Chapter-5

Summary and Conclusion

With an increase in the incidence of kidnapping for ransom, an increasing incidence of kidnapping is indicative of the fact that there is an increased motivation for crime for material benefits rather than for the squaring up of enmities arising out of a conflict in the agrarian setting or in the rural power structure. So even if dacoity and murder have decreased, the ratio between them remains more or less unaffected. This would indicate a substantive reduction of the political content of the baghi sub-culture and an enhancement of the criminal propensities for material accumulation of wealth.

The above pattern of deduction would suggest, first, that for some reasons or complex of reasons the baghi way of settling disputes is becoming progressively less relevant, and therefore some changes must have taken place within the last thirty years or more by the new political and economic forces released in the society. Second, it would be consistent with the baghi-rebel configuration if the baghi finds his political targets in the village becoming less relevant, or perhaps getting a forced relevance, consequently shifts his targets to some other object in which his baghi rebel configuration finds some kind of a fit. It is therefore, interesting to note that there has been an increase in the incidence of kidnapping. The impression that one gets out of the inadequate data is that a number of targets of kidnapping are those who have been identified by the baghis as having amassed wealth by improper means. Can it be that consciously or subconsciously the baghi-rebel target has been the black sheep of the society who have amassed black money? Has he consciously or sub-consciously tried to give continuity to this baghi-rebel role? However, this needs proper empirical validation and should be the hypothetical basis for further research.
In conclusion, it would be desirable to evolve a theoretical model with the help of which the phenomenon of the baghi-rebel subculture can be analysed. In a situation such as Chambal Valley we are confronted with an interaction between a legitimate order and a deviant sub-culture. Both the legitimate order and the deviant sub-culture have contradictions within them. The legitimate order has a manifestly legitimate dimension. It also has, embedded in it, latent deviance. Thus there are those who are enacting roles by occupying legitimate status positions in the existing institutions of the order, but there are status incumbents who are not necessarily playing the roles as per the institutionally defined normative standards. Such status incumbents also play a deviant role in pursuit of specific objectives, which generally relate to personal acquisition of material possessions. Illustratively a person may be a politician or a member of legislature or a police man; there are statuses in the legitimate order. However, such persons may decide to play their roles in terms of the manifest norms, and they may also choose to indulge in corrupt practices by utilizing their manifest position and amass wealth or some other kind of benefits. The deviant subculture too has a manifest and latent manifestation. At the manifest level he is an outlaw, he is a criminal, he can choose to murder or kidnap or indulge in rape—all these would not be inconsistent with the manifest deviance of his role.

However the baghi subculture also has a latent legitimacy. Is this latent legitimacy that reinforces his image of a rebel against oppression, makes him keep up his role as benefactor of the poor and the poor in turn try to ensure his safety? It is within this framework that we can examine the levels of interaction between the deviant subculture and the legitimate order. Further it would also help to explore and explain in great details the factors responsible for the persistence of the deviant sub-culture. Clearly there are four broad areas of interaction. First of all, the interaction between the legitimate order at its manifest level with the deviant subculture at its manifest level.
Clearly the interaction here is that of conflict. The manifest legitimate order cannot accept the existence of the manifestly deviant subculture. Thus the various institutions of the state would try to control and contain the manifestly deviant activities of the baghis. However this ideal typical situation of the two contradictory structures in conflict faces problems when the manifestly deviant baghis can cooperate with the latent deviant structures of the legitimate order. The reason for such cooperation may be many ranging from material gains to kinship to sympathy etc. Again, even those of the manifest legitimate order have to reckon with the latently legitimate role of the baghi, the prototype of which is the image of Robinhood. Again it would be interesting to note how the latently legitimate role of the baghi interacts with the latently deviant structure of the legitimate order. This model is at best a broad methodological framework, which doubtless would have to undergo further refinements as the variations within each broad cell multiply.

The first and foremost measures to be adopted in curbing the growing dacoity menace are the reassertion of the forces of law in areas where the bandits have acquired a reputation of invincibility. Only when the outlaws will feel unsafe with the force of criminal justice machinery, the real security and safety for the life and property of defenseless individuals can be ensured. The government determination to suppress lawlessness with firm hand will go a long way in suppressing many a petty and heinous offence like daring kidnappings, murders, robberies and dacoities.

Coming to specific measures, following suggestions can be given with regard to dacoity control.

1. Effective surveillance of persons having criminal tendencies and convictions followed by an efficient system of intelligence collection at the Thana level. Such intelligence should necessarily include information:

   a) About the activities of bad characters with strong disposition of turn dacoits.
b) The movement and activities of regular and irregular gangs.

c) The details about the persons who act as helpers, supporter’s informers, harbourers and suppliers of arms and ammunitions to the dacoit gangs.

2. Constant vigil should be exercised on all such places where real or potential dacoits find an easy haunt.

3. Equipping the village based police stations of the dacoity infested areas with modern weapons, wireless sets and motor vehicles.

4. Raising the strength of armed police personnel followed by proportionate increase the number of police stations and police outposts in all those districts where incidence of dacoity is a common problem.

5. The police officials of the proven integrity and efficiency should be posted in the dacoity infested areas.

6. The genuine complaints against the erring police officials should be speedily, impartially and effectively enquired into.

7. Disloyal and corrupt elements in the rank and file of police men finding place in the anti-dacoity squads be sternly dealt with.

8. The police officers posted in the dacoity infested areas should not be transferred too frequently. The tenure of their stay should be made reasonable to a minimum of 3 years. This is required to make the police officers of the dacoity infested regions develop familiarity with the ecological, social and political dimensions of the problem and thereafter make good use of the informer and other local resources.
9. Speedy and adequate relief (including family pension) be given to the dependants of the officials and non-officials who lose their life or suffer grievous injuries in helping the force of law and order.

10. Adequate remunerative and promotional rewards be provided to police officials who perform out-standing work in anti-dacoity operations. Formation of inter-state police commands to bring about effective co-ordination of police departments of certain dacoity infested States. The need for such a co-ordinated police action programme is particularly great in the State of UP, MP and Rajasthan.

11. Proper and speedy investigation of all robbery and dacoity cases coupled with the tightening up of the law regarding easy availability of bail will go a long way in easing out the dacoity menace. The judges should be directed to make a more stringent view in bailing out the alleged culprits in dacoity cases.

12. The scheme of Gram Raksha Samities is abandoned because these have served no useful purpose. These samities may be replaced by village security forces under the direct control and supervision of the police department. The police should impart the members of this force with training in fire arms, patrolling, intelligence collection and dacoit encounters.

13. Reasonable restrictions need to be placed on the distribution of arms license and the existing provisions of the Indian Arms Act be suitably amended to prevent the abuse of the law. This is considered essential in view of the fact that indiscriminate licenses have been sanctioned in many of the dacoity infested regions without proper enquiries. The result has been that many such weapons have fallen into undesirable hands.
14. Stringent punishment should be provided for the unlicensed manufacturers of illicit arms and illicit traders of factory made or country made weapons. The provision of their bail should also be made similar as for murder or dacoity.

15. And finally, the problem of dacoity should not be treated as a mere law and order problem. Its socio-economic ramifications be clearly examined and researched. To effectively curb this menace the government will have to take urgent measures aimed at bringing about social and economic equality, and not merely a political one, in all the villages, towns and cities.

The phenomenon of change in Chambal Valley, therefore, can be understood in terms of the erosion of deviant structure of the baghi subculture, and in terms of the emergence of voluntary association, new formal rules and regulations and the advent of the new problem solving and decision making groups with a view to prevent the recurrence of conflicts which give impetus to the contending parties to enter the baghi sub-culture. The shanty sena or peace brigade has been encouraged to grow at the village level since April 1976.

The analysis of the secondary source material gives sufficient clues to the persistence of this phenomenon of dacoity, especially until the 1960s. The historicity of the problem, as we have noted had endowed the baghi with the image of a rebel. Thus right from the beginning the baghi deviance had a political connotation and content. It is not, therefore, surprising that the conflicts, rooted in the contradictions of the system of the agrarian structure, and therefore of the political system of the rural society should become one of the sources of a steady inflow into the deviant sub-culture. It is further not surprising that the wider political system involving the power structure upto the level of the state and beyond should also have been related to the perpetuation of this sub-culture. The pattern of extracting taxes from territories under control of the baghis in
the form of ‘chanda’ is again reminiscent of the rebel baghis who had to contend with the imperial powers in Delhi or with their lieutenants. One however does not know whether it was from poor villagers only that they extracted their levy at the village level.

However, while the rebel image of many important gangs continued in the minds of those under their domains, there has been a steady increase in the content of criminality and the objective of material gains. This is clearly indicated in the change that has been taking place in the crime pattern.