CRIME IN INDIA—1954

GENERAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The gradual improvement in the economic condition noticed in 1953 was maintained throughout the whole of 1954. In spite of the annual visitation by floods in certain parts of the country, the aggregate out-turn of crops was good and self-sufficiency in food-production was maintained. A few remaining controls over foodgrains were removed and thus, for the first time since the war years, normal conditions were fully restored to the grain market. The cost of living index also continued to show a downward trend and there was an all round easing of the economic position.

There were some serious but localised disturbances of a political nature in some parts of the country. In Calcutta, the teachers’ agitation, which took a serious turn in February, developed into mass demonstrations and satyagraha which lasted for several days and finally into widespread acts of violence necessitating the calling out of troops. In Indore (Madhya Bharat), in the month of July, an agitation, which started over the termination of the service of the Principal of a college, ultimately developed into widespread disturbances which did not spare even the sanctity of the High Court, where a considerable amount of records were burnt. In Parlakimeni in Orissa, some disturbances broke out in October between Oriyas and Telugus, and many Oriya shops and houses were looted. The Praja Socialist Party started a satyagraha in Manipur in November for responsible government and continued it for several months. In South Travancore-Cochin, the agitation by the Tamil-speaking people for the acceptance of their right to be included in Tamil Nadu, ultimately developed into large-scale riots in August 1954. The Naga Hills area of Assam District and the Tuensang sub-division of the North East Frontier Agency continued to be in a disturbed state and the recalcitrant Nagas burnt several Government buildings and bridges and interfered with civil administration in other ways.

Communal disturbances, which occurred during the year, were usually of a minor nature except the riots which occurred in Hyderabad in August 1954 over some alleged cow-slaughter and the hoisting of certain objectionable flags. Fortunately, these riots were quickly brought under control.

Industrial unrest was prevalent in one form or other throughout the whole of the country and sometimes took the form of violent picketing, surrounding the management and even assaulting loyal workers. There was, however, no prolonged strike action anywhere though on the whole, the tempo of agitation seemed to be rising.

Agitation for the liberation of the French and Portuguese possessions required concentration of large numbers of policemen to prevent any breach of order in the border regions. Though the de facto withdrawal of the French from India relieved the strain on the Madras police, the Bombay police had to continue their vigilance on the borders of Portuguese possessions.

Peace was well maintained at the general elections held in Travancore-Cochin and Pepsu in the first quarter of the year though this required large scale deployment of the police.
The Calcutta and West Bengal police strikes which occurred in December 1954 and continued for several days, were of a serious nature and indicated the existence of serious malady in the force.

In spite of the localised troubles, which occurred in various parts of the country, on the whole, the general situation remained practically normal and hence it was possible for the police to concentrate on their basic task of preventing and suppressing crime against society.

**COGNIZABLE CRIME DURING 1954**

Total cognizable crime in India continued its downward trend for the third year in succession. The statement below will show the number of total cognizable cases recorded every year since 1948:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>6,25,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>6,54,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>6,35,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>6,49,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>6,12,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>6,07,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>5,56,912</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total cognizable crime in 1954 registered a 7.5 per cent decrease when compared with the figure for 1953, a 11.7 per cent decrease compared with the quinquennial average of 1949—53, and a 14.9 per cent decrease from the peak figure of 1949.

In appendix I is given state-wise the number of cognizable cases reported during the year and also the volume of crime by which is meant the incidence of crime per 100,000 of the population. It will be seen that the States which reported over 50,000 cases during the year were Bombay (71,435), Uttar Pradesh (64,467), Madras (59,177), Bihar (57,857), Madhya Pradesh (56,721), and West Bengal (56,320). The volume of crime was however the highest in Andaman & Nicobar Islands (522.6), Delhi (458.7), Madhya Pradesh (266.9), Bhopal (261.7), Kutch (233.8), West Bengal (226.5), Saurashtra (202.3), and Madhya Bharat (201.4).

These comparisons do not always bring out the correct picture because of the vast disparity in the sizes of the States and also the number and density of the population inhabiting them. For example, though the incidence of crime in Delhi (458.7) seems high when compared to the other States, it may be pointed out that Delhi State is almost entirely an urban area and, therefore, a comparison of this City State should be made not with other States like Punjab or Bengal but with other big urban areas like Bombay City (584.9) or Calcutta (494.4). There are special features in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kutch which are responsible for the high incidence of crime in these small States.

On the whole, however, it would appear from this statement that the incidence of crime was higher in Part C States than in Part A and B States. Part A States with 77.1 per cent, Part B States with 20.2 per cent and Part C States with 2.7 per cent of India's total population contributed respectively 80.1, 16.2 and 3.7 per cent of the total crime.
SURVEY OF CRIME

In the table below an attempt has been made to classify crime under certain main heads which are recognised by the United Nations’ Social Welfare Division, and the International Criminal Police Commission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>Percentage change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total cognizable crime</td>
<td>6,01,964</td>
<td>5,56,912</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>9,802</td>
<td>9,765</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>5,261</td>
<td>5,214</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dacoity</td>
<td>5,579</td>
<td>5,395</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>8,407</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>House-breaking</td>
<td>1,47,379</td>
<td>1,32,457</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Thefts</td>
<td>2,05,557</td>
<td>3,23,866</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Riots</td>
<td>20,529</td>
<td>22,777</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1,48,440</td>
<td>1,49,538</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is satisfactory to note that all forms of crime against property, i.e., dacoity, robbery, house-breaking and thefts showed considerable decrease. The increase in the number of kidnappings and riotings, however, should cause certain amount of alarm. The reasons for their increase have been analysed under the respective heads.

MURDER

In Appendix III is given a statement of the cases of murder reported during the year and the incidence of crime reported per 100,000 of the population. There was little variation in this form of crime as compared to 1953. States which reported more than 400 cases during the year were Uttar Pradesh (1,607), Bombay (1,593), Madras (916), Bihar (867), Madhya Pradesh (679), Hyderabad (644), Andhra (617), Punjab (470), Madhya Bharat (406) and West Bengal (404). The incidence of crime was above 3 in the following States:—Andaman and Nicobar Islands (12.9), Madhya Bharat (5.1), Pepsu (4.8), Delhi (4.2), Punjab (3.7), Saurashtra (3.7), Bombay (3.6), Hyderabad (3.5), Madhya Pradesh (3.2), Bhopal (3.1) and Coorg (3.1).

2,885 cases ended in conviction in courts after trial, 3,428 cases ended in acquittal or discharge and 2,432 cases were not detected. The percentage of conviction to the total number of true cases investigated and to the number of cases charge-sheeted were 33.0 and 45.7 respectively.

18,283 persons were tried for the offence of murder or abetment, 6,122 were convicted and 12,161 were discharged or acquitted. The percentage of persons convicted to those brought forward for trial was 33.5.

The result of investigation and trial both in respect of cases as well as in respect of persons was not satisfactory. Murder is one form of crime which responds best to scientific investigation and the lack of scientific facilities and proper medico-legal examination, which have been described under ‘Handicaps in Police work’, is no doubt responsible for this unsatisfactory position.

KIDNAPPING AND ABDUCTION

In Appendix V is given a statement showing the number of cases of kidnapping and abduction reported during the year and the volume of this form of crime. This is the second year in succession in which this
form of crime has shown an increase. Increase over 5 per cent occurred in the following States:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The volume of crime was more than 3 in the States of Delhi (7.2), Manipur (5.5), Bhopal (3.8), Kutch (3.7), Himachal Pradesh (3.5), and Punjab (3.3).

1,041 cases ended in conviction, 1,474 cases were acquitted or discharged and 1,247 cases were not detected. The percentage of conviction is 27.6 to the total number of true cases investigated and 41.4 to the cases sent up on charge sheet.

6,972 persons were tried in the offences which were sent up to courts and out of them 2,096 persons were convicted and 4,882 persons were discharged or acquitted. The percentage of conviction is 30. The large number of acquittals is due to the fact that in many cases the women are willing partners and also because there is much lacuna in the law dealing with prostitution.

Kidnapping for ransom by dacoit gangs used to be prevalent previously in the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat and Vindhya Pradesh, but this form of crime has been practically eliminated due to the intensive pressure maintained by the Police on the dacoit gangs.

West Bengal ascribes the increase to the continued influx of refugees and many refugee women, not having any homes or suitable environments, having been lured to the life of shame. Other States which have reported increases do not adduce any specific reasons. It appears that due to the better vigilance of social workers, many more cases of kidnapping and abduction, which would have gone undetected, have come to notice. This would indicate that the position in respect of this form of crime is worse than the figures would indicate and many cases of this nature have not seen light at all.

Concerted vigilance work by social workers and not Police measures alone are necessary to stop this form of crime. Methodical investigation in this direction has been started under the auspices of the Central Social Welfare Board, and, it is hoped, will produce early result. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Bill, 1954, now before the Lok Sabha, when passed, will also remove a great many of the defects in law which handicap investigation and trial at present.

Dacoity

In Appendix VII is given a statement of the number of dacoities reported during 1954 and the volume of crime in the various States of India. There was a 3.3 per cent decrease in this form of crime as compared with 1953.

The States which recorded the highest number of cases were: Bihar (1,562), Uttar Pradesh (918), West Bengal (729), Bombay (535), Hyderabad
(331), Assam (309), and Madhya Bharat (202). The volume of crime, however, was above 3 in the States of Tripura (10-3), Bihar (3-9), Assam (3-4), and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (3-2). Many of the cases which occurred in Tripura were of political nature.

Bihar alone contributed nearly 28-8 per cent of the cases reported in 1954 and this State along with Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bombay accounted for 69-3 per cent of the all-India total.

1,025 cases ended in conviction, 1,323 cases ended in acquittal or discharge, and 2,492 cases remained undetected; the percentage of cases convicted to total true cases reported and to cases sent up for trial was 21.2 and 43.7 respectively.

Of the persons tried in courts, 4,910 persons were convicted and 10,448 acquitted or discharged, giving a percentage of conviction of 32. The high percentage of acquittals would indicate the necessity of a more careful assessment of the evidence before sending up persons for trial.

Village Defence Committees continued to play an effective part in the control of dacoities in several States. The Police also deployed large forces for the purpose of preventive patrolling. There were many cases in which joint operations by the villagers and the Police led to the red-handed capture of dacoit gangs.

The anti-dacoity operations started in March, 1953, against several gangs of dacoits operating in the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat, Uttar Pradesh, and Vindhya Pradesh by a combined force of nearly 2,000 policemen of these States, resulted in the suppression of six gangs by the end of the year. The notorious gangs of Man Singh and Lakhman Singh, however, continued their depredations though their strength was considerably depleted due to casualties received in encounters with the police, who also suffered severe casualties. During the last quarter of the year, Man Singh's gang committed several savage murders to intimidate witnesses and informers. Though there was no doubt that the gang was kept continually on the run and its field of operations was continually shrinking, yet the leader, Man Singh, evaded capture by taking shelter in the ravines of the Chambal.

**ROBBERY**

In Appendix IX is given a statement of crime of robbery during the year. This form of crime showed a decrease of 9.6 per cent from the 1953 figure.

Bombay reported the highest number of cases (1,991) and was responsible for approximately 25 per cent of the all-India total. Other States which contributed a large number of cases were Bihar (851), West Bengal (831), Uttar Pradesh (505), Madras (484), Rajasthan (433), Hyderabad (430), and Madhya Pradesh (392). The incidence of crime was higher than 3 in Kutch (6-9), Bombay (5-5), Saurashtra (4-1), Delhi (3-5), Vindhya Pradesh (3-4), West Bengal (3-3), Tripura (3-3), and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (3-2).

1,528 cases were convicted during the year, 1,669 cases were acquitted or discharged and 2,953 cases remained undetected; the percentage of conviction being 24-8 to the total number of true cases investigated, and 47-8 to the cases charge-sheeted.

Out of 7,003 persons tried during the year, 2,704 were convicted and 4,299 were acquitted; the percentage of convictions to number of persons tried was 38-6.
Appendix XI gives a statement of crime of this nature. Bihar (21,236) reported the largest number of cases, followed by Uttar Pradesh (18,718), Bombay (13,394), West Bengal (12,513), and Madhya Pradesh (11,183). The incidence of crime was, however, the highest in Andaman and Nicobar Islands (135.5), Bhopal (102.4), Delhi (75.6), Madhya Bharat (65.5), Kutch (58.3), Madhya Pradesh (52.6), Bihar (52.5), Assam (52.3), and West Bengal (50.3).

It is gratifying that there was a 10.1 per cent decrease in the offences of house-breaking during the year. Except Mysore, Pepsu, Bhopal, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which showed small increases, and Orissa where there was little variation, all the other States shared in this decrease. Madras contributed the largest share and registered a drop of 4,230 cases in 1954 from 12,865 reported in 1953.

23,494 cases ended in conviction, 10,350 cases ended in acquittal or discharge and 86,763 cases were not detected. The percentage of conviction to true cases investigated works out at 19.5. Though this looks rather low, in offences of house-breaking this is considered to be satisfactory by world standards as burglary or house-breaking is the most difficult form of crime to detect. The percentage of cases convicted to cases charge-sheeted was 69.4 which was satisfactory.

57,053 persons were tried in court, of whom 31,959 were convicted and 25,094 were acquitted. The percentage of persons convicted to the total number sent up was 55.8. Good, though the figures are, it should be possible to further improve on them.

Thefts

Appendix XIII gives a statement showing the cases of cattle and ordinary thefts reported during the year. This form of crime decreased by 12.3 per cent.

The States where the largest number of cases were reported were Bombay (30,739), Madras (29,621), Madhya Pradesh (29,130), Uttar Pradesh (24,774), West Bengal (24,598), and Bihar (17,547).

The incidence of ordinary thefts was over 50 in the following States:—Delhi (245.6), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (161.4), Madhya Pradesh (128.6), West Bengal (97.0), Kutch (94.5), Bombay (81.0), Bhopal (77.1), Madras (72.1), Tripura (69.6), Coorg (62.9), Orissa (57.8), Saurashtra (52.9), Ajmer (52.5), Madhya Bharat (50.4), and Assam (50.8).

53,970 cases of ordinary thefts and 7,643 cases of cattle thefts ended in conviction, 18,321 cases of ordinary thefts and 3,509 cases of cattle thefts ended in acquittal or discharge, and 1,02,410 cases of ordinary thefts and 8,334 cases of cattle thefts were not detected or the accused were not apprehended. The percentage of conviction to true cases investigated collectively in these two forms of theft works out at 31.7 and to cases charge-sheeted at 73.8.

Of the 1,26,731 persons tried in ordinary and cattle thefts, 79,244 were convicted and 47,487 were acquitted or discharged. Thus, the percentage of conviction of persons comes to 62.5.
Appendix XV gives a statement of riots during the year under review. The States where over 1,000 riots took place were West Bengal (3,868), Bihar (3,583), Uttar Pradesh (3,110), Madras (2,090), Andhra (1,682), Bombay (1,310), Orissa (1,191), Madhya Pradesh (1,155), and Assam (1,015). The incidence of this form of crime was the highest in West Bengal (15.6), Assam (11.2), Bihar (8.9), Andhra (8.2), Orissa (8.1), Kutch (7.9), Tripura (7.8), and Manipur (7.1).

3,887 cases were convicted, 7,449 cases were discharged or acquitted, and in 3,268 cases the investigation was unsuccessful. The percentage of conviction to true cases investigated was 26.6. The percentage of convictions to cases sent up for trial was 34.3. The high percentage of acquittal is attributed to the fact that this offence is compoundable with the permission of the court.

Appendix XVI gives the statement showing the number of persons tried (99,256), convicted (27,370) and discharged or acquitted (71,886) in cases of riot. The percentage of persons convicted to those tried was 28.

This form of crime showed a 9.9 per cent increase in 1954. Except Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan, where this form of crime decreased by 11.5 and 29.3 per cent respectively, and Bihar, Assam, Punjab, Madhya Bharat, and Saurashtra where the variation was negligible, all class A and B States showed considerable increase and similar increase was also registered in all C class States, except Ajmer, Kutch, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The States where large increases took place were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>Total Increase</th>
<th>Per cent Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>3,159</td>
<td>3,868</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>1,732</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travancore-Cochin</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>1,161</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>2,975</td>
<td>3,110</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>1,026</td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All these States have ascribed the increase to petty land disputes, village factions and other intrigues. In West Bengal, there were many cases arising out of the teachers' strike, kisan agitation and other industrial disputes. In Andhra, the agitation over the ban on toddy tapping and also for the occupation of waste land developed into riots on many occasions. In Travancore-Cochin, additional reasons for increase were the Tamil agitation in the South and the industrial unrest throughout the whole State.

The considerable increase in rioting in spite of the improving economic condition of the people would indicate a tendency to settle disputes by agitational and violent methods. This is borne out by the fact that in many cases large-scale disturbances developed from very petty causes which could have been settled with a little bit of patience and tolerance.
RESULT OF INVESTIGATION

Appendix I gives a statement of cognizable crime showing the result of investigation and trial.

At the end of 1953, 1,91,710 cases were either pending investigation by the police or pending trial in courts. During the year, 5,56,912 cases were reported. Thus, there was a total of 7,48,622 cases available for disposal during the year. In 26,070 cases (3·5 per cent) investigation was refused as authorised under the Criminal Procedure Code. 15,578 cases (2·1 per cent) were declared false, and 40,633 cases (5·3 per cent) to be mistake of law or fact or non-cognizable. 1,99,755 cases remained pending investigation or trial at the end of the year. Thus, in a total of 4,66,586 cases, investigation and trial could be completed. Out of these, 1,34,811 cases were convicted, 83,527 cases were discharged or acquitted, and 2,48,248 cases were not detected. The percentage of cases convicted to the true cases reported and investigated thus works out at 28·9, and to cases charge-sheeted at 61·7.

In Appendix II is given a statement of persons tried in cases. At the end of 1953, trial or investigation against 3,67,917 persons was pending. During the year, 5,73,770 persons were arrested for different offences, making a total of 9,41,687 persons in police or magistrates' hands. Out of these, 1,00,075 persons were released by the police or magistrates without any trial, and 3,61,032 persons remained pending in police or magistrates' hands for disposal. Trials were completed against the remaining 4,80,580 persons, of whom 2,14,223 persons were convicted, and 2,66,357 were discharged or acquitted. The percentage of conviction of persons put up for trial was 44·6.

The percentage of conviction of cases to true cases investigated was appreciably above the all-India figure of 28·9 in the States of Coorg (57·6), Mysore (51·2), Travancore-Cochin (50·2), Himachal Pradesh (49·0), Madras (43·6), Andhra (41·4), Punjab (38·0), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (35·4), Kutch (34·1), and Madhya Pradesh (33·6).

The percentage of cases convicted to cases charge-sheeted was higher than the all-India figure of 61·7 in the States of Ajmer (84·9), Madhya Pradesh (74·7), Bhopal (73·2), Coorg (71·6), Mysore (70·8), Madras (70·3), Hyderabad (69·7), Punjab (66·8), and Madhya Bharat (66·7).

The percentage of persons convicted to those put on trial was appreciably higher than the all-India figure of 44·6 in the States of Coorg (73·9), Ajmer (72·6), Madhya Pradesh (63·6), Himachal Pradesh (60·7), Madhya Bharat (60·2), Hyderabad (59·3), Madras (57·7), Vindhy Prades (56·0), Bhopal (56·0), Kutch (54·3), Andhra (51·3), and Delhi (50·4).

On the whole, the percentage of 28·9 of cases convicted to true cases investigated was on the low side and so was the percentage 44·6 of persons convicted to those tried in courts. In order to improve the standard it is necessary, on part of the police, to improve the quality of the investigation and use more discrimination in charge-sheeting persons for trial, and, on the part of the magistrates, to exercise better control on the conduct of cases and to ensure much speedier trials.

CASUALTIES AMONGST THE POLICE

In the year under review, 70 Police Officers and Constables were killed and 1,851 were injured in the performance of their duty. Of the deaths, 19 occurred in Uttar Pradesh, 18 in Madhya Bharat, 5 in Rajasthan, 3 each
in Bihar, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal, Hyderabad and Vindhya Pradesh, 2 each in Madras and Jammu and Kashmir, and 1 each in Assam, Orissa and Delhi. Most of the casualties in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Bharat were caused during the operations against Man Singh's gang. Of the injuries received, the larger numbers were in Bombay 482, Madras 214, West Bengal 247, Madhya Pradesh 153, Manipur 122, and Rajasthan 103.

HANDICAPS IN THE POLICE WORK

Last year, we enumerated the various handicaps from which the Police suffered in their work of prevention and detection of crime. All these handicaps continue to exist and they are worth repeating.

The number of Police is insufficient and, compared to any other advanced country of the world, India has the lowest number of Policemen per 100,000 of population.

There has been a general fall in the standard of Police recruits of all ranks.

Control over bad characters has been lost due to various reasons.

There has been no improvement in the methods of investigation because no facilities exist in any rural police station, and even in most of the urban police stations for scientific investigation. Very few States have yet provided themselves with forensic laboratories and very few investigating officers are provided with even the most elementary instruments which are indispensible for scientific investigation.

Medico-legal examination still continues to be of an extremely poor standard.

Time lag in the disposal of cases in court continues to be serious. People are extremely reluctant to appear as witnesses in trials.

The rural chowkidari police is almost non-existent in its effectiveness, and thus the main weapon with which to fight crime in rural areas has disappeared.

Co-operation from the public in the detection and the investigation of crime is still extremely poor.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

We make the same suggestions as we made last year, and a few new ones.

A reassessment of the strength of the Police should be made in all States and increases that are considered to be necessary should be made in the ranks of the Civil Police, particularly in the rural areas and not in the Armed Police. The number of investigating and prosecuting officers also requires to be increased.

To obtain a better class of recruits in all ranks of the Police, it is necessary that the service conditions should be examined carefully to decide whether they are attractive enough and necessary remedial measures taken. The West Bengal Police strike of 1964, and the Madras Police strike of the previous year were pointers to the need of an early examination of this problem.
An extension of the provision of Section 565 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which serves as a deterrent to criminals, is desirable. In some Western countries, the law on this subject is much stricter and wider than in India, and, therefore, more effective.

Government of India have sanctioned the establishment of a Central Forensic Laboratory and this is going to be established at Hyderabad, and it is hoped that it will start functioning by the end of 1956. There is, however, need for a large number of laboratories of this type all over the country, and the States must set up their own laboratories even on a small scale. It is also necessary to provide scientific instruments to all investigating officers. A start has been made on a very small scale in some States, but it is necessary to extend this facility to every police station.

Government have set up a committee to examine how medico-legal examination of cases can be improved. Though a few years must elapse before any actual improvement is effected in the methods of examination, it is hoped that the publicity which this problem will receive due to the setting up of the committee will make the medical officers, who conduct medico-legal work, more conscious of the need of careful and methodical examination.

The Government of India have sanctioned the establishment of a Central Detective Training School for giving advance training to the investigating officers. This will start functioning from the 1st of January next year. It is also intended to put the I.P.S. officers through this training. All States should avail themselves of the facilities of training which will be available in this institution.

The rural chowkidari police all over India has to be revived, and without this, a good deal of the expenditure incurred on the Police will be ineffective so far as control of crime is concerned. This is a matter of some urgency. The Panchayats have not filled the gap caused by the breakdown of the rural police system.

The question of appointing more Magistrates for the speedy trial of cases has to be examined by all State Governments. If trial of cases get prolonged for months, memories of witnesses get blurred, and in their evidence they make mistakes and contradictions which are exploited by the defence.

Facilities available for a witness in the courts and his treatment should be improved so that, instead of being frightened at the prospect of being called as a witness, he may voluntarily come forward to give evidence.

It is essential to secure public co-operation in the investigation of crime. For this it is necessary to improve public-police relations. Educating the public by exhibitions and film shows on how they can help the police in investigating crime may prove to be useful to some extent.