INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW

MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 6 | Issue 5

2023

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Emerging Issues of Dacoity under the Indian Penal Code

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ABSTRACT

Dacoity is a type of violent robbery that is done by an armed group. There is no difference between robbery and dacoity, except for the number of people involved. Robbery is considered dacoity if there are five or more people involved. In Malaysia and Singapore, dacoity is called 'gang robbery'. To be considered dacoity, it's necessary for five or more people to conspire to commit a robbery or attempt to commit a robbery. If only one person conspired to commit a robbery, there would be no doubt that the dacoits had the booty with them. Dacoity consists of three components: The accused commits or attempts to commit a robbery; The persons committing or attempting a robbery and those present and aiding in the act must be at least five in number; All such persons must act together. This paper analyzes about nature of dacoity and relevant provisions under the Indian Penal Code.

Keywords*: Attempts to commit robbery, Aiding, Dacoity, Robbery and Gang Robbery.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Dacoity is a term primarily associated with South Asia, particularly in countries like India and Pakistan. It refers to an organized form of armed robbery or banditry. In a typical dacoity incident, a group of armed individuals, known as dacoits, commits theft or robbery, often using violence or the threat of violence to achieve their objectives.

Dacoits usually operate in remote or less-accessible areas, such as rural villages or isolated highways, where law enforcement presence is limited. They strike during the night, taking advantage of darkness and isolation to carry out their crimes. These groups may employ firearms, traditional weapons, or both, depending on their resources and tactics.

Targets of dacoity can vary widely, ranging from homes and businesses to travelers and cargo shipments. The modus operandi of dacoits often involves surprise attacks and intimidation, leaving victims with little chance to defend themselves. In some cases, dacoity incidents escalate to more serious crimes like kidnapping or murder.

Efforts to combat dacoity include strengthening law enforcement, increasing patrolling in vulnerable areas, and offering incentives for dacoits to surrender and rehabilitate. However, the

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persistence of this criminal phenomenon is linked to socio-economic factors, such as poverty and lack of opportunities in rural areas, which drive individuals toward a life of crime. Additionally, the challenging terrain in some regions and corruption within law enforcement agencies have posed significant challenges to eradicating dacoity completely.

The following are some of the section under the Indian law in which the crime of Dacoity is being covered

- Section 391 [Dacoity] :- If five or more people conspire to commit or attempt a robbery; or if the total number of people conspired to commit or attempted a robbery; and the number of people present and aiding in the commission or attempt; is five or more; each person so conspired to commit, attempted or aided in the commission of a robbery is said to have committed "Dacoity."[2]

- Section 395 [Punishment for Dacoity] :- Any person found guilty of dacoity will be sentenced to either [life imprisonment][3] or severe imprisonment for a sentence of up to 10 years, and will also be fined.[4]

- Section 396 [Dacoity with murder] :- If five or more individuals, who are collectively guilty of commiting dacoity, are found to have committed murder in the course of committing dacoity, each of them shall be sentenced to death or to a life sentence or a term of imprisonment of up to ten years, and shall be subject to a fine.[5]

- Section 397 [Robbery or Dacoity , with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt] :- The sentence with which the offender will be punished shall be no less than seven years if, at the time of the robbery or dacoity , the offender uses a deadly weapon, causes serious bodily injury, or attempts to cause serious bodily injury to any person.[6]

- Section 398 [Attempt to commit Robbery or Dacoity when armed with Deadly weapons] :- If the offender is carrying a deadly weapon when he or she attempts to commit a robbery or a dacoity, the maximum term of imprisonment for such an offender shall be at least 7 years.[7]

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[2] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no.156B
[3] Subs.by Act 26 of 1955 , sec.117 and sch., for "Transportation for life" (w.e.f. 1-1-1956)
[4] Indian penal Code , 1860 , Page no . 156C
[5] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no . 156C
[6] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no. 156D
[7] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no . 156D

- Section 399 [Making preparation to commit dacoity] :- Individuals who engage in, or attempt to engage in, any preparation for the commission of dacoity shall be subject to mandatory imprisonment for a term of up to ten years, as well as a fine.[8]

- Section 400 [Punishment for belonging to a gang of dacoits] :- Individuals who, at any point after the completion of this act, are members of a group of individuals who conspire to commit dacoity, shall be subject to either a [life sentence][9] or a custodial sentence of up to ten years, in addition to a fine.[10]

- Section 402 [Assembling for purpose of committing dacoity] :- If, at any point after the passage of this act, five or more individuals conspire to commit dacoity, they will be sentenced to life imprisonment, with the possibility of up to seven years in prison, and fined.[11]

II. THE CLASSIFICATION OF DACOITY[12]

The task of ~cIassification of dacoity is very dififictllt. Gray (1940) observes, "It has been truly said that he who could pufectly classify the law, would have a perfect knowledge of law." Attempts have been made to classify the Iaw of dacoity by the Indian Police. It may be inadequate and dcubtful; still it may be the first step for a good classification. Thc Indian Police classifies thc offence af dacoity as fallows:

(a) The Professional Dacoity[13]

It is a kind of meticulously planned and organized banditq. The majority of the gang members are hereditary robbers. They typically receive training from an established leader. The gangs maintain a constant membership of at least five robbers and may add members as necessary to meet their needs. The gang members have numerous resources for information. They unexpectedly break into a house and overcome resistance. When they approach any home, they utilize overt aggression. The members are extremely courageous, skilled, and enterprising, and they never give up or betray their friends in the face of adversity and peril.

If they were discovered, it would be exceedingly difficult to condemn them. According to Slecman (1849), "If the robbers escaped conviction, which they are very likely to do, in spite of

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[8] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no. 156D
[9] Subs.by Act 26 of 1955 , sec.117 and sch.,for "Transportation for life" (w.e.f. 1-1-1956)
[10] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no . 157
[11] Indian penal code , 1860 , page no . 157
[12] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972)
[13] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no.11

all the evidence available, they are almost certain 10 wreak their vengeance upon the victims by them or some other robbers by robbing and burning down their homes to deter others from intending to appear against them in court."

The term "professional dacoity" refers to those thieves who use it as their line of work, as well as to those who are regular members of a gang of thieves or other subterranean thieves who observe them.

Their primary line of work was dacoity. A professional thief is described as follows: According to Kitt (1889), "The professional dacoit is a member of an organized gang, armed with a sword or a blunderbuss and working primarily by torch-light but occasionally also in broad daylight." The group is led by a well-respected professional leader. The regular members view being a dacoit as their permanent calling, which they engage in when the opportunity arises from the time the rains stop until the rainy season resumes. Occasional members may be accepted or even forced into service for an expedition or "Lwo."

   (b) The Technical Dacoity[14]

This kind of crime is uncommon today. Politically motivated individuals who are five or more commit theft of grain or the looting of goods. Technical dacoity, according to Kitts (1889, p. 35), is an act performed by amateurs who have no other claim to the term "professional" than the fact that there are five or more of them.The goal behind such an act is to loot it when no other moral ways are available to satisfy their needs, not to plunder it legitimately for profit. Technical dacoities are most common during famine years, when groups of famished wretches led by two to three genuine criminals pillage grain reserves.

It might be caused by racial tensions that exist in the nation):. People who are moved by a sense of community misappropriate the property of other communities. Unsociable individuals may occasionally abuse the mob mentality by pillaging the belongings of the opposing society. Such cases are reported as communal dacoity offenses, which are defined as five or more people participating in the forcible taking of another person's property. In such an offense, the person's intent is not to profit illegally but to coerce another community by destroying their property.

Based on the 'Modus Operandi' of the dacoit-gangs, dacoity is classified in another way.

   (c) House Dacoities[15]

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[14] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no 12
[15] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no 12

The Indian police have a very bad reputation for handling domestic dacoities. Armed bands of robbers frequently raid homes known to contain riches in sudden raids. The leader chooses the residence based on the information his informers and aides provide. The group shows up at the location at the scheduled time, which is typically late at night. Guns, spears, swords, daggers, lathis, and other weapons are frequently carried by the gang members. Upon conflict or resistance, they severely abuse the prisoners and even kill them. Dacoity is freely committed after gaining control over the residents of the home. The women are stripped of their jewelry, and on occasion, they severely beat and torture them to uncover hidden gems. They brazenly plunder the homes and flee the area right away.

(d) Road Dacoities [16]

Highway robberies, as opposed to road dacoities, were once common. None of the roadside scumbags have a stern demeanor. According to Temple (1923), the roads frequently wind through waste for kilometers at a time, and certain specific trees or rocks are identified as being the locations where, in the past, bandits would wait for passing travelers. On the highways, this kind of violent and organized criminality has now been stopped. In this scenario, the method of operation is pretty simple. The gang bosses do elementary math on market days, fairs, holidays, and the time of year when money and valuables travel around. The wedding parties typically provide money and ornaments during harvest season. When the gang leaders have the necessary information, they plan raids on these people and take everything they own. If they encounter opposition, they may suffer harm or perhaps lose their lives. However, road crimes no longer happen frequently.-a-days

(e) Miscellaneous Dacoities[17]

There doesn't appear to be a set of patterns or methods to commit dacoity under this subject. Burglary is a crime that casual thieves may perform both on the spot and when forced to by external forces. While other gangs may only employ small weapons and torture, some may utilize fatal weaponry.

III. A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM OF DACOITY [18]

It is likely that dacoity has been a part of society for as long as society has existed. Its current

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[16] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no 13

[17] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no 14

[18] Shyam Sundar Katare , "Pattern of Dacoity in India" , volume – 1 , published by S.Chand and Co. (Pvt).Ltd. (1972) page no 23

form is likely the outcome of a long history of development, and thus the different stages of its evolution is captivating. In ancient India, there is a reference to a character known as Dasyu, similar to modern-day dacoits, in the Rigveda and Mahabharata. Dasyus was known for stealing from the wealthy and resorting to physical violence. The Mahabharata's Drona Parva mentions that Dasyus robbed a wealthy king named Sanjaya and abducted him, leading to his execution. Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana, was originally associated with the life of Dasyu. While there are numerous references to Dacoity in ancient literature, it is beneficial to focus on the history of Central India, particularly Chambal Basin, which is particularly associated with Thugi and Pindari.

During the British colonial era, organized banditry or highway robbery known as "dacoity" was common in British India. Here is a timeline of its past:

Dacoity has historical origins in ancient India, but during British control it organized and spread more widely. The word "dacoit" comes from the Hindi word "au" or "a," which means a thief or bandit.

- Colonial Impact: In the 18th century, the British East India Company established its dominion in India. As they grew their empire, they implemented a number of measures that upended conventional economic and agrarian systems, causing social discontent and hardship in many areas.

- Causes: Economic difficulties, agricultural problems, and onerous taxes levied by the British government frequently led to dacoity. Dacoits increased as a result of landlessness, excessive land revenue demands, and moneylender abuse.

Several notable dacoit gangs were active in various regions of British India. The Thuggee cult, the Phoolan Devi gang, and the Sultana Daku gang are just a few of the well-known ones.

- British Reaction: The British colonial government made several attempts to eradicate dacoity, including the creation of specialized police units and the adoption of strict anti-dacoit legislation. The Thuggee and Dacoity Suppression Acts were significant legal initiatives designed to stop these behaviors.

- Popular Culture: Literature and film have idealized and portrayed dacoity in British India. Dacoits were frequently represented in books, film, and folklore as rebels against British rule or as anti-heroes.

- wane: With better law enforcement, economic reforms, and societal changes, dacoity started to wane in the middle of the 20th century. The Indian government took action to

alleviate poverty and land reforms, which helped lessen the societal circumstances that encouraged dacoity.

- Legacy: Dacoity continues to play a vital role in the history and culture of India. Some robbers, such as Phoolan Devi, have even attained some kind of compassion and posthumous fame.

In conclusion, dacoity was a complicated phenomena in British India that had its roots in socioeconomic problems that were made worse by British colonial policy. On the communal memory and cultural depiction of the time period, it left a lasting impression.

IV. CASE REFERENCES

In the case of "The state v sadhu singh and ors"[19] where Injuring Gharsirama Jugalkishorean, Basantilala, and Sandal in the robbery that took place at his home were Gharsirama Jugalkishorean, Basantilala, and Kurda Singh, who made up the total number of suspects to five. The suspects were all armed with deadly weapons including rifles and handguns. Additionally taken from Santlal were a wristwatch and a scarf that he was wearing. The dacoits made an attempt to take any of the loot with them as the event caught the locals' notice. But when the dacoits fled, the locals chased them, and one of them is said to have fired a shot that killed Dharma. The courageous locals were also successful in catching one of the offenders. In a similar case[20] According to the statement of facts, the accused, who had knives and sticks in their hands, entered Kalamaduga Village in a Jeep and stopped at a house. They asked the owner to open the house door and the owner refused to do so. The four accused then dragged the owner to the Jeep and threatened to beat him up if he did not open the house door. The accused then entered the house and searched it. The Kirana shop was also searched. The accused also intimidated the owner's wife and took away around 50 grams of gold, one wrist watch and other valuables worth around Rs. 17.5000/- from the shop. The accused also committed dacoity in each of the Houses by threatening the residents of the Houses. The APSRTC night halt bus parked near the Gram Panchayat Offices was also attacked by the accused, the Conductor was asleep and cash was taken from him. The complaint has been lodged in the morning. In another case[21] Vishwas and Renu's residence was entered at the end of night. While Vishwas was asleep, five persons entered the house. During the incident, they tied up Vishwas' and Renu's servant Chaturbhushu, who was sleeping in the basement. They tied Vishwas's mouth, hands and legs.

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[19] 1999 (1) MPLJ 478
[20] Shankar and Ors. vs. State of A.P., Rep. By Its Public 1972 WLN 677
[21] Abdul Kalam vs. State of Rajasthan 2003 CRI LJ 2242

They locked Renu and Vishwas in the bathroom and used a pistol and knife on them. The accused then robbed Vishwas, Renu and their servant of gold and silver jewellery, coins and cash. The accused stayed for about an hour in the house. Vishwas escaped from the bathroom and called the police. The police reached Vishwas' house and filed a written complaint. A case was registered under Section 395 IPC. With regards to Section 395 (Punishment for Dacoity) of Indian Penal Code .

In the case of "Om prakash v . State"[22] The murder and robbery occurred in the middle of night, when official moonlight and lantern light allowed eyewitnesses to quickly identify each accused person. Holding that the IPC section 396 offense was appropriate. In similar case[23] The facts of the case are as follows:

First, the accused committed a dacoity at Mendai's home with the help of others, in violation of section 396 of the Indian penal code, where one of the participants killed another person.

Second, the accused and his accomplices fled Mendai's home without taking any of the loot.

Third, Mendai's cries for help stopped the appellant and his accomplices from carrying out their robbery after they entered Mendai's house.

Fourth, when the residents of Banni purwa and the nearby "Abadi" of Banni hamlet came to the scene, the applicant and his companions fled from the scene.

Fifth, Mendai and his accomplices pursued the appellant and fled from the scene, in the company of Ganga.

Failing to take any of the loot, the appellant fled on foot, and when he crossed the pipra Ditch.

The above are few cases related to Section 396 (Dacoity with Murder) of Indian Penal Code .

In case of Shravan Dashrath Datrange vs. State of Maharashtra[24] The court determined that, pursuant to this provision, a criminal offense is only considered to be malicious if the offender has used a deadly weapon, has caused serious bodily injury, or has attempted to cause death or serious bodily injury while engaging in theft or robbery. In another case[25] In the absence of proof of identity of the goods allegedly taken from the accused, and if neither the victim nor the court was able to identify the accused in an identification parade, the accused is unable to be found guilty pursuant to Section 397. With respect to Section 397 (Robbery , or Dacoity with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt) of Indian Penal Code .

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[22] 2008 CRI LJ
[23] Shyam Behari vs. State Of Uttar Pradesh 14 March,2008 Appeal (Crl.) 489 of 2008
[24] 2012 Cri LJ 2974
[25] Bhurekhan vs. State of Madhya Pradesh 2013 Cri LJ

In the case of Arjun Ganpat Sandbhor vs. State of Maharashtra[26] A truck was shot at, the driver was killed, and the truck was stolen by dacoits. It was dark at the time. There are good reasons to doubt the son of the deceased, who was sitting in the truck when it happened. He has clearly admitted that he had a tendency to forget things at the time. The rules of the criminal manual on how to conduct a test identification parade were not followed and the accused was entitled to be acquitted in light of all the evidence. In similar case[27] The complainant, Gagabhai Lalbhai Chauhan, resided with his family in the village of Ghodasar located near the Mahi Canal. Three of his siblings' residences were located nearby. His three brothers had been found guilty of riot-related charges and were apprehended in the Vadodara area. At approximately 10:00 pm, the complainant heard a burning sound coming from the automobile outside his residence. When he woke up and went outside to call upon nature, approximately ten individuals exited the vehicle. They began by asking for water. After consuming the water, the complainant was accused of selling charas and marijuana by three or four of the individuals. They demanded to search his residence and removed his television, cash, and other valuables, including decorations, from his residence. They were apprehended and held in custody for questioning. They were apprehended on the ground that they might have been involved in a series of crimes, such as the one at issue. An identification test was conducted and numerous witnesses assisted in identifying them. In another case[28] While the informant was away from his home instructing the children, four to five armed men entered his residence while concealing their faces. At the same time, Taranna Ara, the informant's daughter, was in the kitchen preparing meals. When Taranna Ara spotted one of the intruders, she exclaimed that an insane person had broken into her house, and the intruder responded by claiming to be a dacoit. Seven to eight other intruders then entered the home. Taranna Ara was surrounded by the intruders, and they began to steal her belongings. The intruders also took jewelry from Taranna Ara's wife and children. Eventually, all the intruders fled, including the dacoit. Taranna Ara's daughter was reported to have recognized one of them.

<u>Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)</u>

1. Burglary, dacoity, robbery and theft are all different crimes under the IPC. How do we differentiate?

According to the IPC, burglary, dacoity, robbery, and theft are all distinct offenses. Between stealing and robbery or dacoity, extortion is in the midst. Robbery performed or attempted to be

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[26] 2012 Cri LJ 2974
[27] Raman Lakha vs. State Of Gujarat 10 October, 2013, The High Court of Gujarat at Ahmadabad
[28] Mohammad Israel vs. State Of Bihar 2008 Cri LJ

committed by five or more people at the same time is known as dacoity. As opposed to stealing or extortion, robbery is a unique and aggravating version of both. If during the course of the theft the perpetrator intentionally causes or seeks to cause any peer to suffer wrongful restraint, death, or the threat of such harm. Therefore, the crime is penalized as robbery if harm is genuinely inflicted when it is performed. If violence (i.e., putting the victim in fear of immediate death, injury, or unlawful restraint) is present, the offender is present, and the victim receives the object demanded, then extortion is robbery. Theft and extortion are different in that .

Distinction between theft, extortion and robbery:

(i) Consent: When someone steals, they do it without the owner's permission. Extortion is when someone steals something by falsely acquiring their permission. A more severe type of theft or extortion is robbery. Takes action without permission.

(ii) Property: Only moveable property may be the subject of theft. Extortion is a crime that can be committed in relation to both movable and immovable property. Immovable property is only involved in robberies if they entail extortion; otherwise, it is not.

(iii) Force: There is no use of force during stealing. In robbery, force may or may not be employed, depending on whether it is a kind of theft or extortion. In extortion, the property is gained by purposely placing that person or any other in fear of danger.

Distinction between dacoity and robbery:

The quantity of people participating in the two is the only thing that truly separates them. Robbery carried out by five or more people is known as dacoity. Dacoity is another crime for which mere planning is enough to commit the crime.

 2. Why is dacoity preparation a serious offense yet planning for murder is not?

Crime = Actus Reus + Mens Rea in criminal law.

Actus Reus now denotes the actual deed, whereas Mens Rea denotes a guilty thought. Only when both are present does a crime occur. Therefore, it is a common rule that both components must be present.But there are certain exceptions. In general, no matter how bad the motive, it cannot be punished. One of the reasons for this is that it is exceedingly challenging to demonstrate in court what a defendant intended to do before he actually commits the crime. However, there are some unique circumstances whereby intention is criminal even though there

is no Actus Reus since it must be established in court.

The fact that a preparation was made with the purpose of committing murder is never sufficiently established in court to warrant punishment for preparation to kill. It only turns into an attempt when it ultimately reaches the point where it can be demonstrated.

If A buys a gun with the intention of killing B, even though this would be considered preparation for murder, it would be very difficult to demonstrate in court that the pistol was bought with that intention.Even if A were to walk out of his house and toward B's house with a gun, the mens rea or guilt intention could not be shown until he had shot B, at which point it would already be considered an attempt and so illegal under section 307 IPC.

Now, in the instance of Dacoity, when five or more persons gather with the purpose to commit robbery, it has already passed the preparation stage and is now considered a faux attempt.

In contrast to murder, when five persons gather and prepare to commit a robbery by gathering rope, cutters, guns, and other necessary items, the guilty mentality or the purpose to commit robbery can easily be shown because the acts are tied together and therefore tell the tale themselves.This makes it a crime.

As an illustration, suppose A, B, C, D, and E gather weapons and materials for house breaking and march toward Z's house with the aim to plunder it. Police catch them before they can enter or even get close to the residence to commit the robbery. Although they never carried out or attempted to carry out the heist, their mala fide purpose may be simply and conclusively established in court.

3. Is dacoity a crime committed against a person or a society?

Anyone who commits the crime of dacoity, whether they are an individual or a society, is guilty of it, and under the IPC, Section 391 is applicable. Section 395 of the IPC is used to punish dacoity, and the punishment can include up to ten years in prison with hard labor and a fine, as well as non-bailable penalties. Dacoity between the hours of dawn and evening, or during the afternoon on a public street, carries a sentence of imprisonment that is more than 10 years longer—up to fourteen years—with hard labor and a hefty fine. When five or more people carry out an act that transforms a robbery into a dacoity, Section 120-B is also applicable, and Sections 391 and 395 are added to the list of crimes that Section 120-B is a conspiracy for.

4. What justifies the difference in the number of persons used to distinguish between Robbery and Dacoity ?

Robbery is the act of taking another person's property by using unlawful force, unjustifiable

restraint, inducing fear of death (during theft) or dread of sudden death (during extortion). Dacoity is defined as an act involving five or more people. Dacoity is therefore a more severe kind of robbery. No one is exempt from liability regardless of how deeply they were involved in a debauchery.

V. THE MOST DANGEROUS DACOITS IN INDIA

1. Veerappan

Veerappan, whose full name was Koose Munisamy Veerappan, was a notorious Indian bandit and poacher who gained infamy for his criminal activities in the forests of South India, primarily in the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Here are some key points about Veerappan:

- Early Life: Veerappan was born in 1952 in the Gopinatham village of Karnataka, India. He hailed from a marginalized community and began his criminal activities at a young age.

- Criminal Activities: He was involved in a wide range of criminal activities, including smuggling sandalwood, ivory, and wildlife poaching. He also kidnapped individuals for ransom, which often made headlines.

- Elusive Nature: Veerappan was known for his ability to evade law enforcement agencies and maintain a low profile in the dense forests. His knowledge of the terrain and the support he received from local residents made it challenging for authorities to capture him.

- Kidnappings: One of his most high-profile crimes was the kidnapping of Kannada film actor Rajkumar in 2000. The kidnapping triggered a massive manhunt, but Veerappan managed to negotiate a ransom and secure the actor's release.

- Police Operations: Over the years, multiple police operations were launched to capture Veerappan, but he continued to elude capture. His actions resulted in the deaths of several police officers and forest officials.

- Death: Veerappan's criminal career came to an end in October 2004 when he was killed in a police operation in the Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu. The operation, known as "Operation Cocoon," involved a carefully planned ambush.

- Legacy: Veerappan's life and crimes have been the subject of books, documentaries, and movies. His notoriety and the challenges faced by law enforcement in capturing him made him a symbol of India's struggle against organized crime in its forests.

In summary, Veerappan was a notorious bandit and poacher who operated in the forests of South India, carrying out a range of illegal activities and evading capture for many years before being killed in a police operation.

2. Phoola Devi

Phoola Devi was one of India's most notorious female dacoits (bandits). She was active in the 1980's and 1990's.

Phoola Devi was born into a poor, low caste family in Uttar Pradesh's rural Uttar Pradesh. She experienced poverty and oppression early in her life. She was subjected to sexual abuse and discrimination as a child.

She was forced to marry a man against her will when she was only a teenager. Her husband and his family abused her for many years.

In the late 1980s, Phoola Devi got into a land dispute that turned violent. She joined a band of bandits and became their bandit queen. She led a bandit gang that carried out crimes such as robbery and kidnapping. Phoola Devi's gang operated in the Chambal's deep-rooted jungles, making it hard for the police to apprehend them. During her years as a dacoite, Phoola Devi rose to fame as a symbol of resistance against the oppressive social conditions and caste system in India's rural areas. She attracted widespread media attention and public sympathy, especially from the lower castes who viewed her as a champion of their rights.

After surrendering to the police in 1983 following negotiations with the government, Phoola Devi spent 11 years in jail. During her time in jail, Phoola Devi transformed and made politics her life's goal. She was elected as a member of parliament in 1996

Unfortunately, her political career came to an abrupt end when she was murdered in 2001. The story of Phoola Devi has been extensively documented in books and a well-known Bollywood movie, "Bandit Queen".

3. Paan Singh Tomar

Paan Singh Tomar was an Indian athlete and soldier. He was born in Bhidausa village in the Morena district of Madhya Pradesh, India. Tomar had an aptitude for running from an early age. He joined the Indian Army, where he excelled in the long-distance running sport steeplechase with hurdles. He went on to represent India in national and international competitions, winning several medals.

Tomar's life changed drastically when he became involved in land disputes and faced harassment from the authorities. He was angry and frustrated, so he decided to turn to crime

and became a dacoit. He and his band of dacoits carried out various criminal activities, including robbery, kidnapping and murder.

Pawan Singh Tomar was a notorious dacoit who ran his gang in the rugged Chambal rivulets. The dacoit's activities attracted the attention and fear of the locals. Tomar was captured by the Indian police in 1981 and spent some time in jail before he was killed in a shoot-out with the police.

After his death, the life of this dacoit came to limelight. His story was later immortalized in the form of a biopic titled "Paa Singh Tomar" which was released in 2012 by the Bollywood film industry. The biopic tells the story of how Tomar went from being a well-liked athlete to a dreaded dacoit due to various circumstances and grievances in his life. The story remains part of India's folklore and is a vivid reminder of the intricacies of rural life.

4. Sultana Daku

Inderjit Singh Sultana was a renowned dacoit, or bandit, in the Northern regions of India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Born in a rural village in Uttar Pradesh in 1890, Sultana was raised in a region of lawlessness. As an adult, he began to engage in a variety of criminal activities, beginning with cattle theft. Eventually, his gang of bandits grew to include robbery and murder, and he achieved notoriety for his daring heists. Sultana's gang was active in the north of India, primarily in the areas of Saharanpur and Muzafarnagar, as well as Meerut, and he was seen as a symbol of resistance to the oppressive British colonial government and the feudal system of rural India during this period.

- Capture and execution: His criminal activities ended when he was arrested by the British in the year 1924. He was tried and convicted of murder and sentenced to death by the British in 1927.

- Legacy and folklore: His life and deeds have been immortalized in the region's folklore and popular culture through the publication of novels, plays and films.

The story of Daku is a complex one. In the eyes of many people, the bandit was a symbol of resistance against colonialism and social injustice of his time.

5. Daku Maan Singh

Maan Singh was a well-known bandit (dacoit) from the Chambal area of India in the middle of the 20th century. Daku Maan Singh's life and crimes are often linked to the stories of other well-known dacoits from the same area. Here is a brief description of Daku Singh's life.

- Early Life

Mahan Singh was born in the village of Chambal, which is located in the present state of Madhya Pradesh. Like many other dacoits of the time, he was born in a rural area where poverty and oppression were common.

- Why Daku Singh Turned to Banditry

Mahan Singh turned to banditry in the face of various socio-economic issues, such as land disputes, caste discrimination, and injustice. He formed a band of dacoits, and began to engage in criminal activities like robbery, kidnapping and extortion.

Mahan Singh's legendary career began in the 1950s and 60s when he and his band of banditry operated in the rugged and remote Chambal Ravines. He was one of the most elusive and feared dacoits of the time. The authorities conducted several operations to capture him, and in 1955 he was finally captured. He was tried and convicted of banditry and sentenced to life in prison.

Mahan Singh's life and adventures have become part of Chambal Valley folklore. His story, and the stories of other dacoit from the region, have inspired books, films, and folk songs that depict dacoits as villains and rebels against the social and economic injustices of the time. Daku Singh's life serves as a reminder of the difficult circumstances and injustice that often drove people to banditry in Chambal Valley in the middle of the 20th century.

6. Manya Surve

Manya Surve, also known as Arjun Surve, was an Indian gangster who was active in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Mumbai, India. His life and crimes have been the subject of books, films, and folklore.

Manya Surve's life began in 1944, when he was born into a poor, middle-class family in a village in Maharashtra. His life changed drastically when he was falsely accused of a murder that he did not commit, and he was sent to prison. In prison, he met other criminals who introduced him to organized crime. After his release, he joined a gang and began engaging in various criminal activities such as extortion, robbery, and violence. Surve quickly became one of the most wanted criminals in Mumbai.

On January 11, 1982, Manya Surve was killed in a brutal police encounter in Mumbai's Wadala area.

The story of Manya Surve and his close call with the cops has been the focus of a lot of books, films, and documentaries over the years. The 2013 Bollywood movie "Shootout At Wadala" is based on Surve's life and the shoot-out. Surve's story is often seen as a symbol of the complicated socio-economic problems, unfairness, and violence that the Mumbai underworld

was dealing with in the 70s and 80s. His life has stayed a part of people's minds and is still part of Mumbai's criminal history.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the concept of dacoity, a form of banditry, is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon that has long been embedded in the societies of the world. Historically, dacoit or banditry has been a common occurrence due to a variety of factors, such as social and economic disparities, political instability, and systemic injustice. In some cases, dacoity has been a form of criminal activity, while in others, it has been seen as a form of resistance to oppressive forces. Despite the romanticization of dacoity in literature, films, and popular culture, it is important to recognize the detrimental effects it has had on individuals, societies, and societies. Law enforcement and governments have made significant strides in the fight against dacoity, with both successes and setbacks being part of the larger narrative. Recent years have seen a significant decrease in dacoity in many areas due to the implementation of effective law enforcement measures, economic growth, and social transformation. Nevertheless, it remains a potent reminder of the intricate relationship between crime, law, and humanity. As we contemplate the past, it is important to recognize the need to address the underlying causes of criminal activity, promote social equity, and search for solutions that can improve the lives of marginalized communities, thereby diminishing the appeal of criminal behavior.

(A) Suggestion

Dacoity and organized banditry can be prevented by taking a multi-pronged approach that addresses the root causes as well as the enforcement aspects of the crime. The following are some of the ways in which dacoity can be prevented:

- Economic Development: Address the economic disparities that lead to dacoity by investing in rural development, creating jobs, and improving infrastructure in vulnerable areas. This can help alleviate the economic despair that often drives people to commit crime.

- Empowerment and Skill Training: Encourage education and skill training programs, particularly in underprivileged areas. Education can empower people and communities, offering alternative pathways to economic and social prosperity

- Social Reform: Address social issues like caste discrimination, land dispute, and gender inequality that often lead to the rise of dacoity by promoting social equality and justice, which can help reduce the tensions that cause banditry.

In order to effectively address the issue of dacoity, it is essential to strengthen community policing, which involves local law enforcement collaborating with the community in order to build trust and deter crime. Additionally, surveillance and technology should be invested in to ensure that law enforcement agencies are able to effectively monitor and respond to any criminal activity. Finally, legal reforms should be undertaken to provide the necessary legal frameworks and tools to law enforcement agencies in order to effectively fight against dacoity. Finally, border control measures should be strengthened to ensure that criminals are not able to escape to neighboring regions. Finally, citizens should be educated on the dangers of aiding or harbouring dacoit activity and encouraged to report any suspicious activity to law enforcement, as well as to develop rehabilitation programs for those who wish to return to a productive life. Finally, international collaboration and information sharing should be encouraged in order to effectively address cross-border dacoity. In order to reduce the prevalence of dacoity, it is essential to take a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of the crime, as well as its associated economic and law enforcement implications. Media and awareness campaigns should be utilized to inform the public of the consequences of criminal activity and to counteract romanticized representations of dacoit behavior in popular culture. Additionally, a fair and effective judicial system should be implemented to ensure that criminals are prosecuted in a timely manner, thus providing a dissuasive effect.

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