

# Evolution of the CID in Colonial India and its Induction in Sind

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## Abstract

*This article examines the establishment of the Criminal Investigation Department and its induction in colonial India and then moves to the report of the Indian Police Commission of 1902-03 and the genesis of the CID. In the same context it refers to the evolution of the federal CID or the origin of the Intelligence Bureau and the induction of modus operandi techniques in investigation and detection of crimes in India. It analyses the long gap between England and colonial India in the induction of scientific systems in police detection of crimes. Further, it assesses the origin, developments and ramifications of the CID in Sind, including the reorganization of the Sind CID by John Court Curry in 1917, the work done by Rao Sahib Narindas of CID in 1927, and a discussion on Sind CID's detection of bomb explosions in Karachi in the 1930s and the 1940s and the administrative organizational situation and problems of the CID in the districts of Hyderabad and Tharparkar. Last, the article gives details of operational performance during the Hur insurgency, 1942-43, and the interconnected issues of the severe inadequacy of advance information on Hur gangs and their activities despite efforts by the CID.*

**Keywords:** CID, colonial, India, police, crime, SB, I.P.

## British background to the Criminal Investigation Department and its induction in colonial India

According to John Court Curry,<sup>1</sup> 'as of the early 1930's, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) was a comparatively recent creation in

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<sup>1</sup> John Court Curry was born in 1887 and joined the elite cadre of the Indian Police (I.P.) around 1907, got his training at the Police Training School, Nasik, later spent a year at Khandesh in the Bombay Presidency and from around 1909 till the very early 1930s worked in Karachi, Hyderabad, Naushero Feroze, Larkana and Sukkur. He is the author of a book, *The Indian Police*. His unpublished memoirs, 'The Joys of the Working, Memoirs of an Indian Policemmen,' in two volumes, available at the University of Cambridge, are the most comprehensive and thoroughly analytical and sociological account of life in Sind, on Sindh, on crimes, politics and on law and order as compared to any other memoir of ICS or IP officers pertaining to Sind. He resigned around the mid-1930s, migrated to New Zealand and passed away around 1969/70.

England and in India.’ Prior to the induction of the Act in 1829 through which Robert Peel set up the Metropolitan Police Force, ‘there had been detectives --- the Bow Street runners and others --- but no organization to deal with criminal problems as a whole.’ As far as these Bow Street runners were concerned, they were ‘thief-catchers and they acted as individuals dealing with individuals.’ The then situation was that ‘each man acquired a knowledge of the criminal population but it died with him.’<sup>2</sup>

Basically, the force created ‘was an organization to deal with crime; but it had, at first, no detectives.’ Around 1869, at Scotland Yard, there were only fifteen detectives. Sir Edmund Henderson, then Commissioner of Police, in London, stated that these personnel at Scotland Yard were employed in ‘an enormous mass of inquiries and investigations for the government on important matters.’ The Commissioner initiated administrative steps and provided ‘detectives in all the divisions and trebled the strength of the Yard.’ In 1878, the detective branch developed into an organization for dealing with crime on scientific lines and soon the department was categorized as the Criminal Investigation Department.<sup>3</sup>

### **Report of the Indian Police Commission 1902-03 and genesis of CID**

Compared to the situation in Great Britain and Europe, the Indian Police Commission of 1902-03 found India ‘still lacking any such organization.’ There were detective branches in some of the important cities, yet there was confusion as well as plenty of complaints. In Bombay city, ‘a squad composed of Indian officers, had been giving an excellent account of themselves from the sixties onwards.’<sup>4</sup>

The *Thagi and Dakaiti* Department, made famous by colonial historians and researchers, had been formed in 1830 to deal with the ‘terrible crime of organized murder for gain.’ Such researchers emphasize that after Colonel Sleeman took charge of the department in 1835, it achieved ‘extraordinary success, stamped out *thagi*,’ and in 1839 undertook operations against ‘organized gangs of dacoits operating in the territories of different provinces’ and Native states, or Indian States, as they were then called.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the efforts of some colonial writers<sup>6</sup> to

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<sup>2</sup> J. C. Curry, *The Indian Police* (London: Faber and Faber, 1932), pp. 150, 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Earlier versions of British writers as well as reports of the colonial government on the causes, origin, prevalence and implication of *thugee* and *dacaiti* have

romanticize British efforts to control *thagi* and *dacaiti*, the origin of the CID in colonial India owed much to the findings and recommendations of the Indian Police Commission of 1902-03.

A basic, yet glaring aspect was that the members of the Police Commission were 'struck by the ignorance of district superintendents and their staff of what was going on outside their own districts.' These members overtly stated that they did not desire to interfere 'with the responsibility of local officers for the prevention, investigation and detection of crime.' However, an observation was incorporated in their report that 'they considered it necessary that a central bureau should be established in each province.' This central bureau was to be known as the 'Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for the purpose of assisting local offices by collating and distributing information and by a small staff of trained detectives.'<sup>7</sup>

An important recommendation of the Police Commission was that CIDs in each province would be supervised by a Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP). The function, role and responsibility of the proposed CIDs should be 'more than the mere supervision of the CID.' His supervisory assignment would also include the administrative charge of the railway police. For crime outside the jurisdiction of the railway police, he would 'be the head of an establishment for collating and distributing information over all districts of the province, and advising and assisting (from his staff of detectives) in the investigation of important cases.' In addition, he would function as 'the head of the provincial Finger Print Bureau.' The idea or strategy was that these special branches were not concerned with 'ordinary criminal affairs, but with matters which were the concern of the local governments, namely popular or communal movements or agitations likely to lead to disturbances or to *political* crime.'<sup>8</sup> More important was his responsibility or to 'have under his control the Special Branch then existing in every province for the collection of information.'

The recommendations of the police commission 'were adopted, and the various CID's, as they were commonly called, came into existence soon afterwards.' Although this commission did not insist 'that a separate CID was necessary in any of the great cities, but experience proved that they were mistaken.' Soon, in 1910, a CID was established in Bombay by the 'reorganization of the detective branch at a time when the whole

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been under detailed scrutiny by researchers in India and most of the findings of the colonial period were somewhat erroneous while others have been refuted.

<sup>7</sup> J. C. Curry, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

organization of the city police was remodeled on the lines of the Metropolitan Police.' Next, in 1912, a CID was established in Calcutta.<sup>9</sup>

### **Evolution of federal CID or origin of the Intelligence Bureau and further developments**

In 1902-03, the Indian Police Commission also recommended that a 'similar department should be established for the whole of India, with functions similar to those of the provincial departments in each province.' The institution proposed 'was to be under an officer of the rank of Inspector General who was to be responsible for the collation and distribution of information between provinces in the same way as the Deputy Inspectors-General were to deal with the collation and distribution between districts, and for the maintenance of a central Finger Print Bureau for the records of criminals working in more than one province.' The system envisaged by the Police Commission was that 'provincial CID's were to communicate to the All India Bureau information regarding certain forms of organized crime, such as railway crime, dacoity, coining, note forgeries and crime committed by criminal tribes, foreigners and professional prisoners.' This federal CID was supposed to gather, assess, sift and analyse as well as to 'distribute information collected by the Special Branches of the provincial departments, and to maintain a staff of detectives who could be deputed to assist provincial inquiries concerning criminal tribes or other criminals who operated in provinces where they were not known.'<sup>10</sup>

This recommendation was also adopted by the Indian central government. Delhi 'had the Central Intelligence Bureau that was staffed by Indian police officers seconded from the Provinces.' Some memoirs of the officers of the elite Indian Police (I.P.) cadre reveal that this centralized Intelligence Bureau, later categorized as the Directorate of Intelligence Bureau (DIB, or IB) had, on many occasions, forewarned provincial governments of impending conspiracies because they had 'infiltrated their men in the anti-government parties.' Hence the IB 'knew their plans in detail.'<sup>11</sup>

However, in the 1920s it became obvious that 'some of the proposals regarding the part of the Central All-India Bureau was to play proved impracticable.' Subsequent years saw this central government institution

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Wynne (ed.), *On Honourable Terms, The Memoirs of Some Indian Police Officers 1915-1948* (London: The Chameleon Press, 1985), p 129. Also Leslie Robbins, *Policing the Raj* (London: The Chameleon Press, 1985), Chapter 12, Gorakhpur Again, Spies 1942, p 72.

as a very powerful body mostly confined to secret reports on the security of the state, concentrating itself on search and identification of activities and of activists that were involved in subversion or in conspiracies against the imperial powers and the imperial state. Some memoirs of the officers of the elite Indian Police (I.P.) cadre reveal that this centralized Intelligence Bureau, later categorized as the Directorate of Intelligence Bureau (DIB or IB) had, on many occasions, forewarned provincial governments of impending conspiracies because they had 'infiltrated their men in the anti government parties.' Hence the IB 'knew their plans in detail.'<sup>12</sup>

### **Modus operandi techniques in investigation and detection of crimes**

A word on the other priorities within the framework of the CID. This 'modus operandi system was developed by Major Atcherley in England.' Atcherley emphasized that in England, if not all over Europe, criminal element, especially those confining their activity to crimes against property tended to 'specialize in their methods of committing crime.' This issue, he argued, 'was known and utilized as far back as the days of the Bow Street runners.' However, as of 1931-32, a successful accomplishment was the invention of 'a system by which an immense number of facts concerning individual criminals and individual crimes could be classified, indexed and recorded in such a way as to render the knowledge concerning them available to every investigating officer where an individual criminal was likely to operate.'<sup>13</sup> It was in this specific aspect that the CID was further tasked. Sometimes, there were routine issues and aspects, but 'mostly there were quite sensitive and complex cases wherein were implications for the mercantile system that was the essence of capitalism that was sacred to the imperial government.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Leslie Robbins, *Policing the Raj*, Chapter 12: Gorakpur Again, Spies 1942, p 72.

<sup>13</sup> Captain Llewellyn William Atcherley, later Major General and also knighted, was Chief Constable of the West Riding of Yorkshire and was later appointed as H.M.'s Inspector of Constabulary in the office of the Home Secretary in London. Details of his work are in Raymond B. Fosdick, 'The Modus Operandi System in the Detection of Criminals,' *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol., 6, No. 4, Nov. 1918, pp. 560-570. Also refer to August Volmer, 'Revision of the Atcherley Modus Operandi System,' *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol., 10, No. 2, Aug. 1919, pp. 229 - 274.

<sup>14</sup> J. C. Curry, op. cit., pp. 264, 265.

### **Gap between England and colonial India in induction of scientific systems in police detection of crimes**

While in England, the policy of inducting scientific methods in police investigation and detection had taken place around 1878, the adoption of these techniques were 'gradually introduced into India in or after 1905.' The change or improvement was that while 'earlier individual detectives dealt with individual crimes and criminals,' this was substituted by an 'organization to study and attack problems of criminology on scientific lines.'<sup>15</sup>

A logical query would naturally be whether such a situation transpired due to governmental neglect or complacency in that 'the CID's were not generally established in India until the English model had been in existence for twenty five years.' Did this delayed application take place because 'the advantages of modern and scientific methods were not recognised as promptly as they should have been?' The ground situation that prevailed prior to the induction of the CID's was that 'the detective branch was considered sufficient to meet the needs of a modern city like Bombay' and the CID was established there in 1910. Far worse was the situation in Sind, then a sub-province of the Bombay presidency, that 'had no CID, and no central detective agency of any kind until 1914.'<sup>16</sup>

In the early stages when the CIDs were formed in the provinces, 'their activities were very limited in most instances for some years.' Probably due to the inadequacy of trained staff, these CIDs restricted themselves 'to collating, digesting and distributing information about crime and criminals in a very elementary form, and to supply skilled detectives to assist the local police in a few intricate cases or in dealing with crime having ramifications in more than one district.'<sup>17</sup>

There is no denying the fact that 'the establishment of the provincial CID's was a step in the direction of centralization.' Unfortunately, the systematic induction of the required changes or improvements were 'not carried very far in the absence of the more scientific methods of crime classification and criminal identification which had been developed in Europe, and in the absence of specialization within the CID.' Another reason was that 'the detectives in the CID had not, as a rule, specialized in one particular form of theft or burglary, as in the case in Berlin, Vienna and other places on the continent.' An operational contradiction was that invariably 'the same officer had been employed in dealing with

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 155.

such diverse forms of crime as burglary, murder, cheating or theft.’ However, by 1930-31, a slight improvement had taken place and a tendency was noticeable wherein individual officers were keen to specialize and adopt ‘more scientific methods.’ Yet, as late as 1932, it was seen that ‘specialization had not been extensively adopted in most provinces.’<sup>18</sup>

However, there is evidence that an improvement in scientific techniques was taking place. Slowly and gradually ‘the CID’s of one province after another had effected improvements and introduced more modern methods.’ Within colonial India, ‘the most advanced CID’s were those of Bengal, the United Provinces and the Punjab.’ In the police departments of these provinces, ‘a beginning had been made in the way of starting laboratories and by introducing the *modus operandi* system.’<sup>19</sup>

### **CID in Sind: origin, developments and ramifications**

In the establishment of the CID in Sind, there was some slackness and hence Sind became ‘the last province in India to adopt this recommendation of the Curzon Commission of 1902-3.’<sup>20</sup> Around late 1912, Kirkpatrick (KP), an officer of the elite Indian Police cadre (IP), had been transferred from Bombay Presidency to Sind and ‘had been appointed a Special Assistant to the DIG to initiate the formulation of a C.I.D. for Sind.’<sup>21</sup>

However, by December 1913 and February 1914, ‘the much needed Criminal Investigation Department for Sind had been implemented.’<sup>22</sup> Although during the difficult year of 1914 the police workload had enhanced considerably, yet the Sind and Karachi Criminal Investigation Departments ‘had to bear more than a proportionate share of the extra work’ and senior officers were of the opinion that the CID had ‘already proved to be most useful organizations.’<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Curry Papers at the Centre for South Asian Studies, Cambridge, Box I, ‘The Joys of the Working, Memoirs of an Indian Policeman,’ 2 Vols., John Court Curry, Vol. I, Chapter 9, 1911-12, p. 95.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Police Report of the Bombay Presidency Including Sind and Railways for the Year 1913, Bombay, Printed at The Govt. Central Press, 1914. No. 295 of 1914, Judicial Department (Police), Office of the Commissioner in Sind, Government House, Karachi, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1914, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Police Report of the Bombay Presidency Including Sind and Railways for the Year 1914, Bombay, Printed at The Govt. Central Press, 1915. No. 401 of 1915,

By 1916, with administrative transfers and postings, changes in officers dealing with and handling the CID were inevitable. This sensitive department, under the local DIGP, 'was controlled by Mr. W.H. Luck with Mr Stewart as his Assistant.'<sup>24</sup> As far as the permanent establishment of the CID was concerned, in 1916 it was the same as that existing in the previous year, that is, 1 Inspector, 6 sub Inspectors, 7 Head Constables and 1 Constable. Some extra posts of constables were under consideration, though not finalized or sanctioned by the Bombay government. Since the workload had steadily increased 'one temporary Inspector sanctioned for 12 months' had been added to the above staff towards the closing month of 1916. However, since the second half of the year, there were arguments for and against the structure, working and orientation of the CID in Sind as well as the CID in Karachi, a dual system that represented a unique situation compared to the other operational CIDs in the various provinces of colonial India. In order to understand the complications, problems and duplication that was being triggered by the then existing structure of the CID in Sind, as well as to initiate some saving in the cost of policing Sind via a reduction in manpower and right sizing, it was decided by the Bombay government, with the concurrence of the Commissioner in Sind, to appoint John Court Curry, an IP officer already posted in Sind, to assess and examine a reorganization of the Sind Police and in the same context, suggest what changes were regarded as essential in the reorganization of the young CID that had been established not more than four years ago in Sind. Curry, a talented and a dedicated officer, started this difficult assignment in right earnest.

### **John Court Curry's re-organization of the Sind CID in 1917**

As of November 1917, it was not possible for the CID to report movements of strangers, suspects, criminal tribes and other similar persons all over the province. This work was not done by a CID anywhere in India. It should, in the nature of things, be done by the local police of whose ordinary work it was an essential part.<sup>25</sup> This confusion in this field of duties of the CID in Sind existed and persisted because this position in the context of the CID was 'anomalous and unlike anything anywhere else in India as far as was known.' The prevailing situation

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Judicial Department, Office of the Commissioner in Sind, Government House, Karachi, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1915, Memorandum, p. iii, para 13.

<sup>24</sup> Police Report of the Bombay Presidency Including Sind and Railways for the Year 1916. Bombay, Printed at The Govt. Central Press, 1917, p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> Office of the Deputy Inspector General of Police for Sind, Karachi, dated the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1917. From, J.C. Curry, Acting District Superintendent of Police on Special Duty, to the Commissioner in Sind, p. 30, Appendix G: Re – organisation of the Criminal Investigation Department.



was that 'there were two independent bodies in Karachi,' both known as CIDs, differing from one another in essentials as to their functions and overlapping in many respects.<sup>26</sup>

The Sind CID performed the true functions of a CID and dealt with inter-district and inter-provincial inquiries of a criminal or politico-criminal nature. It took up specially important inquiries all over Sind whenever the local police required their expert assistance and generally kept in touch with other provincial CIDs. However, an odd situation was that 'the so called CID in Karachi did none of these things.' It confined itself to reporting the 'arrivals and movements of travellers and suspects' and, at the same time also involved itself on monitoring and reporting 'political movements in Karachi.' Another subject dealt with the by Karachi CID, especially during the war, was processing the criminal background of applicants for passports.

These and other considerations had led the officer in charge of the Sind CID to propose to amalgamate the two bodies. Objections to this proposal had been raised in connection with the separation of Karachi city and district as well due to a pending proposal regarding the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner of police in the city. An issue of responsibility had also been raised.<sup>27</sup> As regards the position of the Deputy Commissioner, the desirability of his having a separate CID under him had been initiated from the Bombay secretariat and argued on analogy with the Bombay- Poona arrangement. Curry's stance was that there was no real analogy and that the headquarters of the Sind CID must be in Karachi. Poona may be the 'centre of political movement in the Deccan while Bombay required separate handling owing to its immense size.' However, Karachi was the 'chief centre of all movements in Sind and no important political movements arose which did not intimately concern Karachi.' As such, it was rational that there was 'no reason why the relations of the Sind CID in regard to the Deputy Commissioner in Karachi should be different from those with any District SP elsewhere in Sind.' It therefore followed that the CID should be responsible for their special functions in Karachi 'in exactly the same way as everywhere else.' In addition, it was logical that the existence of a CID 'did not anywhere remove from the District SP,' his responsibility for keeping in touch with 'all movements political or otherwise in his charge.' This was so because

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> The proposal for a Deputy Commissioner of Police was kept pending in the office of the Commissioner in Sind and ultimately completely diffused at the level of the government in Bombay. For the issue of responsibility, refer to Office of the Deputy Inspector General of Police for Sind, Karachi, dated the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1917, op. cit., p. 30.

an important function and responsibility of a CID was to keep in touch with district officers and circulate information among them.<sup>28</sup>

John Curry further argued that an important reason for his proposing a district SP, in charge of the CID was that the work was 'too difficult and responsible for a young assistant.' He elaborated that this sensitive post had been held for the last two years by 'a senior assistant of over 8 years standing.' Explaining further, Curry stated that such a situation 'would not be suitable as a permanent arrangement because a senior assistant would either be liable to constant transfers or have to be granted a special allowance to compensate him for the allowances as acting district SP which he would otherwise draw.' As such, it was inevitable that an officer with such experience would therefore 'always cost as much as a district Superintendent of police' as was the situation prevailing in 1917.

An important point that Curry proposed in this CID reorganization proposal was that 'the duties of CID officers were of too delicate and important a nature to be entrusted to constables.' Hence, the posts of constables were eliminated in his proposals and 'a larger proportion of inspectors and SIs was substituted in his proposal.'<sup>29</sup>

In December 1917, the DIGP for Sind, scrutinized and discussed in detail with Curry his entire proposal of CID that was part of the reorganization of the Sind Police. After being satisfied on the arguments and justification given by Curry, he forwarded the report and suggested to the Commissioner in Sind that 'the CID should be amalgamated and a District SP with a Deputy should be placed in charge of the joint force.'<sup>30</sup>

### **1927: work by Rao Sahib Narindas, famous officer of Sind CID**

Amongst many cases of the CID in India, we will take up the work done by Rao Sahib Narindas, a famous officer of the Sind CID. A complex and difficult assignment started in 1927 when he was engaged in an 'unusual case.' For investigating this case, he had to proceed to England, where it was apparent 'how easily the scientific knowledge of Europe could then become available for criminal purposes in India.'<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Police Department, Deputy Inspector General of Police's Office, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1917, No. 4217 of 1917. From W.H. Luck, Deputy Inspector General of Police for Sind to the Commissioner in Sind.

<sup>31</sup> J. C. Curry, *The Indian Police*, pp. 265, 266.

The background to this case was that 'a retired military officer, by name Captain Farrell, came into contact with the firm of Mahomedali Brothers of Duzdap, Quetta, Seistan and Karachi.' His interest involved him into a partnership with 'several members of the firm under the name and style of the North West India Trading Company.' During informal discussions with the associates of this firm, a suggestion was made and further exchange of information took place that pertained to 'the low price of silver prevailing in 1925, the counterfeiting of rupees would be an extremely profitable undertaking and would involve little risk, if counterfeit, perfect both in execution and in intrinsic value, could be made.' The scope of profit making was substantial due to the 'difference between the intrinsic and the nominal value of the coin.'<sup>32</sup>

The project was communicated to one Dickinson, to whom Farrell had in those days given an appointment. Dickinson was a native of Birmingham, and, on being sent home with funds provided by Mahomedali Brothers, got into touch with one Wheeler in that city. Wheeler agreed, for heavy payments, to supply the dies of various Asiatic coins, including those of a rupee. Dickinson arrived in Karachi in September 1925, by the same steamer as the dies which were passed through the customs concealed in an engine shaft and, later, removed by Dickinson to Duzdap and Seistan. At Duzdap they were handed over, according to Dickinson, to Ghulam Abbas of the firm of Mahomedali Brothers.

As Dickinson had brought out only one obverse die, and it was agreed that more than one date was desirable, Farrell proceeded to England and after Dickinson's lukewarm attitude, also got into touch with Wheeler. He paid him considerable sums of money for a series of dies.<sup>33</sup>

When they were dispatched to Karachi by the S.S. City of Cambridge which arrived on 25 January, they were enclosed in a case purporting to contain machinery. The bill of lading was sent to Farrell, having been made out in the name of a firm in Lahore. Farrell sent it to a clearing agent in Karachi, who subsequently testified that they received it from the Lahore firm of whom they knew nothing. Farrell was in Karachi at the time, and so was Ghulamali of the firm Mahomedali Brothers who had come down from Quetta to meet the consignment.<sup>34</sup>

By good fortune and the zeal of customs authorities the dies were found. The matter was at once placed in the hands of the Sind CID. The

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 266

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

letter enclosing the bill of lading was found later to have been typed by Farrell and signed by Ghulamali. A telegram to the Lahore police elicited, as was expected, the fact that the firm in whose name the consignment was made did not exist. Farrell was questioned and was unable to give a consistent statement of his position, and he finally made a clean breast of the whole affair. His evidence implicated Dickinson, Mahomedali, Ghulamali, Wheeler, Ghulam Abbas and Akbarali, the clearing agent. Dickinson was arrested, and also made a confession.<sup>35</sup>

A detailed and prolonged investigation in India and England produced a mass of evidence to corroborate these two confessions. Wheeler was extradited from England to stand trial in India. Farrell was treated as an approver and gave evidence for the Crown. All the accused were convicted in the Sessions Court in Karachi and received heavy sentences.<sup>36</sup> There were many other such complex cases of fraud, cheating, criminal breach of trust and misappropriation that were dealt with by officers of the Sind CID, especially under the supervision of Rao Sahib Narindas, important aspects of the CID's performance.

### **Sind CID's detection of bomb explosions in Karachi: 1930s and 1940s**

Kenneth Raye Eates,<sup>37</sup> M.B.E., I.P., Superintendent of Police of the Sind CID for more than five years, was regarded as one of the most competent police officers of the early to the late 1940s in Sind. After his retirement from the Sind Police and returning back to England around 1951, he gave a talk on various aspects connected with the policing of colonial Sind. An interesting aspect pertained to some bomb explosions that took place in Sind in the 1940s while he was SP CID which were monitored and investigated by his staff under his supervision.

According to Eates, in a short period, during the early 1940s, although Congress was not very strong in urban or rural Sind, there were a few die-hard workers who became involved in subversive activities, especially in explosive substances and manufacture of bombs, which were thrown on certain roads or prominent locations to create the desired impact. In one case, which he referred to as *The Post Office Bomb*, a 'crude but powerful bomb wrecked the gate and pillar of a post office in Upper Sind.'

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 266, 267.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>37</sup> Apart from being regarded as an excellent police officer, having had a long tenure in CID Sind, he was also Member Bombay Natural History Society, 1924-1947, Member British Ornithologists Union, 1928-1958, Member and Vice President, Sind Natural History Society 1929 -1946 and Fellow, Zoological Society, London 1933.

Investigations by the CID, under his supervision, clearly indicated it as the work of 'a militant Hindu organization, probably the Rashtriya Sewam Serak Sang (RSS), which had a branch in the town.' This notorious organization was responsible for the explosion which occurred during one of the Congress civil disobedience movements. Investigations were carried out, several Hindus were strongly suspect, however due to the requirement of very effective evidence, 'nothing could be proved against them.' The case was undetected.

The second case pertained to the *Ram Bagh Bomb*. During a Hindu political movement directed against the government, information was received that a youth who was making a bomb had been injured by it. Eates stated that 'every effort to trace the injured youth failed.' The difficulty was that 'every soul in the locality was a Hindu and dumb.' For the CID investigators and their supervisory chief K. R. Eates, 'it was clear that Hindus were concerned and withholding all information.' Ultimately, a Hindu boy was sent up for trial, but he was given the benefit of doubt and discharged due to insufficient evidence. The third case he categorized as *The Moharram Bomb* which had the potential of perpetrating a serious clash. A crude bomb was thrown at a Moharram procession passing through a purely Hindu locality which struck a mourner who was killed instantly. Here also, the CID and the area police made efforts; however, as Eates stated there 'was no fault of the local police that the case was undetected.' The fourth case which he referred to as *The Railway Bomb*, was not a case of terrorism but of an accidental release of a bullet. A Muslim, the editor of a leading paper, was travelling by train with his family. At a station where the train halted, the door of the coupe in which they were travelling was open. There was a sudden bang and a child was injured on her foot by a piece of metal. It was believed that a bomb had been thrown into the coupe. Investigations indicated that a bullet was accidentally fired from the adjacent compartment. This compartment was occupied by some American troops and one rifle was discharged accidentally. The Americans regretted the incident and compensated the injured girl. Her father, the Kazi Sahib, was most grateful and so ended the mystery of the Railway Bomb.<sup>38</sup>

### **7 April 1943: explosion in Sind Chief Court Karachi**

Another important bomb case occurred in the most sensitive location, inside the Chief Court building in Karachi. The *Civil and Military Gazette* reported<sup>39</sup> that on 7 April 1943, a commotion was caused in the

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<sup>38</sup> Eates Papers, IOR. MSS. EUR. E 314 / 1-2, 'Memories Grave and Gay of a Field Naturalist.' This was a 1967-68 talk at London, Chapter 19, Bombs.

<sup>39</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, Friday, 9 April 1943.

Chief Court building when explosive substances lying in the tin trunk exploded with a terrific report while being removed to the Sessions Court room to be shown as an exhibit in a case. Two court peons carrying the trunk were injured.

The site was visited by the Chief Judge and other officials of the Court. Later, the jury in a case under the Defence of India Rules, the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act against Ramchand Hundraj, was taken to the place where the explosion had occurred.

The reporter of the *Civil and Military Gazette* recalled<sup>40</sup> that the Sind CID had recovered on a search explosive materials, cartridges, ammunition and Congress bulletins and arrested two persons who were committed to the Sessions. Their trial had already started before Justice Hatim Tayabji. However, as far as a conviction was concerned, there were complications in this case also and it was adjourned till 8 April 1943. Ultimately, the accused was given benefit of doubt and released.

### **Problems of the CID in interior of Sind, Hyderabad and Tharparkar districts**

In the historical evolution of the Sind Police, and the formation and development of the CID, a perpetual problem for the Sind Police was the neglect and sidelining of important issues pertaining to its effectiveness, initially by the Bombay government and later by the Sind government in Karachi. As of 10 July 1943, the sanctioned strength of the CID unit at Hyderabad was 3 Head Constables and 7 constables. However, this strength being grossly inadequate, 6 constables were pulled out from other duties and attached to this branch. These were urgently needed 'owing to the great increase in the work due to the War and the Congress Movement.'<sup>41</sup>

Like the CID's situation in Hyderabad district, the outlook in Tharparkar was no different. In March 1944, the local intelligence office at Mirpurkhas in Tharparkar district had 'comprehensively been opened and another sub inspector had been appointed in this unit investigating branch.'<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Confidential Notes on the District Hyderabad being item no. 1 in the List of Confidential Documents in the Office of SSP Hyderabad. Observations on the Organisation of District Police by Mr. K.H.W. Best, IP, District SP Hyderabad, 10 July 1943, p 40.

<sup>42</sup> Confidential Notes on the District Tharparkar being item no. 1 in the List of Confidential Documents in the Office of SSP Mirpurkhas, p. 10 reverse, Some

The problems of manpower and an adequate budget continued during the war years and later, even after the partition of India in August 1947. To this pathetic situation was added an administrative imbroglio that had been inducted in a reorganization scheme. This was the creation of the post of Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP), a staff officer to the IGP Sind, as well as a field officer as far as the operational working of the CID was concerned. On 5 September 1952, G.A. Issani, the district SP Tharparkar, noted that under the reorganization scheme, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP), with separate staff was posted in Tharparkar district 'to work directly under the AIG CID.' The idea was that 'they were supposed to tackle political work in the towns and be an intelligence agency in the mofussil wherever posted.'<sup>43</sup>

Issani, a respected personality in the Sind bureaucracy, observed that as far as he could see, 'except for acting as a Gestapo over the district police,' they took no other responsibility and the District SP had still to bear the brunt of the CID correspondence which at that time was quite voluminous.' His professional view was that 'it would be better, in view of the establishment of the CID, that the District Intelligence Branch (DIB), was cut down, the CID were made fully responsible for all work emanating from their CID office.' His logical argument was that this would give the District SP, who, as of September 1952, 'was kept busy signing futile CID posts,' time to concentrate on his crime work 'which as of those days, due to pressure of office work went by fault.' If these modifications were made, he thought 'that the working of the CID would also improve and there would be no cause of bickering or inefficiency'<sup>44</sup>

### **Sind CID and the Hur insurgency**

In Sind, especially after the release of Pir Sibghatullah, the Pir Pagaro, from the Bengal prisons in October 1936, as per government directives, the concentration of the officers and staff in the CID was on all aspects connected with restraints and control over the Pir Pagaro as well as on his staunch followers, the Hurs. Unfortunately, the performance of the CID in this specific task was grossly inadequate due to severe administrative and financial problems, and more so by the complexities that aggravated the deteriorating quality and output of the CID in Sind. In precise terms, the below expected standard pertained mainly to the collection, sifting and streamlining of advance information on the

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Notes on the Tharparkar District. Observations dated March 1944 by District SP Tharparkar (name not legible) Organization of the District Police.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 25, 26, part I, Organisation of the District Police, Note on the CID, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1952 by Mr. G.A. Issani, District SP Tharparkar.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

movements of the Hurs, in general, as well the designs and strategy of the gangs of militant Farki Hurs. As repeatedly alleged by the district officers of the Indian Civil Service (ICS), the IP district officers as well as by senior military officers, during the martial law period, these Hurs were directly involved in terrorizing government officials, government sympathisers and, especially collaborators. Also, this state of lawlessness was responsible for complete panic and demoralization in the public, as well as in the police and government functionaries.

**29 January to 2 February 1942: inadequate or no advance information on Hur matters; sources to be disclosed to District SPs; absence of an efficient intelligence service, including the CID**

A major problem for the district SPs was a total lack of public support or cooperation with the result that there was no advance or specific information on the movement of Hur gangs, or the information was sketchy with important and relevant connecting links missing. The problem became so acute that, on 29 January 1942, the Chief Secretary (CS), at the request of the IGP, had to initiate a reference to the District Magistrate (DM) Tharparkar, conveying to him, 'that it had been reported that in some cases the DM Nawabshah, had passed information in regard to the activities of the Hurs on to the District SP without telling them the source of the information.' The reference emphasized upon the DM that it was very important that when zamindars, etc., gave him information, and it was important enough to be communicated to the District SPs, 'in such a situation the Police should know the source of the information.' The CS directed the DM to instruct his officers that 'they should give the information secretly' to the district SP 'in all cases where action by the police was contemplated.'<sup>45</sup>

Having received a demi-official (D.O.) letter from the CS, on 28 March 1942, W. L. K. Herapath, IGP Sind, sent a reply and explained categorically, that 'the greatest difficulty had been intelligence,' stressing that 'no information in advance was procurable.'<sup>46</sup> According to the IGP, it was 'only with the greatest difficulty and at enormous price possible to obtain information from a Hur.' Even then, it had to be well sifted to be sure it was 'probably correct and not made or given with the express

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<sup>45</sup> National Documentation Center (henceforth referred to as NDC), Cabinet Division, Govt of Pakistan, Islamabad, S - 200, p 33. D.O. No. 0-915-H/41, Home Department (Proper), Sind Secretariat, Karachi, 29th January, 1942. From Chief Secretary (CS) to District Magistrate (DM) Tharparkar.

<sup>46</sup> Lambrick Papers (LP), IOR/F 208/40, p. 3, p 1 of D.O. Letter. D.O. No. C / 235, Office of the I.G.of Police, Sindh, Karachi, dated the 28th March, 1942. From W. L. K. Herapath to C.B.B. Cleve, CS.



purpose of leading the Police into an ambush or a trap.’ Such were the difficulties the police had to contend with. Herapath acknowledged that ‘lack of information had precluded them, as yet, from ever laying an ambush for the Hurs,’ or ever meeting them on neutral ground. Such ambushes had always been in areas that were strongholds of the Hurs. However, as of March 1942, the Hur intelligence was better than that of the administration ‘for the reason that their spies were innumerable and in every village, even where the police were located.’<sup>47</sup>

### **8 August 1942: Viceroy’s meeting on Hur affairs; importance of an adequate intelligence system then lacking**

Apart from severe panic amongst residents in the Hur affected areas as well as complete demoralization in the police personnel, the lack of advance information on the Hur gangs had become so severe that on 8 August 1942, the Viceroy held a most important conference on the Hur problem. This very high profile meeting in New Delhi was attended by Hugh Dow, Governor of Sind, General Sir Alan Hartley, Conran Smith, Staff Officer to the Viceroy, C. M. Trivedi, Major General Molesworth, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, and D. Pilditch, Personal Staff Officer to the Viceroy. During discussions, the Viceroy enquired to what extent it was possible to make the effort more effective in catching the Hur leaders? The Sind Governor replied that the matter was a military one and that there was no question of any change in policy. He added that it ‘might be that there was a case for some change in military methods.’ Dow also felt that ‘General Richardson<sup>48</sup> was probably rather disappointed in not getting more leaders, though he had been doing better lately in picking these people up.’<sup>49</sup>

An idea that the forces involved in the anti-Hur operations in Sind were not getting adequate and effective information on the hideouts and the movements of the Hurs can be had from General Hartley’s comment

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., LP 40, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> General Roland Richardson was the Martial Law Administrator in Eastern Sind, the Hur areas, and continued on that post from 1 June 1942 to 31 May 1943. During Martial Law in Sind, terrible excesses, repression and oppression were inflicted on the Hurs and their families.

<sup>49</sup> IOR/L/PJ/7/4736, Pir of Pagaro – Transfer of Political Detenus Etc., from India to Detention Overseas with Particular Reference to the Pir, pp. 122 to 129. Most Secret, Proceedings of Conference of the Hur Situation Held at the Viceroy’s House on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942, p. 7 and 8 of the Minutes / pp. 128, 129 of the file, item: Disposal of Pir Pagaro, para 33.

on the ‘importance of an adequate intelligence system if captures on the desired scale were to be made.’<sup>50</sup>

**14-27 September 1942: extreme difficulty in finding suitable officers for the CID and for intelligence work by other departments of the Sind Police and the IB**

General Roland Richardson, the Martial Law Administrator based in Hyderabad, had asked Lambrick<sup>51</sup> to contact his colleagues and ascertain names that he or such officers could suggest from the revenue staff of Tharparkar District who could fill an intelligence assignment. After consulting his colleagues, Lambrick suggested that while he did not know all the available possibilities, he could only think of two officers, Baz Muhammad Shah and Yousifani who were suitable for the assignment. Baz Muhammad Shah was a bit too old, while Yousifani had less status and experience, however, he had ‘the gift of getting on well with military officers.’ Yousifani had told Lambrick that he wanted to get out of Sanghar, and also hoped of getting an assignment as Acting Deputy Collector soon. But it would not be easy to fill his place at Sanghar. Lambrick admitted that these were perhaps not the only choices. The requirement was for an officer with a good knowledge of the people and personnel in the area.<sup>52</sup>

On 28 September, Lambrick felt that Shah Nawaz Pirzada, ‘the fire brand lawyer poet of Nawabshah,’ had many of the qualities required for the job. He was very keen to work and had asked Lambrick when he was Additional District Magistrate, Nawabshah and Tharparkar, for employment on a job of this type. Lambrick felt that Dermont Campbell Barty and John Jenner<sup>53</sup> could ‘manage him, and keep his brilliant energy in the right channels, though he would be striving, being the man he is, to put up the backs of half the people he has to deal with!’ On 30

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., para 34.

<sup>51</sup> H. T. Lambrick, an ICS officer, earlier posted as Secretary to Governor Dow and during the Hur insurgency as Additional District Magistrate for Nawabshah and Tharparkar districts. Highly regarded for his dedication and efficiency, he was an academic, having written four books and several articles on historical aspects of Sind.

<sup>52</sup> NDC – S 213, No 5 of 10, File No. SH 6(A), Part I. Subject: Miscellaneous Law (official D.O.) with Civil Adviser M.L. and Special Commissioner on Subjects for which there is no Special File, Hyderabad, 27 September 1942. From Lambrick to Barty, DM, p. 78.

<sup>53</sup> Barty, Secretary to Governor Sind and Jenner, an officer of the elite IP cadre, was the District SP at Tharparkar.

September, Jenner informed Barty that he did not know Pirzada; however, he thought that 'Yusufani would be quite useful.'<sup>54</sup>

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1942, Lambrick had made up his mind on the issue. Having consulted Jenner and finding that he did not know Pirzada well, he also decided to talk to Peter Cargill<sup>55</sup> about it and both of them agreed that Pirzada was unreliable 'in so far as he can't keep his mouth shut.' Moreover, there was a realization, as Barty had suggested, that Pirzada would irritate people. Another problem was that he was too old for such an active job. The essence was that Lambrick was not in favour of his selection.<sup>56</sup>

### **1942-43: factors aggravating intelligence gathering by the CID that made it ineffective**

According to Wisal,<sup>57</sup> the task of collecting advance information 'was made difficult by the notorious police officials who were spreading vile rumours to damage the reputation of the Pir and his followers.'<sup>58</sup> Another problem was the 'inaccuracy of the maps of Sind.' This created severe complications and therefore they 'had to spend considerable effort in producing maps of the Nara area from the air photographs for the troops operating in that area.'<sup>59</sup>

At a conference held on 14 November 1942, comprising military and police officers and zamindars, the zamindars were asked to state why success had not been achieved in the operations against the Hurs. One reason was that informers were either not being paid or that the payment made was quite late. This had discouraged the informers. It was decided

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<sup>54</sup> NDC – S 213, op. cit., p. 79

<sup>55</sup> Cargill, an ICS officer was Deputy Sub Martial Law Administrator working in HQ ML at Hyderabad and tasked, along with DIGP Chettle and DIGP Frederick Young, with the formulation of a strong case for hanging of Pir Sibghatullah, the Pir Pagaro.

<sup>56</sup> NDC – S 213, op. cit., p. 9, Hyderabad, 28 September 1942, from Lambrick to Barty, DM .

<sup>57</sup> Captain Wisal Muhammad Khan hailed from Mardan, was posted in the military intelligence section during the Hur insurgency, 1942 and 1943, and retired as Major General some decades after the creation of Pakistan.

<sup>58</sup> Major General (Retired) Wisal Muhammad Khan, *Sind Quarterly*, Vol VIII, 1980, No. 2, pp 34 to 37, 'Hur Operations in Sindh, Martial Law -1942 '(Part II), p 35.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

that informers should always be paid as quickly as possible for useful information. So far this has not been done.<sup>60</sup>

In his reference to the Martial Law authorities that was incorporated in the Report of Operations, Frederick Young<sup>61</sup> had emphasized that it was necessary 'to bring home the necessity for the authorities,' wherever M.L. was declared, 'of avoiding entirely basing their activities, except for the first few weeks, on Gestapo Methods.' Indirectly, Young acknowledged the fact that the collection of intelligence by the military authorities during the ML period was in the mode of the rough, crude, oppressive and repressive techniques.<sup>62</sup>

On 12 March 1943, in a letter to Lambrick, the DM Nawabshah<sup>63</sup> stated that the CID, despite all out efforts on their part, as well as the administration's intelligence system did not function successfully. According to him, 'the main reason for this was originally fear, but later lack of co- operation from most zamindars and complete indifference by certain others.' Most of the zamindars of eastern Sind were completely indifferent to the requirements of the administration. Thus, for the Sind CID, an important lesson was that despite the induction of competent and hard working officers, success in field operations required solid public support and tangible cooperation.

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<sup>60</sup> LP 25, Notes of Conference held of Military and Police Officers and Zamindars at Shadadpur on 14-11-1942, pp. 289, 290.

<sup>61</sup> Frederick Young, I.P., was DIGP in Bhopal State and was especially imported to Sind during the martial law period, 1942-43, with a secret mission to crush the Hurs and foist a hanging case on the Pir Pagaro, which he, in collaboration with other ICS and IP officers, accomplished after blatant and massive manipulations and violations of law, rules and procedures.

<sup>62</sup> LP 62, Report of Operations by the Upper Sind Force During Martial Law in Sind, p. 44, Annexure II. Report by F.S Young, CIE, IP, In Sindh Province Commencing From 1<sup>st</sup> June 1942.

<sup>63</sup> LP 71, p 9. 12<sup>th</sup> March 1943. From DM Nawabshah to H.T. Lambrick.