

CHAPTER XII LAW AND ORDER AND JUSTICE

LAW AND ORDER

Consequent on the partition of India in 1947 the atmosphere in this district became surcharged with communal feeling and the situation was worsened with the influx of refugees into the district. Gradually normal conditions began to obtain and it was much later, in 1953, that trouble broke out between the Shias and the Sunnis in the Mahmudabad police circle. In 1956 the Muslims started an agitation which was answered by a counter-agitation by the Bhartiya Jan Sangh in connection with the book *Religious Leaders*. Since then no case of this type, leading to any disturbance, has been reported.

The anti-government activities of some political parties sometimes pose problems of law and order for the magistracy and district police. The civil disobedience movement launched by the Socialists in 1957 and the food agitation by them in 1958 kept the forces of law and order on their toes. No breach of the peace, however, occurred anywhere in this district. The most common forms which these agitations generally assume are demonstrations before the district courts attached to the collectorate, processions in the streets and public meetings. Strikes by students, bank employees, etc., also attracted the attention of the authorities, but these were generally peaceful and no untoward incident occurred.

The general elections of 1952 and 1957, both gigantic in nature, imposed a great strain on the resources of the district administration. In these elections, all the adult population of the district, rural as well as urban, went to the polls; the entire operation being conducted in an orderly and peaceful manner.

Although the communal situation has eased considerably since independence, varied and weighty problems still confront the administration, as in the changed circumstances the efforts of the district authorities have to be directed towards the all-round development of the people. An account of these efforts will be found in the relevant chapters of this volume.

Crime

Statement I (which is at the end of this chapter) shows the number of cognizable and non-cognizable crimes reported to the police, the cases sent to court and the results. These figures do not include cases under the security sections of the Criminal Procedure Code. The figures of only the important crimes will be found in Statement II (which is also at the end of this chapter).

Murders—The average number of murders committed in the district is about fifty per year, disputes relating to land and women accounting for most of them.

Dacoities—In order to stem the menace of active gangs of daccits and the use of unlicensed fire-arms, large-scale anti-dacoity operations have been launched from time to time.

Robberies—The number of robberies committed average about sixteen per year, 1953 being the year when the lowest number of robberies (eight) were committed, the highest number being committed in 1955, after which there has been a decrease which is attributed to the liquidation of two gangs of highway robbers in 1956 and a gang of educated robbers in 1957.

Riots—Riots generally take place in the rural areas, personal animosities and disputes over possession of land being primarily responsible for them. There has been no case of a political or industrial riot but there was a communal dacoity with rioting in the police circle of Pisawan in 1950 and a Shia-Sunni riot in the police circle of Mahmudabad in 1953. In 1959 a riot between the Hindus and the Muslims occurred in Laharpur on the occasion of Muharram.

Thefts—The average number of thefts committed is about 467 per year, *those of bicycles, cattle and agricultural produce being very common in the district. There were two cases of theft of accessories of motor vehicles, one in 1954 and the other in 1955.*

Burglaries—The average number of burglaries committed is about 608 per year, the highest number during the last thirteen years being 1,014 in 1949.

Kidnapping—There have not been many cases of kidnapping, the highest number from 1947 to 1957 being thirty-eight (in 1956). These figures do not indicate that any organized gang is engaged in the abduction of women from the district. Most of these cases appear to be the result of love affairs, and to this extent they are only technical offences.

Sex Crimes—The annual reports of the sessions courts of Sitapur show that in the beginning of 1956, fifteen cases of rape and two of unnatural offence were pending and nineteen new cases of rape were instituted in the court of the sessions judge in that year. In 1957, the number of cases of rape and unnatural offence instituted in the sessions court was four and two respectively.

ORGANISATION OF THE POLICE

Short History

As this district was a part of the old non-regulated province of Avadh, under the police system here, as in the rest of Avadh, there was a military corps for use as civil police as well as what was called the "frontier police".