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RGICS BRIEF

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Uttar Pradesh: A brief on rising crime rates

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This is the first brief in a series of 'Documenting Status of Uttar Pradesh'. The following brief is an attempt to analyse the reasons behind the rising crime rates in Uttar Pradesh.

Introduction:

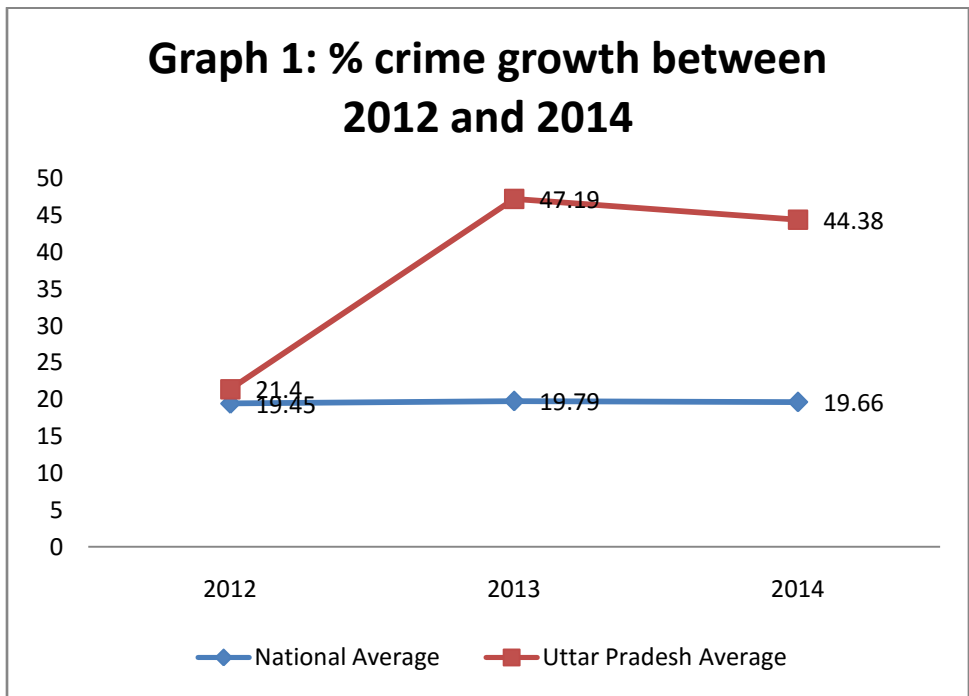
Uttar Pradesh is the fifth largest state in India and one of the most densely populated states with a density of 690 per sq km as per the census 2011 data. It has a population of 16,61,17,921 and contributes to 16.4% of the total population of India. One of the key problems faced by the state is an unprecedented increase in crime rates. Crime data recorded by the NCRB and Uttar Pradesh Police reveals that in 2014, Uttar Pradesh accounted for 36.43% of total crime registered across the country. The state's share in crime is twice its population share. The annual crime records of the last three years reveals that in 2012 the share of Uttar Pradesh in crime was 30.19%, which then increased to 32.28% in 2013 and 36.43% in 2014. In absolute number, the total crime registered under various laws has increased from 18.24 lakh in 2012 to 26.33 Lakh in 2014. During this period, incidents of crime have recorded a growth of 19.66% at national level. In contrast, Uttar Pradesh recorded an alarmingly high crime growth of 44.38% taking together all the incidents of crime registered under various laws. The tables given below give a snap shot of the increasing crime rates at the national level and in Uttar Pradesh

Table 1: Total Crime Recorded in India and Uttar Pradesh

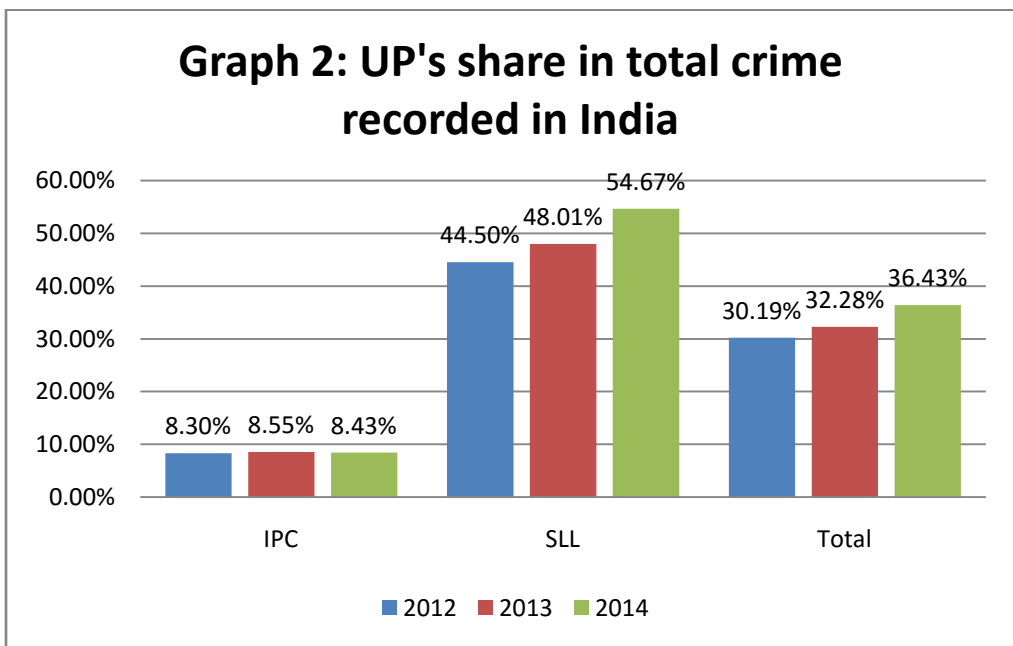
Crime Head	Crime Recorded in India			Crime Recorded in Uttar Pradesh		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Indian Penal Code (IPC)	23,87,188	26,47,722	28,51,563	1,98,093	2,26,445	2,40,475
Special and Local Laws (SLL)	36,54,371	39,92,656	43,77,630	16,26,067	19,16,743	23,93,330
Total	60,41,559	66,40,378	72,29,193	18,24,160	21,43,188	26,33,805

Source: NCRB

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Source: NCRB and UP-SCRB



Source: Compiled from NCRB and UPSCRB

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If one were to go by the media reportage it would seem that, the current government is unable not only to control crime, but is also party to several criminal activities in the state. There have been various reports in the media citing criminal cases in Uttar Pradesh in which political workers of ruling parties in Uttar Pradesh (SP in the State and BJP in the Centre) have been found to be involved. For example, many senior leaders including MPs, MLAs and ministers have attempted to instigate violence on communal lines. Media reports have also revealed that many SP leaders and workers have been protecting people engaged in illicit crime such as mining.

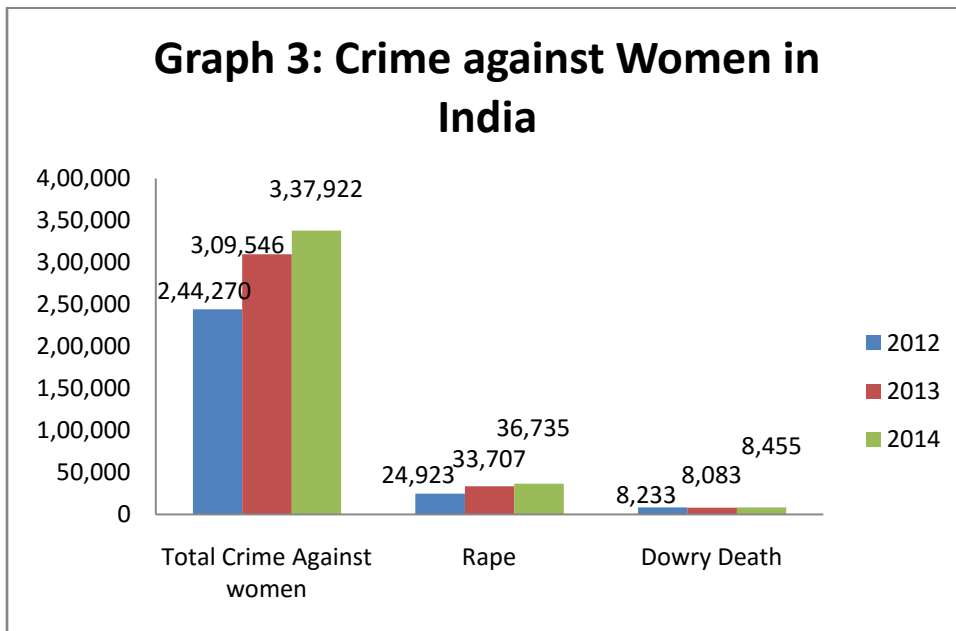
In a large, dense state crime becomes an unfortunate consequence however, the way crime rate has increased in the last few years in Uttar Pradesh raises serious questions on the prevailing law and order situation. It has been observed that there has been a spike in various kinds of crime that affect the poor and disadvantaged. Opposition political parties in the State alleged that the ruling parties (BJP and SP) have weakened police administration. The alarmingly high growth of crime rate may have any connection with the allegation of dismal law and order and involvement of political workers in crime. However, crime data reveals that the main the main targets of the criminals are people belonging to the weaker sections of the society, which includes children, women, dalits and minorities. This situation has made life of these disadvantaged groups insecure. In other words, the majority of people (includes of disadvantaged groups and communities) are victimized by the current fear of crime and criminals. Despite such absolute chaos and absent of rule of law, the representatives of the state government have been ignoring it. This brief attempts to analyse the reasons behind the rising crime rate in Uttar Pradesh.

1. Crime against Women:

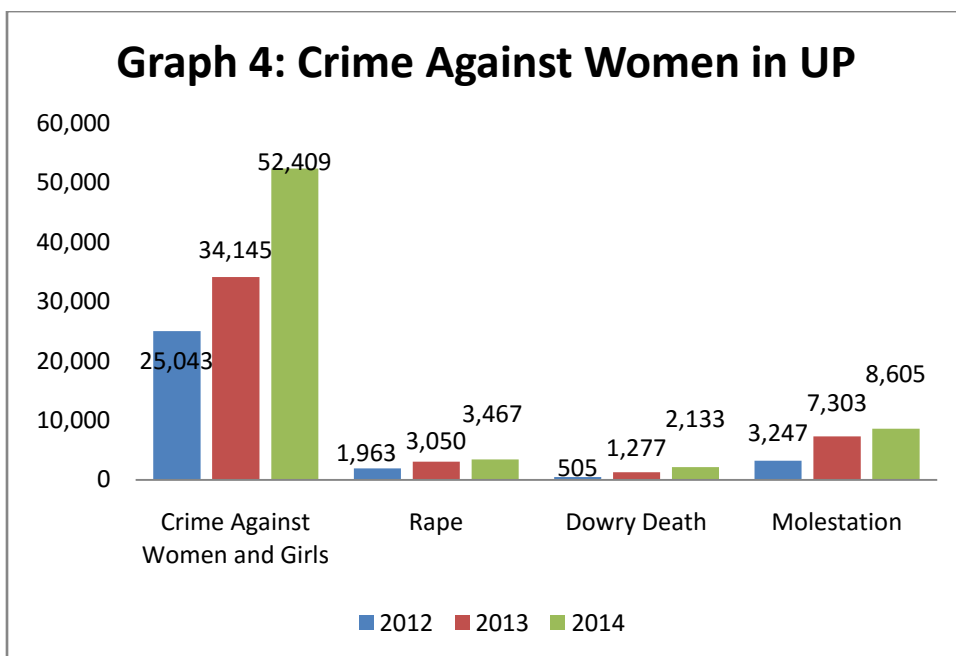
As mentioned earlier, women are one of the prime targets for criminals and crime against women is showing a steady increase. The total crime against women in the state has increased from 25,043 in 2012 to 52,409 in 2014; it has recorded a frightening increase of 109% during this period. During the same period, the national average increase in crime against women was recorded at 38%. Various media reports suggest that the sexual harassment both in rural and urban areas in UP has seen a high jump in the last three years. The available data only represents reported crime in police stations; but a large chunk of crime goes un-reported, especially in rural areas. It has been observed in the last few years, that the state police are reluctant to file cases of sexual harassment. In May 2014, two young girls from a village were gang raped and lynched by six people from a dominant caste group. The local police refused to take action because of in most of the cases the girls belong to low caste and the culprits to a dominant caste group. . There are many such cases, which go unreported. Moreover, an analysis published in *www.scroll.in*, reveals that the Uttar Pradesh government is fudging crime data to project a clean image.¹ According to the report, the reported crime by the state government does not match the ground realities and population share. Following graphs and table shows growth trend of crime against women in India and Uttar Pradesh.

¹ <http://scroll.in/article/713330/lies-and-statistics-how-indias-largest-state-fudges-crime-data>

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Source: NCRB



Source: SCRB, UP

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Table 2: Growth of Crime against Women

Crime	% growth between 2012 and 2014 (India)	% growth between 2012 and 2014 (UP)
Rape	47.39	76.60
Dowry Death	2.70	322.40
Molestation	-	165.00
Total Crime against women	38.34	109.30

Source: Compiled from NCRB and SCRB, UP

The above crime data reveals that the lawlessness in the state has made villages, towns and cities of the state highly insecure for women. The rise in crime against women in the state is much higher in comparison to the national average. In the last three years major crimes against women such as rape, molestation and dowry death has increased drastically. On an average, every day the UP police reports 144 incidents of crime against women. **Ten women in a day complain about rape and six women die out of dowry harassment.** It seems that the reluctance of police administration and ignorance of state government to tackle the increase in crime against women have further encouraged criminals and therefore, has made society more insecure for women. If this kind of situation continues to prevail it can prove to be detrimental not only for women but for the state as a whole. It will have a regressive impact on society which will lead to re-enforcement of patriarchal social and family relations, undermining women dignity, freedom and choice.

2. Crime against Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes:

The Scheduled Castes community accounts for more than 20% of the state's population. With this substantial number and history of Dalit mobilization in Uttar Pradesh, SCs are influential in politics, despite their poor socio-economic conditions. However, caste based suppression has also seen a rise in last three years. The total crime against SCs and STs has increased from 6,246 in 2012 to 8,090 in 2014. Incidents of rape against SC/ST women have also seen horrible increase from 287 in 2012 to 459 in 2014 (an increase of 60%).

Table 3: Crime against SCs and STs in Uttar Pradesh

Crime	2012	2013	2014	% growth between 2012 and 2014
Rape of SCs and STs women	287	393	459	59.9
Total Crime Against SC/STs	6246	7103	8090	29.5

Source: SCRB, UP

Ever since the Samajwadi Party government has come to power in Uttar Pradesh, it has been indicated that a certain community is becoming more powerful. Media have been highlighting various cases of unjustified

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nepotism and favor for Yadav officials in government jobs including police. According to a report published by times of India, Yadav constitutes 35% of UP's population and dominates 1,527 police station across the state. In Lucknow, 50% cops are Yadav². According to a report published in *www.thequint.com*, "if a Yadav is accused of a crime in an area where a Yadav is the SHO or the SP, he's seen to be walking into a safe-house, not a police station. Caste-based postings and promotions are an unwritten rule. Police personnel who vote their favoured party to power believe it is their 'haq' (their right) to get precedence over others³." Political support for dominant community has led to high level of caste based suppression and oppression in the state. In 2014, total 266 incidents riots to harass people belonging to SC and ST community by non-SC/ST community were reported across the state. Most of the mob violence occurred in Lucknow and Agra police zone.

3. Crime against Children:

Uttar Pradesh accounts for 17.2% of total incidents of crime against children reported in India. In the last three years, crime against children has also recorded a high jump. The total incidents of crime against children have increased from 6,033 in 2012 to 14,835 in 2014 (increased by 146%). Incidents of rape, kidnapping and abduction have also seen a sharp increase in last three years.

Table 4: Crime against Children in Uttar Pradesh

Crime	2012	2013	2014	% growth between 2012 and 2014
Total Crime Against Children	6033	9857	14835	145.9
Rape	1040	1381	1538	47.9
Kidnapping and Abduction	4239	6002	5875	38.6

Source: SCRB, UP

4. Communal Incidents:

In last three years, as many as 535 incidents of communal conflict/incidents have been reported in Uttar Pradesh leading to 125 deaths and 1,153 injuries. It accounts for the highest number of communal incidents in the country. Last 2-3 years have seen clear attempts of polarizing people on communal line by politicians from various political parties. For BJP and RSS, Uttar Pradesh has become an experimental ground to conceptualize and initiate messages and actions of communal hatred. Various BJP and RSS leaders have been arrested for their active role in communal riots in different parts of the state. Communal forces in Uttar Pradesh have tightened their grip in rural and urban parts of UP. Most of the communally charged issues in last three years

² <http://www.thequint.com/deqoded/2015/09/19/deqoded-why-even-god-cant-stop-the-lawlessness-in-uttar-pradesh>

³ <http://www.thequint.com/deqoded/2015/09/19/deqoded-why-even-god-cant-stop-the-lawlessness-in-uttar-pradesh>

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were experimented upon and executed in the state such as Love Jihad, Cow Slaughter, Beef Ban and Ghar Wapasi. The SP government of the state has been accused of being lax and lenient of those who are attempting to divide the society on communal lines and not taking action to decrease cases of communal violence. Moreover, many Muslim leaders of SP have been instigating communal tension by giving communally charged public statements.

Table 5: Number of Communal Incidents, Person Killed/Injured therein

Name of State	2013			2014			2015			JANUARY, 2016		
	Incidents	Killed	Injured	Incidents	Killed	Injured	Incidents	Killed	Injured	Incidents	Killed	Injured
Uttar Pradesh	247	77	360	133	26	374	155	22	419	12	1	64
India (total)	823	133	2269	644	95	1921	751	97	2264	59	6	233

Source: Rajya Sabha: Unstarred Question No. 46, Answered on 24th February 2016,
Available at: <http://164.100.47.5/qsearch/QResult.aspx>

4.1 Factoring Communalism:

There are gaps and discrepancies in the documentation of crime related data. Therefore, most of the time, actual communal incidents are under-reported. In 2014, the UP police reported as many as 6,438 incidents of riots in the state. However, the government has reported that only 155 incidents of the six thousand odd were communal in nature. It seems very un-realistic, as many other non-government data shows that occurrence of such incidents are more frequent in the state. An investigation of police records in UP by the Indian Express found that in just 10 weeks period (from 16 May to 25 July 2014) as many as 605 communal clashes took place⁴. The Indian Express Team found that “one third of these communal clashes took place in or on the fringes of — 12 assembly constituencies that were scheduled to go to by- polls over the next few months.” Number of communal incidents in major districts in different regions reported by the Indian Express is as follows:

⁴ <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/uttar-pradesh/express-investigation-part-i-over-600-communal-incidents-in-up-since-its-results-60-near-by-poll-seats/>

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Table 6: Communal Incidents Reported by Local Police (16 May to 25 July 2014)

Region	District	Incidents
Awadh	Lucknow	10
	Unnao	22
	Kanpur	16
	Barabanki	5
Western UP	Muzaffarnagar	47
	Shamli	30
	Meerut	30
	Moradabad	30
	Sambhal	30
	Bulandsahar	15
	Saharanpur	15
	Gaziabad	13
	Bagpat	10
	Rampur	10
	Amroha	29
Bundelkhand	Hamirpur	3
	Mahoba	3
Terai	Bahraich	10
	Balrampur	8
	Kheri	8
	Sravasti	4
Eastern UP	Varansi	5
	Pratapgarh	5
	Fatehpur	2
	Kaushambi	2
	Mirzapur	2

Source: Indian Express, 9 August 2014

The investigation report of the Indian Express found that most of issues leading to communal clashes were construction activities involving Masjids, Madrasas and graveyards and use of loudspeakers for prayers. It also found that other issues such as land dispute, alleged incidents of cow slaughter, alleged incidents of elopement and eve teasing or harassment involving men and women of different communities led to communal clashes in many places. Most of these incidents were small but effective enough to create fear in the society. Dr. Badri Narayan (2014) writes that engineering small-scale communal conflict is a strategy of religious fundamental political groups to maintain a momentum of communal hatred. It helps them to plan large-scale riots over a long period of time but also help them to gain political advantages.

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4.2 Western UP: Hot Bed of Communal Hatred and Violence

Western Uttar Pradesh, which includes districts such as Muzaffarnagar, Shamli, Meerut, Moradabad, Sambhal, Bulandsahar, Saharanur, Gaziabad, Bagpat, Rampur and Amroha is still haunted by the bitter memories of the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riot. The riot resulted in large scale death, injuries and displacement in villages of western UP. Even after more than two years, law and order could not be restored in this part of the state. It contributes to most of the communal clashes in the state. According to the Indian Express investigation, 259 out of total 605 incidents of communal clashes between 16 May and 25 July 2014, registered in police records of Uttar Pradesh took place in western UP alone. High-level frequencies of communal clashes in western UP keeps hatred alive through the memories of 2013 riots and works as a catalyst to further destroy inter-community bonding.

Historically the Jat community has dominated Western UP, as they control land and other natural resources. Muslims also have a substantial population of western UP, and were initially close allies of the Jats. Surprisingly, both of these communities are now parties in most of communal incidents in this part of the state. Mishra (2016) analyzes this tension between two major communities from economical and political perspective. According to him, over the years, Muslims in the region gained remarkably both in the sector of political representation and economic empowerment. Where as, Jats have not been doing well because of farm related issues such as crop failures, decrease in land holding and others. It has now changed the power dynamics between these two communities that has resulted into communal tension.

The persisting inter-community tension in the western Uttar Pradesh has provided space for religious fundamental groups and political parties to mobilize people around their religion. The BJP, RSS and other affiliates of Sangh Pariwar have been actively engaged in such activities in this region for many years. Politically aspiring upper caste Hindu communities found it suitable to re-assert their dominance. The involvement of Caste based Panchayats in western UP and parts of Haryana in such activities indicate that traditionally dominant communities in the region are desperate to get back their social, political and economic hold in the region. Mahapanchayats organized in Muzaffarnagar set the stage for 2013 riot; similarly, the media have reported various cases in last few years, where caste Panchayats played an active role in communalizing issues of law and order.

In last 2-3 years, BJP, RSS and other affiliates of Sangh Parwar were seen actively fueling communal issues in the region. Various leaders and workers of BJP and Sangh Pariwar are accused in court of law for their involvement in various communal clashes such as Muzaffarnagar riot, Shamli riot, Dadri lynching, love jihad in Meerut, forceful conversion in Agra in the name of Ghar Wapsi and many more. Moreover, BJP leaders such as Sangeet Som and Aditya Nath have been booked several times for hate speeches. It is the Sangh Pariwar which has made western UP the focal point of communal hatred by raising issues of Love Jihad, Cow Slaughtering and Ghar Wapsi. In a press conference, a leader of RSS announced that the Western UP is the first region in the country, where RSS has its Sakha in each Nyay Panchayat. According to the RSS spokesperson, it

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2015-16 alone, the RSS has started 673 Sakhas in Western Uttar Pradesh⁵. It indicates that the Sangh Pariwar is effectively using the community tension to spread its roots in the region.

Apart from RSS, Western UP has also been witnessing higher visibility of Hindu extremist groups who share ideas and propaganda of Sangh Pariwar. Danish Raza (2015) in his journalistic investigation found as many as nine potentially active fundamentalist groups in the region. Interestingly, his inquiry found that various current and former leaders and members of BJP, VHP and RSS founded all of these groups. These groups recruit young boys in the age group of 12-30 years for their activities and extensively use social media such as whatsapp, facebook and twitter to propagate their messages. These groups are- Hindu Kranti Dal, Rashtravadi Pratap Sena, Samadhan Sena, Hindu Shakti Dal, Krishna Gau Raksha Dal, Hindu Yuva Vahini, Akhil Bhartiya Hindu Ekta Dal, Akhand Hindustan Morcha and Hindu Swabhimani Sangh.

These groups disassociate themselves from the Sangh Pariwar, but it has been observed that these groups have many similarities with the Sangh Pariwar in terms of ideology and functioning. Activities of these groups consists largely of retailing of propaganda conceptualized by the Sangh Pariwar such as Love Jihad, Cow Protection, Ghar Wapasi, Increasing Muslim Population and hatred against Muslims.

5. Illegal Mining:

Illegal mining of mineral and sand is one of the largest illicit organized businesses that have flourished over the years in Uttar Pradesh. Illegal sand mining in itself is huge and according to an estimate, it has yearly business of more than Rs. 10,000 crore across the country. In 2013, 26 District Magistrates of Uttar Pradesh wrote to the state government complaining that this illicit economy has been in operation with support of the police and mining department officers⁶. In their submission to the government, these officers indicated that the mining mafias have also support of ruling party MLAs and MPs that makes difficult to take action against them. According to these officers districts that are worst hit in Uttar Pradesh are Gonda, Bahraich, Sitapur, Barabanki, Chitrakoot, Banda, Jhansi, Hamirpur, Sonbhadar, Jalaun, Allahabad, Bijnore, Saharanpur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Mirzapur, Gorakhpur and Kushinagar. However, it seems that the SP government seems to have made up its mind not to take action against mining mafia in Uttar Pradesh. The case of young IAS officer Durga Shakti Nagpal is the best example to understand SP government commitment to protect sand mafias in Uttar Pradesh. In 2013, as a sub-divisional magistrate, the young officer in NOIDA decided to take on might of sand mafias. From February to July 2013, in collaboration with the Noida Police, she registered 66 FIRs, arrested 104 people and seized 81 vehicles engaged in illegal mining in her district⁷. However, instead of supporting her, the state government suspended her on false charges of allegedly inciting communal tension in a village of Noida.

⁵ <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/meerut/West-UP-becomes-first-region-in-country-with-an-RSS-shakha-in-every-nyay-panchayat-area/articleshow/51431426.cms>

⁶ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/lucknow/illegal-sand-mining-dms-letters-to-govt-say-it-all/story-Yv7os70T2mIFJO5Fabq8uJ.html>

⁷ <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/durga-shakti-nagpal-suspended-ias-officer-uttar-pradesh-akhilesh-yadav/1/298814.html>

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Table 7: Cases of Illegal Mining and Revenue Recovered in Uttar Pradesh

Year	No of Cases	Amount Recovered (in crore)
2006-07	5120	4.33
2007-08	4656	4.7
2008-09	3874	5.0
2009-10	5472	8.48
2010-11	6234	13.77
2011-12	6713	16.68
2012-13	9708	31.94
2013-14	8612	29.78
2014-15	9920	25.27
2015-16 (Up to January 2016)	10016	29.54

Source: Rajya Sabha Q.N. 2183, 16.3.2016 and <http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/murder-karun-misra-nine-other-journalists-reveals-rising-danger-41289>

Despite the political protection to mining mafias in Uttar Pradesh and allegation of under reporting of crime, the data shows that the reporting of cases of illegal mining have gone up in last four years. **The cases of illegal mining in the state have increased from 6,713 in 2011-12 to 10,016 in 2015-16 (an increase of 49.20%).**

Illegal mining of other minerals is also rampant in Uttar Pradesh. The following data shows that cases of illegal mining of major and minor minerals have sharply increased in the state from just 4,708 cases in 2011-12 to 10,402 cases in 2014-15. **Uttar Pradesh accounts for around 11% of total illegal mining cases of minerals in India. Five years ago in 2011-12 UP had shared only 5% of such cases in India.**

Table 8: Illegal Mining Cases for Major and Minor Minerals

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Uttar Pradesh	4,708	3,266	6,777	10,402
India Total	94,604	98,597	8,8689	97,149
Total Share of UP in Illegal mining of minerals	4.98%	3.31%	7.64%	10.71%

Source: Rajya Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 2032, Answered on 16th December 2015

Illegal sand mining in western Uttar Pradesh along the Yamuna and Hindon riverbanks has been highlighted in the last few years. According to a report published in Frontline on August 7, 2015, the sand mined from Hindon river is wet and used for brick kilns, sand mined from Yamuna goes to hundreds of construction projects in NCR. According to the report, it feeds nearly 330 construction sites in Noida, 200 construction sites in

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Gurgaon, 80 in Ghaziabad and 100 to 150 in Delhi⁸. Activists voicing against illegal mining have been arguing that these construction projects have close link with illegal sand mining in western Uttar Pradesh. According to Dushyant Naagar, activist working against illegal mining in NCR said, “If illegal sand mining is stopped in the Yamuna, then construction projects in the NCR too will stop. There is supply because there is demand.”⁹ The Supreme Court in its order in 2012 directed all state government to regulate sand mining and issue licenses of mining after conducting environmental impact assessment. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has been following the Supreme Court ruling but the illegal mining continues to flourish with the help of strong nexus between politicians, bureaucrats and builders.

Unregulated sand mining has serious impacts on environment, ecosystem and society. Highlighting environmental impacts of illegal sand mining the Supreme Court in its order in February 2012 observed that the sand mining might have serious environmental impact on ephemeral, seasonal and perennial rivers and riverbeds. It may have an adverse affect on bio-diversity as well. It may also lead to bed degradation and sedimentation having a negative effect on the aquatic life¹⁰. It seems that the UP government has not taken SC’s observation seriously. As a result, rampant illegal mining on the bank of Yamuna has created several social and environmental threats. According to experts, the massive mining in the NCR has resulted in “the Yamuna shifting its course by 500 meters and posing a threat to flood embankments in Noida¹¹.” In last four years, the alarming increase in number of illegal mining of major and minor minerals in Uttar Pradesh reveals that the nexus of builders, bureaucrats and politicians responsible for this illicit crime has been protected and strengthened.

Conclusion:

The exceptionally high growth of crime rates in last four years in Uttar Pradesh has adversely affected society and social relations. The spike in communal clashes and spread of misinformation about various communities has weakened inter-community peace and trust. It has also led to violent communal riots in various places. Similarly, high increase in crime against weak and disadvantaged communities and groups such as women, children, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and poor has created environment of fear amongst public. Data reveals that the crime against such weak and disadvantaged people and groups are on rise. This rise indicates the law and order situation in the UP is in dismal and unable to protect victims and control crime. Most of the crime used to be urban centric, but in last few years, various cases of gang rape, mob lynching and rioting have also been reported from rural Uttar Pradesh. This penetration of crime in remote and relatively peaceful villages is a frightening trend. It will lead to oppression of the powerless in the society.

Data reveals that this sudden increase in crime rates leading to victimisation of poor and disadvantaged such as women, children, dalits, tribes and minority in the State has been recorded in last four years of Samajwadi Party government. There are allegations that the Samajwadi Party government has weakened law and order of the

⁸ <http://www.frontline.in/the-nation/rivers-no-more/article7447581.ece>

⁹ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/sand-mining-racket-fears-none-and-profits-everywhere/story-MLCV3aP0OtG2BlvmBoa13I.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.frontline.in/the-nation/rivers-no-more/article7447581.ece>

¹¹ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/sand-mining-racket-fears-none-and-profits-everywhere/story-MLCV3aP0OtG2BlvmBoa13I.html>

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State to provide benefits to its workers and leaders. Based on some of the crime data described in this document, it can be argued that the increased crime rates has benefited social and political elites in three different ways. First, the exceptional growth in crime against weak groups such as women, children, dalit and tribes is an assertion of dominant caste and class. Encouraging such crime will help in reinstating feudal power which victimises weak and disadvantaged in the society. Second, the increase in communal violence and spread of mis-information has helped many political parties to polarize people on religious lines. It is a tested technique to gain votes in elections. Third, increase in illicit crime such as mining generates black money. Despite several rulings of honorable Supreme Court and National Green Tribunal to curb illegal mining in the State, cases of illegal mining of major and minor minerals have seen unprecedented growth in last few years. Political opposition and media have been blaming state government for supporting strong nexus between politicians, bureaucrats and builders to continue illegal mining in the state, which generates huge wealth. The unexpected high growth of crime in Uttar Pradesh in last few years has oppressed many poor and weak people on one hand and provided political, economic and feudal benefits to elites on the other.

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