

CRIME STATISTICS - A WORD OF CAUTION!

Crime is manifestation of myriad complex factors. The genesis of crime can be traced to interplay of various social, economic, demographic, local and institutional factors. They together influence education, employment, parenting / family relationships, societal cohesiveness, emotional stability, mental health, anonymity, criminal orientation, residential stability, leisure etc. which in turn influence the nature, pattern, frequency and volume of crime. These and other latent and concomitant factors vary significantly across different regions, states and societies. The data provided in the edition is not adequate to unravel these criminogenic factors and hence comparison among States/districts/regions/social groups etc. on the basis of these published data without going into the underlying dimensions of crime is too simplistic a way of looking at crime and may not give much insight and hence is best avoided.

Secondly, as is well known, crime increases with population. More population as compared to previous year will result in increased crime. Crime per lakh population (Crime Rate) may therefore be a better indicator. However, the increased registration in crime may even be on account of some specific police initiatives launched in that specific organization! Some of such initiatives include providing better citizen centric services like e-portals for reporting certain crime online. Others may include opening women help-desks at Police Stations to encourage women to freely report crime, etc. Nonetheless, rise in crime especially of grave nature does call for professional investigation of underlying factors as well as increased co-operation with local communities.