they want to live peaceful life. Sartaj says, "That Bumbai is impossible to live in now. So expensive. And too many people. This was true, but where else was there to go? (Sacred Games 89)

Gaitonde was the uncrowned king of Mumbai. He tells Sartaj that now he has built his empire of crime. He had to struggle in his initial stage but now he had a great influence in Bombay, everyone knew him. He says, "I gathered the boys who made up my company, Gaitonde company, it was called, or G-company, and we were quickly famous. Not yet in the papers, but in the north and east of Mumbai the basti-dwellers knew us, and the police, and the other companies" (Sacred Games 112). In Mumbai, the public afraid of mafia dons and consider them local ‘God’ and worship them. They are considered the jobs providers. Gaitonde says to Sartaj, "Mothers came to me then. ‘A job in the post office for my boy, Ganesh Bhai, one said. ‘Settle him somewhere, Ganesh Bhai, another said. ‘You know best. They wanted jobs and justice, and blessings” (Sacred Games 112). Corruption is everywhere in Bombay, the poor and common public is tortured everywhere. The system works partially in the favour of rich, so poor are deprived from everything; they always suffered from injustice in this materialistic society. So, desperately, they take shelter from mafia dons. Gaitonde says to Sartaj:

I lived in a pucca house at the foot of Gapalmath hill, we had built it with two bedrooms and a big central hall, and on the step outside every morning a crowd gathered, seekers, suppliants, applications and yes, devotees. They came to ask for things and to lower their heads. We just wanted your darshan, Ganesh Bhai some said, and so I gave it to them, and they gazed and folded their hands and retreated, storing goodwill against the certain disasters of the future. And their blessings came to me, and money, cash from the shopkeepers and traders and garage-owners and dhaba-owners of the area, and we kept them and their establishment safe. (Sacred Games 112)

Gaitonde was an underworld don, but he was not totally bad, there were also some good qualities in his character. “Gaitonde was very religious, that he conducted
pujas quite often" (Sacred Games 161). He worshiped daily, sang bhajans and read Gita. He was very much health conscious person. He didn’t smoke and drink and did yoga regularly. He donated money for temples. He was a good man but the wicked circumstances made his bad. He spent his childhood in extreme poverty so he didn’t exploit the poor people in his life and he had sympathy with them. He tells to Sartaj, “That year we celebrated Diwali with strings of electric lights along all the main lanes, a big dais at Central Chowk with bhajan singing and mithai, and finally, after dark, I stood at the gate of my house and gave basketfuls of atom booms and rockets and phuljhadis to the children of basti.” (Sacred Games 113)

In Indian cities, the mafia dons and local ‘dadas’ make their own gangs; they tame ruffians and desperate unemployed boys and make them illegal works. These dons divide the city into areas. They collect hafta from shopkeepers and renowned businessmen, if any person denies to give money, then he is killed openly but nobody raises their voice, people close their eyes and police remains silent. The murder has been become common thing in big cities. Gaitonde tells Sartaj that how he established his empire of crime in Bomaby. He says, “I had the boys collecting hafta from the shopkeepers and businessmen around Gopalmath, all the way to Gaikwad Road, which was the border between my territory and the area belonging to the Cobra Gang. I’m not making this up, they were really called the Cobra Gang, like some outfit led by Pran and Ranjit in a movie from thirty year ago” (Sacred Games 115). This is the reality of urban India; what we see in the Bollywood movies, it happens in reality in Bombay.

In this novel, underworld don, Ganesh Gaitonde kills himself in the beginning of the novel. He tells his main accounts of his life to Sartaj through intercom when he was in bunker. The left story comes out in light through the investigation of Sartaj Singh. In the beginning of this novel, Sartaj convinces Gaitonde to come out the bunker, he refused, and Sartaj ordered to demolish the building and got two dead bodies in it. Nobody knows that who was the unknown lady along with him and it had been become the mystery. The RAW agent, Anjali Mathur wanted to get the all information about Gaitonde and that unknown lady. So anyhow, Sartaj gets the clue and approach Iffatbibi, who is maternal aunt of Muslim don, Suleiman Isa. Iffatbibi gives him the address of Pritam Dance Bar where he met with Naina Aggarwal. Sartaj puts the photograph of the dead women in front of her. She recognized that lady and
tells that her name is Jojo and she recommended her to agencies and she put her in video. Naina says:

Jojo was a model, co-ordinator, and she also owned a TV production company, she produced programmes and if there wasn’t a production under way, roles and campaigns to go around, she could connect supply and demand, sent the young, beautiful and needy to the rich and demand, it was all a matter of a couple of glossies and a few phone calls, it was simple it was efficient and everyone got what they wanted. (*Sacred Games* 113)

Through the character of Jojo, the writer divulges so many secrets of film industry one by one. Jojo was model, co-ordinator and owned a TV production company and produced many programmes. She also ran the business of prostitution. She ensnared beautiful and innocent girls who wanted to become models and heroines and served these girls to rich people to earn more and more money. After her murder, the police got the big amount of black-money about six lakhs from her apartment. For the investigation, Sartaj met with Bunty who was the right hand of Gaitonde and assisted him in his all crimes. Sartaj asks Bunty about Jojo:

Who was that woman with him?
Jojo. She sent him item.
Sent him?
Yes. First-class items for Bhai.
He used to have them flown out to Thailand
Or wherever he was.
Virgins. Jojo was the supplies.
Virgins all the way from here?
Yes, he liked Indian virgins.
How many?
I don’t know. Once a month may be.
And Jojo was his woman also?
She was a bhadwi. He must have taken her also.
That was one of his hobbies. (*Sacred Games* 159)
In this novel, Vikram Chandra reveals the filth of India film industry and its relation with underworld. Indian film industry seems glitzy and glamorous outwardly but the writer presents the hidden darkness of Bollywood. There is a lot of corruption in it. In urban Indian society, every girl wants to be heroine and model; they run away from their home in early age and come to Mumbai. Here, they become the victims of pseudo photographers, producers and other shrewd people who exploit them physically. These innocent girls came into contact with corrupt people who sell them to brothels. Most of these girls, who come to Mumbai to become actress, turn into prostitutes here. As Asha Sharma says, “There are traders in flesh who lure innocent girls into this trade. Once having been forced to tread this path there is no point of return for a woman. After this, she has no alternative but to sell herself day in and day out.” (111)

The writer takes us back to 1947, the time of Indian partition and shows the pain of those people who were separated from their kith and kin. Sartaj is a Sikh inspector, who belongs to Punjab, his mother is Prabhjot Kaur. They were three sisters, Navneet, Maninder and Prabhjot. She was youngest of three sisters. She had separated from her sisters in the partition of India. Here, the writer shows the wide chasm between Hindu and Muslim. At that time, Hindu and Muslims had become enemy to each others. Alok says, “These Muslims are bhenchos and maderchos. If all their women were standing in front of me, I would hang them up and cut them open like goats. I would pull out their intestines with my own hands. With pleasure I would do it” (Sacred Games 202). The deep anguish and ingrained pain had left an indelible impression on the minds of people, the Hindu and Muslims alike who hate each other. Their animosity will never end. The religion is the main root which gives birth to communal riots, bloodshed and violence in urban India.

Here, Vikram Chandra highlights the corrupt face of Indian politicians. Politicians have a great role for building the nation. They are policy makers and the nation is in their hands. But they have become corrupt a lot and the nation is in danger at present time. In India, almost every politician is indulged in corruption and it is a matter of anxiety. But there was a time, when India had honest politicians who performed a good role for the nation, like Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chander Bose, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi etc. But at present time, the situation has changed; the most corrupt politicians are leading the nation. The politicians do their politics to gain the votes, they make false promises
to poor people at election time, when they win, they forget everything. And the public remains always in resentment with them. In this novel, Bipin Bhonsle is such a corrupt leader who makes false promises with public and after winning the election he forgets and the public is very angry with him. Sudha reveals her anger for him and says, “That Bipin Bhonsle is such a harramkhor, she said. Before elections he told us that he would get a new extra water pipe to the colony. Now there is no new water pipe, but even the old one gets leaks every second week.” (Sacred Games 229)

In Sacred Games, Ganesh Gaitonde is a mafia don; it surprises the readers when he participates in election in Bombay. It is a great travesty of India in which the most corrupt and criminal people contest the election. In India, the politics is done on the basis of caste and religion. The Hindu voters can’t cast their vote to Muslim and the Muslims also don’t support Hindu candidates. The muscle and money power is used to deviate the voters. The leaders make use of gundas to intimidate other party’s supporters. Gaitonde’s boy says to him, “Bhai first we need help with the campaigning. They intimidate our workers when they go out to canvass, only yesterday they pushed around some of our people and grabbed our posters from them. They took two hundred and fifty posters.” (Sacred Games 243)

At election time, the politicians misguide the public and promise to eradicate the corruption from the country. But after winning the election, these politicians become the cause of corruption. In India, the corruption is spread by politicians and leaders. Gaitonde’s supporter says to him, “I thought you Rakshaks wanted to clean out corruption in the country. When the whole world is dirty, bhai, you have to get dirty to do any cleaning. We can’t fight their money without tricks. Once we are in power, it will all be different. We will change everything” (Sacred Games 244). In election time, the politicians make fool of the innocent and illiterate people. Such leaders and ministers have made politics the arena of corruption. To usurp the political chair, these corrupt politicians can do everything. They spend a lot of money in elections to hire the people for convincing and recover this lost money for making illegal works. As Bipin Bhonsle’s supporters whisper, “The goondas are coming on election day, thugs have been hired” (Sacred Games 254). The politicians think that the poor should be remain poor always, they don’t want to see them becoming rich. The politicians desire that the public should be remain illiterate because the illiterate and poor people can be make fool easily. At election time, these corrupt politicians
make false promises and distribute money, meat, wine, cell-phone and blankets to poor and illiterate people in order to get votes:

The congress incumbent had been going around the bastis, handling out hundred-rupee notes and rum and whole sheep to the citizens. Good fresh mutton is the basis of many a political career, I came to know. I made sense. A poor man fills his stomach, he takes pleasure in his dinner, he lubricates himself with two free pegs, may be three, not too many because he has other plans, he rides his wife in the morning they both go to the voting booth happy, in that uplifted haze their bodies feel light, and they forget all about how the Khadi wearing bhenchod politician had done nothing for them for years, how he has robbed and stolen and maybe murdered. All of that is gone vanished, and the happy couple cast their votes, and the servant of the people is in once again ready to serve them out of roti, kapda and makaan. Hungry, naked and without shelter, they have no memory after meat. (Sacred Games 254)

Vikram Chandra emphasizes on the contemporary issue of casteism. In comparison to rural India, the urban society is less rigid on casteism. It is fact that with the spread of education, the casteism is faded-up in urban society, but not utterly, it has an indelible impression on the mind of Indians, whether they belong to rural or urban society. Casteism is not eradicated from the mind of Indians yet. Even in the developed cities of India, the honour-killing is prevalent at present time. The parents and relatives kill their children and newly married couples, if they do inter-caste or inter-religion marriages. The urban society pretends to be educated, modern and western, people communicate in English and thrill on western music, but they haven’t developed their thinking yet. They strictly adhere to casteism in the matters of marriages. Some couples display courage to do inter-caste marriage, but they are not accepted by the society. Adams Mars Jones says, “Sacred Games is an epic thriller which doubles as an anatomy of modern India, concentrating on Bombay but making confident sweeps into various hinterlands: ‘We met farmers who carried cellphones and murdered their daughters and sons for marrying out of caste” (Web). In this
novel, Dipika is such character who is suffering with the same problem. She is a second-oldest daughter of Pritosh Shah. He is a supremely gifted money handler for gangsters, including Ganesh Gaitonde. Dipika is in love with her college friend, Prashant, but he belongs to another caste. They want to marry with each other but Dipika knows that her father will not agree. She discussed her problem with Gaitonde and requests him to talk her father on this matter. Gaitonde asks Dipika about the caste of her boyfriend:

_Dalit_ she said. And he’s poor. Her problem was gigantic, as elephantine as her father. I had always found the Gujaratis to be more advanced, more tolerant than over communities but this would strain her father’s understanding. He would do business with anyone but marriage was another matter. He had sent her to college, but not for this, not to marry, who was not only a _Dalit_ but a poor _Dalit_. Maybe a very rich _Dalit_ could have been approved, but I could hear Paritosh Shah saying it already. This is the family you want to marry us into? Her mother and Aunts would be harsher, more violent in their disapproval. Young Dipika had set herself to a hard battle. Why do you want to do this to your family? I said. This is not some film. Your father will have this Prashant of yours torn to pieces. (_Sacred Games_ 250-251).

In urban India, people work together with various people belonging to different caste. They eat together and attend each-others functions. But inter-caste marriages are almost taboo and accepted rarely in society. Gaitonde tries to convince Dipika and says:

_In my company there were Brahmins and Marathas and Muslims and Dalits and OBCs, all working together, without difference or suspicion. We had OBCs who were controllers and Brahmins who were foot-soldiers and nobody gave it a thought. Muslims and Hindus were years who put their lives in each other’s palms every day, every night. But this was not special to my_
company; it was true of many others. We who were *bhaís* were truly brothers, we lived outside the laws and were bound to each other. We were desperate men, and therefore free. But a company was a company, and marriage - especially in a joint family like hers was something else. *(Sacred Games 251)*

In urban society, people work together and mingle with each-other in spite of their different castes. But in the matter of marriage, the people are rigid. Here, Dipika loves a *Dalit* boy, when her parents came to know about her love affair, they force her to marry another person. So she had to marry with her parents’ choice. Later, Dipika committed suicide. This is the ugly dual face of urban society. “There is no law against such offence as the marriage of the daughter against her wishes who simply succumbs to the pressure…” *(Sethi 57)*. One side, the urban society pretends to be modern and considers woman equal to man, but on the other side, a girl can’t marry according to her own choice. She has to do compromise with her desire and she is forced to do marriage with her parents’ wish. As Meera Kasambi says:

> Indian society today shows a strange mixture of traditional and modern values. On the one hand we have belief that women must get education employment, better health care and more freedom of choice; we also accept their entry into the professions and positions of power (including the prime ministership, the highest office in the country). On the other hand, the basic view of women as inferior and subordinate remains unchanged. *(25)*

This is not the story of only Dipika. In Indian society, there are so many girls who have to commit suicide because their parents don’t allow them inter-caste marriage. It shows that a girl can’t take her own decision for marriage. The parents impose their wish on girls forcefully. Except the high-profile society, the inter-caste and inter-religion marriages are solemnized rarely whether it is rural or urban society. This is the reality of Indian society.

For the purpose of investigation, Sartaj meets Jojo’s sister, Mary Mascarenas. She was middle aged divorcee woman, running her hair dresser parlour in Bombay. After divorce, she has to face so many problems including financial crisis. She was
not well, and was suffering with loneliness. In urban society, the divorce has become common thing. In comparison to rural society, divorce is more prevalent in urban society. It is a tragic end of a marital relationship in which man and woman both suffer, but woman suffers more in comparison to man. As Usha Devi R. asserts:

> Emotional consequences of the divorced women manifested in such behavioural symptoms as depression, loneliness, tendency to cry easily etc. Inspite of the fact that they had sometimes escaped from troublesome, and at times brutal marriage, most of these women found that they suffer from loneliness. (87)

Sartaj asks to Mary about Jojo. She reveals her anger for Jojo and confessed that she was involved in nefarious activities with mafia don. She tells Sartaj about the biography of Jojo. She was fifteen years old when she came to Bombay. She stayed with her sister Mary. She was very much beautiful and wanted to be heroine. She had a sexual relation with her sister’s husband. So Mary had to take divorce to her husband, John. Jojo became the cause of their divorce so Mary was resented with her.

Jojo joined the dancing and acting classes. She met some producers and directors and got role for television and for Dabur shoes. Jojo’s family was much resented with her, because they knew that she was involved in anti-social activities. Mary says, “My mother was very angry at her also. *Ma* was sick and Jojo tried to get in touch but ma said no, she didn’t want to speak to her to that sinful, shameless girl. She died without every speaking to Jojo” (*Sacred Games* 289). Because her mother knew that she had become the trader of bodies. She was running the business of prostitution in Bombay. Jojo wanted to be actress and she met with producers and photographer, who exploited her physically. She came to Bombay for become an actress but the corrupt atmosphere of film Industry had made her prostitute. She was very much cute girl and didn’t want to be prostitute but the corrupt society makes her. Now she had become the supplier of girls. She had contact with corrupt people including underworld don and she provides them girls for sex.

Prostitution is a big social problem in urban society. Through the character of Jojo, the writer divulges so many secrets of Bombay life. He shows the reality of film industry which is full of corruption. It exploits so many girls and left them as prostitutes. He also shows the relation of this glamorous with underworld. In this novel, Jojo is a television producer and having sexual relation with underworld don,
Ganesh. She sent him virgin girls who belong to high profile society and come to Bombay for becoming heroines. Gaitonde says, “Jojo. A strange name, but the girls she sent were indeed a cut above the common randi. They were educated, and some of them English speaking” (Sacred Games 388). The prostitution is more prevalent in urban society in comparison to rural. As A.K. Srivastava says, “The institution of prostitution was essentially an urban phenomenon. The beginnings of urbanization led to the emergence of a class of alienated women who took to this profession for their subsistence.” (68). In big Indian cities, the prostitution is considered a normal thing and considered the requirement of society. But the prostitutes have no respect in society. They are considered only the object of sex. The customers torture them and treat like animals. No girl wants to become prostitute but the corrupt society and wicked circumstances force them to be. Every whore have miserable story behind them. Some girls are beguiled by rich people, they pretend to love and promise them for marriage and make sexual relation. After making the sexual relation, they deny for marriage. So they remain no alternative and become prostitutes. As Puran Batria says, “Many socially and economically depressed and under privileged women were attracted towards this life and many innocent girls were not only enticed into it with the prospects of marriage and comfortable living but were even coerced by the exploiters to enter into this life for their financial gains” (81). In some cases, the girls and women become prostitutes due to their helplessness and poverty. The problem of survival propels them into prostitution. The modernization and westernization are also a big cause for prostitution. In urban India, every girl wants to lead a luxury life; they live in pomp and show. In middle class family, the girls are very ambitious, their needs are very high, they want to walk in luxury cars and they desire to wear branded attires. They aspire to look like rich but due to lack of sources, they couldn’t replete their unlimited desires. So they try to search the sources to earn money, but due to unemployment, earning of money is very difficult in cities. So they get it easy to sell their bodies and get good earning and caught in the mire of prostitution. In urban India, the prostitution has been become a big business and big industry in which women suffer a lot. As Jean D’cunha says:

Within this context of the commodification of every aspect of human life, sex and women’s bodies have also been commoditized. Prostitution has now become a lucrative market and a booming industry, differentially
tiered with profit acquiring to the organizers and controllers of this sex service sector/industry while the women are by and large exploited. (116)

There was a time when India was known for peace and it had a good reputation in the world, but now the situation has changed. At present time, India is known for corruption, terrorism, smuggling, crime, poverty and begging etc. The corrupt politicians and ministers have become enemies for the country. They are the main cause of corruption and terrorism. These corrupt politicians give shelter to criminals and these criminals provide them muscle power. India has become the center-point for smuggling and terrorism in the world:

The Pakistanis and the Afghans run a twenty-billion-dollar trade in heroin, which is partly routed through India, through Delhi and Bombay, to Turky and Europe and the United States. The ISI and the generals fatten on the trade and buy weapons and *Mujahideen* warriors. The criminals provide logistical support, moving men and money and weapons across the borders. The politicians provide protection to the criminals, provide muscle and money to the politicians. (*Sacred Games* 326)

The situation has become complex in urban India. The leaders, who are leading the nation, they all have been become corrupt. Indian cities are full of thugs, robbers and terrorists. Nobody knows that when the bomb would blast under his feet. Indian cities are not safe. A person can kidnap any time. The girls and women are not safe in cities; they can become the victims of gang rape at any time. It seems that the cities are full of animals.

The poor have no place in cities, they are treated like animals. Their condition is worse than dogs. In high profile society, the dogs are treated like family members in house. These dogs lead better life in comparison to poor. They are washed by servant daily and walk in luxury cars and get good food. In the same house, the servants are treated like dogs; they eat the left out food and do not get the proper wages for their hard work and services. The servants have no place and respect in high profile society.
In this novel, Vikram Chandra reminds us the incident of 1992, when the Babri Masjid was demolished in Ayodhya and it took a place of great communal riots in which so many innocent people were killed. In big cities, the Hindu and Muslims live together, but they hate to each-others. Their animosity is running since a long time. And it seems that it will never end. The corrupt politicians know the weakness of Hindus and Muslims. They instigate the public for their personal benefits on the basis of religion which gives birth to communal riots in which innocent people are killed. Muslims are in minority in India, so Hindus burn their bastis and kill them brutally. For the purpose of revenge, the Muslims take the help of RDX and bombs in which so many innocent people lost their lives. Sometimes, such communal riots take a place of great blood-shed in which the police and army get fail to control the situation. In this novel, Bipin Bhonsle is a corrupt leader; he wants to usurp the govt. land where the poor Muslims live. He bribes Hindu don (Gaitonde) to demolish the Muslim basti and orders him to burn the basti. Bipin haggles with Gaitonde:

Bipin saab. That land is worth four Crores, easy.’
Twenty-five, then.
I’ll need a lot of boy.’
Your boys can keep what they find.’
Find in some miserable hut, while a fire is roaring over their heads?’
Thirty.’
One Crore.’
He laughed. I’ll give you sixty lakhs
Done.’
When?
Tomorrow. (Sacred Games 393)
So, the deal settles on sixty lakhs. Bipin pays sixty lakhs to Gaitonde. The next day, he demolishes and burns the basti and it takes a place of big communal riot in which so many people are killed. The riot runs for long time. Gaitonde says:

Finally, in the third week of January, the burning and killing stopped, under the bullets of the police and the army, and under orders from Bipin Bhonsle’s bosses, and their boss. Finally there were too many dead bodies even for the very supreme top and the reeling roar of the
approaching chaos too deafening and so it stopped. The city cringed and shook itself and began to clean up the debris, bulldozers swept up the emptied grounds and dug foundation, bodies were lifted from the gutters, from the rubbish heaps, and traffic churned through the lanes again. *(Sacred Games 394)*

This incident reminds us of June, 1979, when the government had vacated the slum area in Bombay forcefully. The government had proclaimed as its own land where the poor people made slums. The police had invaded the area and demolished the huts. At that time, 50,000 slum dwellers had become homeless. As S.S.Jha took the interview to the victim of that incident, “All was well with us’ moaned Lautram Jaiswal, “but our peace was shattered a few days back when suddenly a group of 300-400 police invaded our area, started beating us and demolishing our huts. All our belongings were confiscated and we were left with just a few bamboos and some straw mattresses.” *(119)*

In this novel, there are two dons, Ganesh Gaitonde, and Suleiman Isa. Ganesh Gaitonde is Hindu don, he fights for Hindu. One the other hand, Suleiman Isa is a Muslim don and he fights for Muslims. They both have their own companies, G-Company and S-Company respectively. These two agencies are the cause of terrorism in Mumbai. As caste and religion are the main reasons of communal riots in India, every riot starts from temples and Masjids and takes a place of great bloodshed. Bomb exploding is also a result of these communal riots. In India, Hindus demolish Muslim’s masjids in riots. Muslims are very few in India, so to take the revenge they explode the bombs in crowded cities in which the children, women and innocent people become the victims. In *Sacred Games*, the Hindus demolish the mosque of Muslims and it takes the place of great communal riot. Gaitonde says:

I knew it all from our paltu policemen before it was announced on television that in the simmering and swelling of anger after the masque was pulled down, after the riots, young Muslim boys from Bombay had been flown to Dubai and then to Pakistan, that they had been trained by Pakistanis, that greasy pockets of RDX had been brought in by sea by Suleiman Isa’s vastly seasoned smugglers, that the trainees had made RDX
bombs complete with timing device and planted them in cars and scooters, that they had distributed these vehicles in the most crowded and best-known part of the city, and then the massacre had followed. This was their revenge for the riots, for the many Muslims who had been killed. (Sacred Games 407)

The situation has been becoming more and more complex day by day in urban India. Indian cities are not safe to live. The bombs explosions, crime, violence, murders, smuggling, kidnapping, riots, rape, corruption, cruelty and terrorism have been become threats in urban India. Indian cities seem like jungles which are teemed with cruel animals. The increasing crime rate has been become a big problem in urban society.

In this novel, the novelist adds nine sub-plots to the main story and all stories are interlinked with the main story. All sub-plots present the various faces of urban society. Through the character of Mrs. Kamala Pandey, the novelist presents the infidelity of women in urban society. Mrs. Kamala Pandey is an air-hostess, belongs to a middle class family. She always quarrels with her husband, Mr. Mahesh Pandey. She wanted to do her job but her husband refused her because he doubts on her fidelity. She loves her dog (Fluffy) more than her husband. “Mrs. Kamala Pandey, who in talking to Fluffy always spoke of herself as ‘Mummy’” (Sacred Games 3). This dog becomes the cause of their quarrel always. So, one day, he had thrown the puppy out of a window from fifth floor. The dog was died. For the revenge of her dog’s murder, she attacks him with stick and knife. She had an extra-marital affair with her colleague, named Umesh Bindal and it had become a big problem for her. In modern urban society, the extra marital affairs have become a fashion which gives birth so many problems like divorce, marital-discords, murders and blackmailing etc. In cities, both male and female enjoy the extra marital affairs. As Puran Batria asserts:

The urban environment is also conducive to extra-marital relations. Through the laws of society, religion or custom rarely permit extra-marital relations, the taboos seem much more strong in the case of females as compared to males. Male enjoys this license comparatively easy. For the sake of variety some find extra-marital relations more satisfying. (78)
In this novel, Kamla Pandey was distressed due to her extra-marital affair because someone was blackmailing her. She had a love affair with her colleague, Umesh Bindal and had a sexual relation with him. They used to go to hotel many time and someone had made their videos. So that unknown person was blackmailing her again and again and require big amount of money. So, she was very much distressed. She meets with inspector Sartaj and tells her problem with him. But she doesn’t report in police station because if she lodges FIR in station, his husband will know about her illegal relation, so she requests Sartaj to keep it secret. To keeping the secret, she offers to bribe twenty thousand to him:

But Sartaj was very angry. ‘Madam, I can’t help you without a complaint. How much do you want? He shoved the envelope across the table. I can arrest you right now, for trying to bribe a police officer. That shut her up. She put a hand on her mouth and began to weep. Sartaj could see that it was real this time. He stood up and walked away. Why had he been angry at her? It wasn’t just the money. He was quite used to taking money, to being brought. Things and people were bought and sold every day in the city. (Sacred Games 420)

The whole system has become corrupt. So the society’s mental set-up has been also become corrupt. In this story, Sartaj was a single policeman who didn’t take bribe, except him every policeman was in the grip of bribery. He was also forced to take the bribe many times, even his colleagues also allure him to take the bribe but he always opposed. In urban India, money is the main power. The police, administration, judges all are bought and sold like things. The public is also become corrupt; people think that bribery is the need of modern time.

The crime is a big problem in Indian cities. Some women are also involved in criminal and anti-social activities. The increasing women’s crime rate has become threat for urban India. Along with the prostitution, these women are running the business of smuggling the heroin, Charas, Ganja and other intoxicating drugs. The women indulge in such crime due their financial problems. As Madhurima says, “Prostitution, shop-lifting, thefts, frauds and drug-related offences were mainly done for economic reasons. When women did not have resources or were unable to obtain
sufficient money from traditional and legitimate sources, they indulged in illegal and
criminal activities.” (13). In high profile society, the girls and women misuse their
freedom and indulged in criminal activities. They pretend to be modern and go to
dancing club at night. There, they use smoke, wine, drugs, charas and Ganja and
spoil their life. In intoxicated state, they become the victim of rape, murder and
blackmailing etc. and their freedom becomes the curse for them.

The nudity and sexuality have also become big problems in urban society
which give birth to many crime like rape, murder, blackmailing etc. With the
influence of modernization and westernization, the Indian society has forgotten it own
culture. There was a time when Indian women are known for their lajja (shame) and
they wear full attires and keep their eyes down when they talked to unknown person.
But at present time, the women demand to be equal to man. Now the women live in
freedom, they can do whatever they want. They wear western attires which are less
than their needs. As Puran Batria says “Materialistically, a very small section of ultra
modern women wear little concealing costumes only in an effort to ape the west to
look mod and be acceptable in the accidentally oriented society” (101). The modern
girls wear very short costume to attract the attention of people but sometime it
becomes the cause of crime like rape. The media is also responsible to serve the
nudity and sexuality on cinema and television. “It is becoming very difficult. As it is,
you never know what can be on television, right in the middle of the day. It is
impossible for a family to sit together and watch.” (Sacred Games 431)

In this story, Mrs. Kamla Pandey was suffering the problem of blackmailing.
Some unknown person had made her videos and requiring money again and again.
Sartaj Singh got the clue anyhow and knew that unknown person had link with Red-
T-Shirt gang. So Sartaj wanted to get the information about Red-T-Shirt gang. During
the investigation Sartaj and his colleague, Kamble were scouring the city. They were
opposite side of the street, in front of Apsara Cinema in Bombay. They saw, the street
was full of beggars:

There were beggar boys and girls working the crowd,
holding up their hands and trying out their patter. Hello,
Aunty, give me something, only one rupee, aunty. One
rupee, Aunty, I’m very hungry. Please Aunty. The
chokras wore a variety of ragged shirts and banians,
but no red T-shirt. (Sacred Games 515)
Here, the writer criticizes the begging system of India. There is no single city in India which is without beggars. At present time, the Indian cities have been developed a lot. But there is such poor class in cities which arises the question of the development of urban India. In cities, there is such poor class which doesn’t seem human being with their appearance. They look like animals it seems that they never bath in their whole life. They live in very miserable condition. They are totally illiterate. They don’t have roofs on their heads; they are homeless and spend their whole life on footpath. Their life is depended on the alms. They are to beg for their stomach, they have no source of earning and the government doesn’t pay attention for the upliftment of them.

In *Sacred Games*, Vikram Chandra presents the chaotic situation of urban India where everything is in muddle. The streets are full of thugs, robbers and pocket-pickers. A person is not safe in cities. In cities, some bad people are running the business of pick-pocketing, they make their gangs in which one master-mind person gives tricks to unemployed boys that how to pick the pocket and snatch the gold-chains from women. In this novel, inspector Sartaj and his colleague, Kamble meets with the person, named Jayanth who was the master mind of pocket-picking and running his business of pocket-picking through his gang in Bombay. K.R. Jayanth is a famous pocket-picker. He had his own gang, called Red-T-Shirt *chokra*. In his gang, Ramu is a ring leader who wears black T-Shirt, except him, all wear red T-Shirts. Sartaj wants to get the information about Red T-Shirt boys because the person who was blackmailing Mrs. Kamla Pandey, he had linked with Red T-Shirt *Chokras*. So Sartaj get the information to Jayanth. Jayanth says “Don’t worry. I’m not picking your pocket. Don’t worry. And don’t worry about the chokra. You just keep alert, keep looking” (*Sacred Games* 522). Jayanth gives the address of Red T-Shirt gang and instructs him, “You don’t carry much money, uncle” (*Sacred Games* 522). In Indian cities, a man has to remain alert in crowded areas because the pocket-pickers are very expert, he can be robbed any time. Even, sometime the policemen are also become the victims of these pocket pickers. The Indian cities are brimmed with robbers, dacoits and wicked persons. Jayanth says, “Too much crime on the streets nowadays.” (*Sacred Games* 522)

In metropolitan cities, terrorism and crime are in it pinnacle. Some dangerous people and local dons are running the business of killing and murders. They take big amount of money for murders and this money is called “*Khokas and petis*” (*Sacred Games* 545) in *Mumbaia* language. People are not safe in metropolitan cities. The rich
are in more danger than the poor because the rich have enough money, so they are murdered. Even they are not safe in their own home sometimes their servants slay them to usurp the money.

The corruption, robbery, decoity and terrorism have spread their roots terribly in urban India. The man is always frightened in cities. He doesn’t know when he will be murdered for a small amount of money. Even the school boys and girls are also in danger; these innocent children are beguiled and kidnapped by the wicked people. After kidnapping, they demand money from their parents, if they are unable to give the money or if they report in police station, then these kidnapped children are killed brutally. So the parents have to give the big amount of money to release their children. There was a time when India was a very peaceful country and every people were safe and live without fear. If any person was in grief or problem then other unknown people helped him without any personal benefit, but now the time has been changed. Now, the people have been become selfish and self-centered, they don’t bother for others. Nowadays, the murders are done openly in crowded area but the people turn their face another side and close their eyes. The people don’t oppose the murderer even they don’t report in police station. The girls are picked and rapped openly by local dons but nobody take tension. People don’t want to indulge in other’s problems. The situation has been become complex. It seems that we are in Kaliyug. Sartaj says, “We live in sad times. A real kalyug.” (Sacred Games 548)

Vikram Chandra touches every bad aspects of urban India; he also presents the scenario of Indian jails. Gaitonde was arrested by police. He was charged with “murder, giving shelter to criminals, extortion, issuing threats” (Sacred Games 457). But he came out soon. When he was in jail Jojo sent him girls into jail. In this novel, the writer divulges the secrets of Indian jails where the staff takes bribe and supplies prostitutes to prisoners.

In this story, the novelist presents the struggle of Indian models and actresses that how much they have to suffer in Bombay. Jojo told her miserable story to Gaitonde that how she became what she was. She had a great desire of become a heroine from her childhood. But she didn’t know the bitter reality of film industry. Her exploitation began from her own home. “Jojo sister’s husband had run off with young Jojo, told her that he would make her a movie star, but after months and months of doing the rounds of producer’s office, he had prostituted her to one of them. He told her all the girls had to do this, compromise was the price of fame and
part of the business, everyone compromised. She had understood this by now, and had done it, but the film had never materialized. Then there had been another producer and then another” (Sacred Games 484). In the beginning of her career, she was getting a lot of trouble for her survival because Bombay was very much costly to live. She struggled in her beginning but couldn’t get success, and then she went to producers and compromised in front of them. It is not the story of only Jojo but every heroine has to do compromise with producers. Then, she got into the dancer’s union and worked in a few movies as a dancer. She dreamed that she would be an actress some days, “but she wasn’t stupid enough to believe it for long. And she was smart enough to understand both demand and supply. She knew rich men, and she knew young girls who needed a way to survive in the city. So she began her business. But her business wasn’t only sex. She did get some of the girls acting jobs. And she herself, finally, became a producer” (Sacred Games 485). In this novel, Jojo is a producer and dealer of prostitutes and Gaitonde is an underworld don. But there is a similarity between them; they both are the victims of this cruel society and corrupt system. Now they both are powerful and got a huge success in their life. They didn’t want to be corrupt but the corrupt atmosphere surrounding them, forced them to be what they were. This is the reality of Indian urban society. This is only the society which creates mafia dons and turns a girl into prostitute.

In this novel, Vikram Chandra adds many stories to the main story and presents the kaleidoscopic picture of urban society. Through the journey of Jamila Mirza from a poor girl to Miss India, the novelist unfolds so secrets of urban society and Bollywood. Jamila Mirza is a very beautiful Muslim girl. She belongs to an orthodox family in Lucknow. Her father owns a small family restaurant in Lucknow. She is six feet tall, having the burning desire of be a model and heroine. She is very intelligent and ambitions girls and aspires to grow in her life. “She reads, she watches. Somehow she makes up her mind that all this is not enough for her. Lucknow and marriage at eighteen is not what she wants” (Sacred Games 562). With the growth of education and modernization, Indian girls are becoming more ambitious. These modern girls have challenged the traditional thinking of society. In ancient time, girls are deprived from education and they are kept in the four walls of house. They are married in early age by their parent’s choice. Women had very miserable condition in society and they are considered inferior to men. They were financially depended on their husbands so they were always dominated in family as well as in society. But,
now the situation has been changed. The women have been proved that they are equal to men. They are performing the equal role like men in society. They are serving in every field like police, education, administration, medical, army and navy etc. The girls defeat boys in every field whether it is education or any other competitive exams. Now, the girls are very ambitious, they want to touch the sky in every field. In urban society, every girl is attracted towards glamorous world. Every girl wants to be heroine and model. It is not bad thing that girls are attracted toward the world of glamour, but due to lack of sources they are caught in the trap of wicked persons who lead them in the way of prostitution. In this novel, Jamila Mirja is a poor girl, she comes Bombay for become a heroine but she is trapped by Jojo, who supplied girls to rich people including mafia dons. Jamila is very much ambitious girl; she can do everything for her career. So she was agreed with Jojo. Gaitonde says, “Whole of India is full of idiot like her. Bad influence of films and television” (Sacred Games 562). In urban society, the girls are very ambitious; they are ready to do everything for their bright future. Sometimes, these girls have to pay a lot for their ambitiousness; they are trapped by shrewd people who lead them to destruction. For become heroines, some girls run away from their homes in early age and come to Bombay where they suffer a lot. Jamila was also run from her home. Jojo recites Gaitonde the story of Jamila:

Jamila had waited until the day after her eighteenth birthday. Late that afternoon, she left her house wearing a burqa, carrying only her purse in which she had seven thousand four hundred rupees, some of it saved painfully over the years, most of it stolen from her mother almirah. She had three gold bangles, and some silver jewellery of no account she caught a rickshaw to Nakkas, via Kashmiri mohalla, where she bought a cheap suitcase. She kept her face covered and walked” (Sacred Games 665)

Jamila had a great desire to become a heroine so she waits for her eighteenth birthday to run from her home. After stealing some money, she leaves a letter in which she says, “I am going of my own free will. It is my choice. Please don’t try to find me. She wrote nothing about where she was going, and why, and what for. Since, she had never said a word to anyone about her ambitions. About her direction, nobody knew
where to look for her” (Sacred Games 666). She reached at Bombay and discarded her burqa and changed her name. She suffered a lot in Bombay in the starting of her career. Then, she came into contact with Jojo. She was ready to do everything for her career. So Jojo offers her for Gaitonde. Jojo allures him for Jamila:

Not just a girl. This one is ...This one is an amazement, Gaitonde. So tell. First of all she’s a virgin. Yes, yes, like every other randi in Bombay. Seriously. You have a doctor check her if you want. She’s from a very orthodox family in Lucknow. If she’s that orthodox, what is she doing with someone like you? Arre, baba, she wants to be an actress. (Sacred Games 562)

In urban society, the girls are more conscious for their career. To making their dreams true, sometime they take the help of wicked means and propel themselves in the world of crime. In film industry, girls have to pass so many ordeals to be an actress. A poor girl can’t sustain in this profession for long time. She has to compromise everywhere. In this novel, Jamila was a poor girl. She had a great need of money so she wanted a man who could invest on her. So she agrees with Jojo. Jojo negotiates with Gaitonde for her and says:

You’re the only one who can handle her. I’m giving you a compliment. You mean I’m the only one who can afford to pay for this giant virgin. How much? A lot. Of course a lot. Tell me the price. But she doesn’t want that much cash, actually. Then? It look me a while to understand, when she first talked to me. She doesn’t want just a man. She wants an investor. An investor in what? In her future. (Sacred Games 563)

The poor have no place, they have to suffer everywhere. They can’t exist in this materialistic society. In film industry, there is a lot of corruption in which the poor girls suffer more. “If you’re just a girl from Lucknow, with no fluid cash, you’ll be just one more among thousands going from producer to producer by auto-rickshaw, and every photographer who agrees to take a picture for your portfolio will want to introduce you to his bed upstairs in the loft” (Sacred Games 564). To get the name and fame in film industry, a poor girl has to compromise everywhere. The film industry is made for rich people the poor can’t survive in this profession. “This is why
all these children-of-star dominate the industry, because they have not just connections but also resources" (Sacred Games 564). In this novel, mafia don, Ganesh Gaitonde plans to make a film and he selects Jamila Mirza for his movie. But she has to pay a lot for get the role in his movie. She had to stay with him in the hotel when they were on suiting. He makes sexual relation with her there. He says, “I switch off the light, and we lay next to each other. I knew she wouldn’t sleep for a while, for an hour or two at least, but she deferred to my schedule and was courteously pliable. She ate and slept and woke when I wanted. And I wanted to sleep now. But her body kept men awake.” (Sacred Games 661)

Through the character of Jamila Mirza, the novelist reveals the darkness that envelops the glamour of this film industry. In Bollywood, the actress and models are exploited a lot. They have to spend many nights with producers, photographers including mafia dons for financial support. At present time, every girl is attracted towards the world of glamour but they don’t know the bitter reality behind this shining world. Most of the girls, belonging to poor background, are exploited in Bombay. Because the city is teemed with shrewd and clever people. They allure these innocent girls and promise them to provide the work in movies and make sexual relation with them. Most of the girls are sold in brothels and they couldn’t escape from this mire the whole life. These girls couldn’t become heroines but the corrupt atmosphere of Bombay makes them prostitutes.

The rising crime rate in the cities has become a big problem for India. The worrisome incidence of random robberies, rape, murder, corruption, terrorism and kidnapping have been become a threat for urban India. In comparison to urban India, the rural India is more peaceful. The rural dwellers live their life peacefully. But in urban India, the man is feared and scared always. The underworld has a great terror on the mind of people. In Bombay, the Bhai can do everything, nothing is impossible for them. When Gaitonde was disguised himself in bunker he orders his boys to kidnap Jojo and they do. After kidnapping, when Jojo came to know that Gaitonde made her kidnap, she scolds him, “You listen to me. Who do you think you are? You think you’re some king, you can just kidnap people? You can just shock somebody like they were some animal and have them dragged down to you? You bastard, just because everyone in the world is afraid of you, you think you can do everything? (Sacred Games 850). In Bombay, these mafia dons have great terror on the mind of
people. The police, politicians administrators, everyone fears from them. Through the character of Gaitonde, the writer presents the criminal world of Bombay.

The youth is the most aggrieved class in urban society. In this novel, Vikram Chandra also presents the problem of unemployed urban youth. Unemployment is a big problem in India in which the educated youth suffers a lot. Through the character of Aadil Ansari, the writer reveals the frustration of youth and presents that how the frustrated youth becomes the threat for society. In this novel, Aadil Ansari is a simple and most intelligent Muslim boy. He belongs to a small town, Rajpur, in Patna (Bihar). He is well qualified but unable to get a job in this corrupt system. He search job home to home but gets fail at every efforts. In his childhood, his all friends were involved in anti-social activities, “But Aadil’s passion was his books and he wanted nothing else but the swooning pleasure of learning” (Sacred Games 885). But his childhood was spent in extreme poverty. Even he was unable to pay his school fees, but his burning desire of getting the education couldn’t fetter him. Aadil had a great need of money to complete his education but his parents were helpless. “Aadil had told them that fees and books and exams alone would require seven hundred rupees, may be more, every six months. They asked where will that come from? But Aadil was adamant. He was not rude, but he put his head down and repeated one single sentence: I want to go to college” (Sacred Games 886). He faced a lot of problems in his childhood but that couldn’t confine him.

Here, Vikram Chandra focuses on the helplessness of poor and unemployed youth. In spite of having the proper qualification the youth is unable to get a job. In this corrupt system, the rich get the jobs easily because they have money enough to bribe and they have political approach, but the poor are unfit because they have neither money to bribe nor political links, so they are always deprived. Sometimes, the caste and religion becomes the great hurdle for unemployed youth. After the completion of his education, Aadil goes door to door for searching the job but fails everywhere. He was becomes frustrated and felt miserable. Eventually, he met a truck driver, named Maqbool Khan. “Make me a driver, he said. Now Maqbool Khan suddenly wanted to defend the dignity of Aadil’s learning. How can an educated boy like you be a driver? He said. Why don’t you give tuition or something? The Hindus won’t hire me to teach their children, Aadil said. And there are not enough Muslims in Rajpur, not enough who can pay” (Sacred Games 890). Aadil Ansari is a Muslim boy but lives at such place where Hindus were in majority, and they didn’t prefer a
Muslim to teach their children. He was growing old so his parents forced him for marriage but he is an unemployed and unable to sustain to his family. So, he was tense about his future. He agreed to do everything for money. Maqbool feels pity on him; he was surprised to see the helplessness of Aadil, inspite of having the proper education he was helpless. Now he wants to become the truck driver. So Maqbool offers him the job of number adding assistant and he says, “You are honest, help me with sums and bills. But Aadil asked who got paid more, a truck driver or a number-adding assistant. It’s not that simple, Maqbool Khan said. You have to apprentices as a cleaner first. Only later you make more money.” (Sacred Games 890)

At present time, everyone wants to shift to urban area from villages. Urban area is becoming more and more populated and congested day by day. And this increasing population gives birth to so many problems like unemployment and poverty etc. and this unemployment and poverty give birth to brutal crimes. In urban India, the youth is the most tensed and frustrated class. Due to unemployment and poverty, the youth finds unable itself to get the place in society, inspite of having the proper education. So the frustrated youth takes the help of anti-social activities and becomes criminals. The corrupt atmosphere of cities forces them to involve in corruption. In this novel, Aadil is well educated boy. He scours the city for job but fails at every effort. The Hindu families refuse him to teach their children because he was Muslim. He feels humiliation when he went to Maqbool Khan for learning the truck-driving and Maqbool says, “Education made you unfit” (Sacred Games 891). His mother also blames on his education. So he was very much frustrated and he left his native place and comes to Bombay. He was very much angry with the prevalent and “rotten system” (Sacred Games 901). So, he wanted to take the revenge from this corrupt system. In Bombay, he came into contact with comrade, Kishore Paswan and Jansevak. Comrade Paswan makes use of him and says, “I heard you are having lots of trouble” (Sacred Games 899). So they prepared him for the fighting to the corrupt system and society. They convinced him:

The institutions of the state were reactionary by nature, defined by the class positions of those who controlled them. The police and other executive arms of the state were used to destroy, to exterminate the developing class struggle of the landless peasants. What was always referred to as a ‘Law and order problem’ in the
reactionary newspapers was actually the natural outcome of a socio-political system which generated poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and all-round underdevelopment for more than ninety percent of the toiling population in mostly rural areas, while producing immense wealth and extravagance for a handful of parasitic classes in the villages and the cities. The aim of the class struggle was to eliminate feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism. *(Sacred Games 900)*

Aadil Ansari was felt resented with the prevalent system and corrupt society. He came into contact with Comrades; they instigate him against the system and turn him into Naxalite. They teach him that the few rich people are spreading the corruption in society. This rich class is called the capitalistic. This class eats the share of poor people, this is the main cause that the poor are becoming poorer day by day and the rich are richer. So to eradicate the corruption from society, the poor will have to fight with the rich and capitalistic society. So Aadil was convinced with them and applied himself to the struggle. Comrade Jansevak instructs him to educate the poor people of Rajpur to raise the revolutionary consciousness. So Aadil becomes Naxalite because he was truly desperate. He educates other frustrated poor people. Comrade Kishore Paswan and Jansevak provide him rifles and bullets and he attacks on police and killed them. He becomes the ring leader of desperate class and educates them to fight the corrupt society. At last, he was shot dead by police in an encounter. This is the stark truth of urban society which forces a simple and honest man to become a criminal. Aadil was an intelligent boy and wanted to do something good in his life, but he faced a lot of injustice in the society. He didn’t want to kill policemen but the wicked circumstances had forced him to do that. He didn’t want to be a Naxalite but corrupt atmosphere and injustice made him.

To sum up this chapter, one finds Vikram Chandra presenting the true picture of Bombay which also becomes a character in the novel *Sacred Games*. The main story is focused on the life of criminal lord Ganesh Gaitonde and police inspector, Sartaj Singh. The novelist adds many sub-plots along with the main story and reveals the cruel face of urban society. Here, the maximum characters are the victims of social injustice and corrupt system. They don’t want to indulge in nefarious activities but the corrupt atmosphere of Bombay forced them to be. In this novel, Ganesh
Gaitonde was a poor man, who had seen an extreme poverty in his childhood. He had sensed that the powerless and poor person can’t survive in this corrupt atmosphere. So, to gain the power he becomes mafia don. It is only the poverty which creates monsters like Gaitonde. Jojo came to Bombay to become a heroine but the underworld forced her to become prostitute and the dealer of bodies. Jamila Mirja also wanted to become an actress but she had to pay a lot to become an actress. She had to lose her virginity. Sartaj was an honest police inspector but he was forced to take the bribe many times. Due to his honesty he could not get promotion in his whole job career. Aadil was innocent and intelligent boy but wicked circumstances and social injustice turn him into Naxal. Urban India has developed a lot, Indian cities shine like European cities but behind the glittering and shining cities, there is a lot of dreary darkness which can’t be ignored. This is the bitter reality of urban India.
Works Cited


