

Crime Ka

Simple, my dear Watson

BY IAPAS SEN

A CROUCHING figure sport-
ing a cap pulled down low
over the forehead. A long black
coat and dark glasses trail the sil-
houette in a dirty lit gait. The
deafening silence of the night
punctuated only by the faint stac-
cato of footsteps.

You have guessed it right. The
legendary sleuth, Sherlock
Holmes, or Hercule Poirot, on the
job.

Heavily fictionalised and
dramatised through cinema,
private detectives have always
evoked the layman's curiosity.
Notwithstanding the dangerous
encounters, close brushes with
death and unceasing action, it's
the master snooper who always
comes out victorious at the end
albeit being pitted against the
worst of crooks.

Thrillers apart, the real life
counterparts of these
fictionalised heroes may not be as
glamorous but their exploits are
as fascinating. After all, truth is
stranger than fiction.

Over the years, the scope of
private investigators have grown
to a point where they can
favourably be compared with
institutionalised investigative
agencies like the police or CBI.
The burgeoning tribe of private
investigators in Delhi testifies this
fact. Snooping on people and
even helping catch culprits,
private detectives today play an
indispensable role, especially, in
a cosmopolitan milieu where the
nature and complexity of cases
go beyond the scope of the
police. In fact, the large number
of difficult cases, many of which
involve prying into private lives of
people, solved by private
detectives would make even the
top cops of the country blush.

Says Ramesh C Madan,
director of Goliath Detectives and
the 1989-winner of the
'International Investigator of the
Year' award: "The complex
nature of modern living coupled
with the emergence of the
emancipated woman, marital
discord and strained conjugal
relationships have become very
common. A large number of
cases involve surveillance on the
spouse's activities. About 30
years ago we used to get hardly
one or two cases a month. Now
there are as many cases every
day."

A pioneer in private
investigation in the country,
Madan heads one of the largest
detective agencies with 16
offices throughout the country

where more than 500 sleuths,
including 130 women, are
engaged. Established in 1958,
Goliath Detectives today boasts
of a large clientele, many of
whom prefer to engage a private
investigator rather than seek the
help of the police.

Interestingly, the marital
infidelity constitutes 50 per cent
of the cases Madan handles.

This is followed by cases of
industrial espionage (20 per
cent), family disputes (10 per
cent) and legal matters (20 per
cent). In most of these cases, the
clients trust the private dick more
than the police.

Significantly, in criminal cases,
it is the accused party who
usually seeks the help of private
detectives for being wrongly
implicated in a crime.
Sometimes, of course, the victim
of crime or the aggrieved party
engages the services of private
investigators to expedite
investigation which the police
keep dragging for months.

Incidentally, Madan, a
self-taught investigator with 30
years of experience, has already
saved 26 persons from the
gallows, creating a world record
for a private detective. The first
Indian to become an
internationally certified detective,
Madan has been a member of
the Council of International
Detectives since the last two
decades.

Unlike the police, secrecy is the
password for private detectives.
Considering the sensitive nature
of the cases, the nature of the
problem and the relevant details
are kept absolutely confidential
as a cardinal rule.

Each centre has a chief
maintain the files and has sole
access to them. In Delhi, only
Madan and his younger brother
HC Madan, have access to the
files, prepared after a session
with the client. At the onset, the
client discusses his problem
behind closed doors with Madan
or his brother, the investigating
officers.

Subsequently, a case is
registered (akin to an FIR by the
police) and all the details are
recorded in the confidential file.
Next, a blueprint for the mode of
investigation is prepared and the
various tasks required in the
case are delegated to a team of
investigators. Each investigator
handles only a part of the entire
case and none of them have
knowledge of the case as a
whole. Thus, the investigator
sees only a part of the case,

unlike the police machinery
where the investigating officer
(IO) handles the whole case and
reports the findings to his boss.

The job of a private detective
involves various sophisticated
techniques which can make a
typical IO of Delhi Police turn
green with envy. This includes
tailing, interviewing,
fingerprinting, photographing or
even video-taping the
movements of a person. For
example, the photo-sniper can
clearly catch a subject from a
distance of one kilometer or even
more. Again, when required to
record the voice of an individual
without his knowledge, the
investigator carries a purse with
a false bottom which conceals a
highly sensitive recorder with a
microphone. Likewise,
investigator's person. Likewise,
telephone tapping gadgets are
also used to record conversation
of a person who needs to be
pryed upon.

With rising spate of crime and
growing domestic feud, private
detectives are often hired,
especially in big cities, for their
professional expertise. Not
without reason, Detective
agencies surprisingly have a high
rate of success. And clients,
most of whom belong to the
upper-middle class and above,
do not mind paying the high price
as long as the results come by.

to meet the detective at the
particular restaurant. After all,
seeking is believing. Things were
almost confirmed when the man
blew his top seeing his wife
seated at a table with the
stranger. When he drew a little
closer for the final encounter, he
discovered to his shock that the
woman had a startling
resemblance to his wife.

Suspicious laid to rest, the
executive managed to avert an
inevitable marital split. However,
he had to literally pay through his
nose for the services: A thousand
rupees a day (eight working
hours, that is) is the minimum
fee for shadowing a suspected
person!

Private detectives are
sometimes called to solve
murder cases too. Take the
sensational case of the
unclaimed trunk on a train at
New Delhi railway station.
Fearing a bomb, unnerved
passengers informed the police
of an unclaimed trunk on the
train. Railway police broke it
open and were shocked to
discover a dead body inside. The
autopsy revealed that the man
was stabbed to death. But
nothing more.

Clueless, the police summoned
Madan to solve the puzzle.
Forensic tests on the soles of the
shoes revealed traces of a
chemical on them. Also revealing

handed over to the police for the
necessary follow-up action. And
often, the credit goes to the
police alone, maintains Madan.
Despite being in the same
business of fighting crime, cops
and detectives often find
themselves at crossroads when
their evidences contradict each
other.

Take the case of Asha Ram
who was found murdered in a
well in Lakhaur village of
Saharanpur district of UP on
February 28, 1973. The police
arrested six people for whom
Ram worked as a servant. The
police established that these
persons murdered Ram as he
had turned against them in a
court case. Based on the police's
findings, the court sentenced all
the six persons to death.

It was at this point that Madan
and his team intervened. Madan
provided a clinching evidence
before the court and established
that the investigating officers had
connived with the real murderer.
The condemned convicts were
acquitted by the sessions judge.

Exciting and lucrative, the job of
a private detective is not without
its occupational hazards. At least
three attempts have been made
on Madan's life. Once, he had a
close shave when three bullets
punctured his chair in the office.
Fortunately, he had just got up to



Ramesh Madan at work with a powerful camera which can catch any object at a distance of one km

Take the case of a business
executive who suspected his wife
of infidelity, thanks to a
well-wishing friend who spotted
his wife at Connaught Place on a
motorbike with a stranger.

Enraged with the shocking news,
the man decided to initiate
divorce proceedings immediately.
But, again on the advice of his
friend, he decided to engage a
dick to get to the bottom of the
'affair'. But no results came even
after shadowing the woman for
two weeks.

Changing the course of
investigation, the owner of the
motorbike (traced from the
registration number of the
motorbike noted down by the
same friend) was trailed over the
next week. Finally, the sleuth put
on trail called up his boss
informing that the duo have been
spotted at a particular restaurant
in Connaught Place. The rate
husband was immediately
contacted on the phone and told

Was the dead man's false tooth.
It was made with a particular
metal which is used only by
dentists in Germany. Connecting
these two vital clues together,
Madan hypothesised that the victim
had been to Germany and was
probably an engineer in a
chemical factory located
somewhere along the route of
the train on which his body was
dumped.

Inquiries conducted in all the
chemical factories along the
train's route finally traced the
man to a factory in Bareilly. A
chemical engineer had failed to
report for duty a day after joining
work. Ultimately the killer was
 nabbed. The culprit had
suspected engineer's intentions
towards his wife.

The assistance can be
vice-versa too, as the detectives
take assistance from the police
too at times. But the former is
quite rare. When a case is
solved, it has to be eventually

pick up a book from the shelf.
"Risk is a part of our profession.
The deeper you get into a case,
greater the risk," says an untaxed
Madan.

But providential escapes are
rare. Madan always carries a
loaded gun, whether at home or
in office. His Vasant Vihar house
is practically impenetrable by
an intruder. A series of burglar
alarm network which operate
even when the power lines are
cut, takes care of everything.

It may not be long before many
unsolved cases would be handed
over to detective agencies for
unraveling their mystery. Armed
with more sophisticated gadgets,
professional expertise and an
investigative temper different
from the stereotyped methods
used by the police, private
detectives in India would soon
earn a reputation equal to their
counterparts in the developed
nations.

Blast Pays

ANIL SHARMA

WITHIN hours of the
Naya Bazar areetee
Police denied any possi-
bomb being the cause
aster. They declared that
case was the chemic-
and gas cylinder which
and brought down some
buildings while gutting
Even as the blast site v-
verted into a mound of
and dead bodies, the c-
sioner of police, MB Ka-
voned a press briefing
dismissed all suggestio-
was a terrorist attack ar-
intensely bomb was the
for the calamity that str-
Bazar. The inquiry to ac-
the reason for the blast
dered a day later. Clear-
police was not intereste-
ing out what the report
quarry had to say.

In spite of repeated asser-
by the police that the bl-
caused by a chemical d-
exploding in a tempo, or

