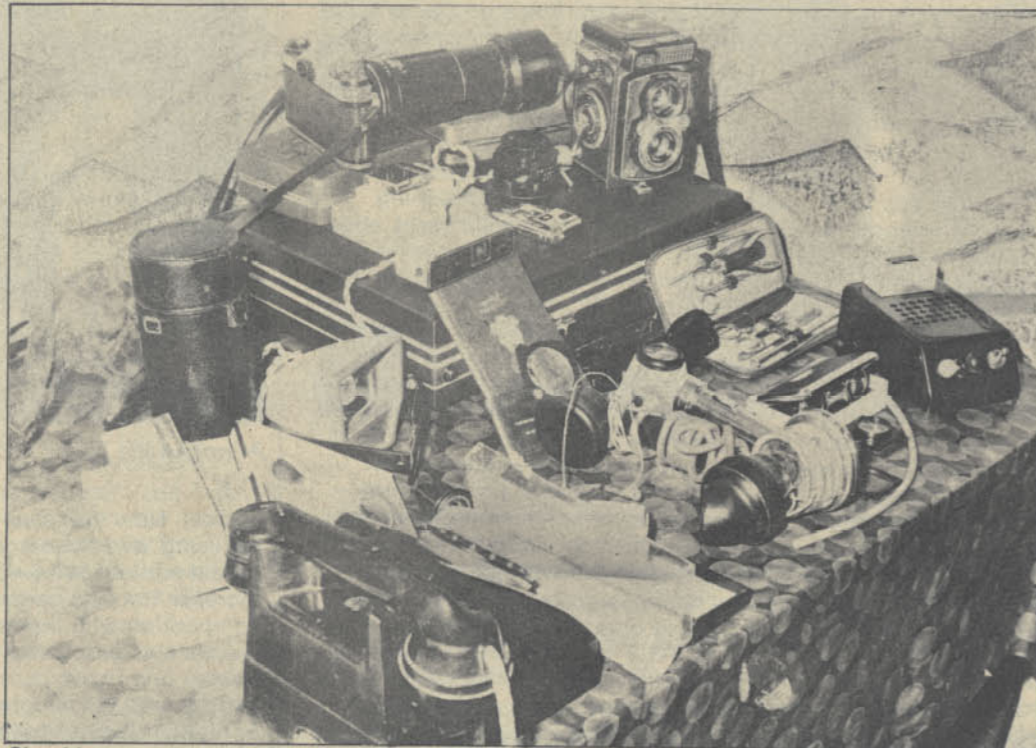


Delhi's detective agencies

# Sleuthing goes hi-tech



Sleuthing goes hi-tech: The briefcase tape recorder (looking just like a briefcase), tele-camera, photo-enlarger (looking like carlights) and wire-tapper (looking like a telephone receiver wrapped with wire) et al.

A detective is like a *girgit* (chameleon). Detectives like chameleons don't bite a carrot a la Karamchand when it is raw. Karate would be a word with better recall value in their minds. Real-life detectives are not exactly as they have been projected through the media over the years—they certainly are not demi-gods but are mortals like you and me but with that extra scoop of agility and imagination to handle tricky situations. And they are not always successful in all the cases they handle—they have their share of failures and successes and, it's the former that pushes them to do better the next time. They lead a life that is dangerous—but they love adventure that adds spice to their life.

What made these people choose a profession that was unheard of and also set up detective agencies to solve people's problems? *New Delhi* went around the Capital and interviewed the senior professionals in the field to find out what made these agencies tick.

**K**aramchand...our *desi* Sherlock Holmes streaked across the Doordarshan screen every week, nibbling at a carrot and solving murder mysteries with a finger scratching inside of his ear pinnae alternately. Children loved him and so did the grown-ups who craved to solve the whodunit puzzles. Karamchand and his prototypes created by film and fiction are a far cry from the real-life detectives who investigate cases that are not

## DELHI'S DETECTIVE AGENCIES

limited to gory murders alone but encompass much more. Majority of people have a very wrong picture of detectives sourced as it is from films and fiction. Before you utter the word 'detective' the familiar Hitchcockian associations float before the eyes—car chases, jet hoppings, indiscriminate shootouts, women falling over each other to offer themselves and in the end, without fail, the superdetective triumphs over the criminals...

For real-life professionals things are a trifle unplotted. He or she (well you do have a few women too in the fray) has to go through the nitty-gritty, the rough and tumble while probing into the cases. A client would not take 'no' for an answer. He wants results - information no matter how inaccessible it may be...

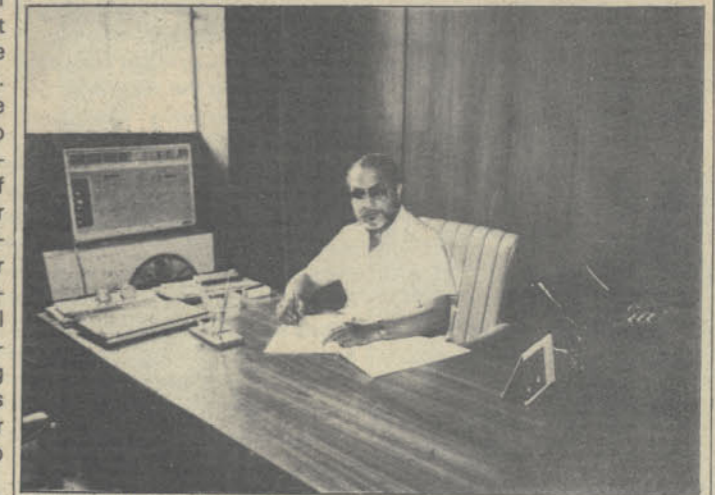
Would you need a Tarzan or an Einstein on the job? Fortunately the answer is 'no'. Says T. Ganguly of Globe Detective Agency: "Just the right amount of devotion, intelligence and rest is luck—being at the right place at the right time and, God and the faltering criminal party willing."

Private detective agencies have taken deep roots in the

Capital. This is indicative of the social complexities that are developing in the cosmopolitan cities of India. The usefulness of the private detective agencies is no longer limited to cross-checking of the credentials of the bridegrooms or brides for matrimonial alliances, collection of evidential material for divorce cases, petty crime investigations and commercial and industrial related enquiries, but they are getting more difficult assignments from private and public sector undertakings in addition to individuals.

Globe Detective Agency celebrated its silver jubilee two years back. It considers itself to be one of the doyens in the profession. Investigation Bureau and Private Detectives Bureau, another Delhi-based agency came into being in 1963. Goliath Detective Agency with its branches spread across the country has been operating since 1961.

Globe Detective Agency had an interesting beginning. Its founder and now Managing Director, Prem Kumar, had gone to USA for a course in civil engineering. The circumstances took such a turn that he received a wide exposure to the activities of the senior members of the Crime



A detective in his office.

Detection branch of Chicago police. He got so much interested in the profession that he gave up the engineering course and on returning to India started what turned out to be one of the first detective agencies in Delhi.

R.C. Madan who heads Goliath Detective Agency started working as a private detective in 1958. According to him, his father was the mayor of a city (now in Pakistan) and a lot of police officers used to visit his house and discuss police investigation et cetera which interested him in the profession. After his father's death, he was involved in a number of litigations with his relatives and in the course of his meetings with his advocate, he found an opportunity to collect evidence to substantiate a case. That was the beginning of his involvement in the profession. He started getting assignments from other advocates as well, to collect information for covering the missing links. The scope of his assignments widened and he was expected to collect evidence as well as check the characters of witnesses deposing in a criminal case.

Says T. Ganguly of Globe Detective Agency: "Initially we dealt with post-

matrimonial problems, individual divorce cases, enquiries about major thefts and burglaries but today the scene has changed and the agency mainly gets assignments from the corporate sector like the Tatas, Birlas, multinational organisations, industrial undertakings and commercial houses which constitute about 90 per cent of the work. Investigation and Private Detectives' Bureau started with all types of cases like matrimonial cases, rape cases and dowry deaths and commercial enquiries but at present the agency deals more with commercial intelligence than anything else.

T. Ganguly remembers those days when the concept of detective agency was not only unheard of but also somewhat unacceptable to the Indian environs and, people were not sure about the dependability of the detective agencies. "There was a tremendous amount of resistance to taking these people into confidence but things have changed today and private investigation as a profession has been established and their contribution is being noticed and appreciated in the society," says Ganguly and it holds true for all the agencies of repute.

Look again, it is not a cigarette lighter but a pocket-size 8 mm camera!

