

Characteristics of Crime in India (With Statistics)

- **1.** Of the total crimes committed in India every year, about 16.35 lakh are cognizable crimes under the IPC (including theft, burglary, robbery, dacoity, murder, riot, kidnapping, cheating, breach of trust...) and about 38.76 lakh are offences under the local and special laws (like Dowry Prohibition Act, Prohibition Act, Gambling Act, Excise Act, Arms Act, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, Narcotic Drugs and Psychiatric Substances Act, Railways Act, Explosive Substance Act...).
- Thus, the crime rate is not very high in our country. Whereas crime rate per one lakh population in India is 614.79, in Canada it is 10,955, in Britain it is 10,404, in the United States it is 5,898, in Japan it is 1,510, and in the Netherlands it is 9,507 (Crime in India, 1993:22 and 1994:25).

- **2.** Of about 21 lakh cases of crimes investigated by the police every year, about 30 per cent are cases of cognizable crimes under the IPC and about 70 per cent are cases of offences committed under the local and special laws.

- **3.** The pattern of IPC crime indicates that of the total offences, 14.4 per cent are violent crimes (murder, rape, kidnapping, etc.), 26 per cent are property crimes (theft, burglary), 3.1 per cent are white-collar crimes (cheating, breach of trust, counterfeiting) and 56.5 per cent are other (uncategorized) crimes (Crime in India, 1994: 35).

- **4.** Of the total (cognizable) crimes, a little more than one-fourth (28%) are economic (property) crimes relating to theft (18.6%), burglary (7.4%), robbery (1.4%) and dacoity (0.6%) (Crime in India, 1994: 7-8). Further, crime is greater for property offences than for offences against persons (murder, abduction...).

- **5.** Of the total persons arrested for offences under the local and special laws, about one-fourth (24.9%) are arrested under five Acts: Prohibition Act—15.8 per cent, Gambling Act—4.3 per cent, Excise Act—2.5 per cent, Indian Railways Act—1.7 per cent and Arms Act—0.6 per cent. The remaining three-fourths (75.1%) are arrested under Immoral Traffic Act, Narcotic Drugs Act, Explosives Act, Dowry Prohibition Act, Essential Commodities Act, TADA, and so on (Crime in India, 1993:107).

- **6.** Of the total IPC crimes, about half (50.6%) are committed in five states of Uttar Pradesh (12.7%), Maharashtra (10.4%), Madhya Pradesh (11%), Bihar (9.1%), and Rajasthan (7.4%). About one-fourth (25.6%) crimes are committed in four southern states of Tamil Nadu (8.5%), Karnataka (6.4%), Andhra Pradesh (6%), and Kerala (4.7%) (Ibid, 1994: 138).

- **7.** For about 16.4 lakh IPC crimes committed every year, about 25 lakh persons are arrested, that is, on an average 15 persons are arrested for every 10 crimes committed. On the other hand, for every nine offences committed under the local and special laws, 10 persons are arrested.
- **8.** More than four-fifths of the offenders (85%) commit (cognizable) crimes under the IPC for which they get less than 6 months' imprisonment, that is, their crimes are misdemeanours.

- **9.** Crime rate is much higher for males than females. Out of every 100 offenders, 96 are males and four (3.8) are females (Ibid, 1994:138).
- **10.** The ratio of urban offenders is much less than the rural offenders.
- **11.** Crime rate is highest among those in the low (income up to Rs. 1,000 pm), lower-middle (income between Rs. 1,001 and Rs. 2,000 pm) and middle-middle (income between Rs. 2,001 and Rs. 3,000 pm) socio-economic groups.

- **12.** Crime rate is highest (51%) in the age group of 18-30 years. The percentage in other age groups is: less than 1 per cent (0.2%) in age group below 16 years, 1 per cent (1.2%) in 16-18 years age group, 41 per cent in 30-50 age group and 7 per cent in 50 + age group (Ibid, 1994: 140).
- **13.** The last characteristic feature of the Indian criminal scene is the increase in the organized crime—the growth of large-scale organizations for criminal activities. What is being organized more is the control and distribution of illicit goods and services—drugs (narcotics), girls for prostitution in India and in Arabian countries, smuggling of gold... In addition, there are the organized efforts of the mafia groups to control various legitimate business activities, such as coal mines, unions in industries and the like.