

## Even private detectives are investigating kidnapping and ransom cases

They mostly go unnoticed in the matrix of the world, but their presence can't be denied. Romanticized in the world of fiction as super sleuths like Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes, the private detective industry is as old as

### What to do when you get an extortion call?

The primary duty of Pune's Crime Branch is prevention and detection of crime. If you are threatened or get extortion calls, visit the Crime Branch office located in the premises of the Pune Police Commissionerate on Sadhu Vaswani Road, opposite Nucleus Mall.

You may also contact:  
Anti Extortion Cell - 26208299  
Crime Branch - 26121685 / 26208100

crime itself. Although in India we hardly get to see any one in lieu of the above mentioned names, their presence is quite strong. With a turnover of Rs 1000 crore a year, the private detective industry is booming in India. Earlier they were mostly engaged by private companies for employment verification, information and asset pilferage and industrial espionage. Then came the era of personal matters investigations like pre-marital and post-marital verification, extra marital affairs, love affairs, divorce cases etc. However in the last 6 - 7 years, private detectives are getting serious cases like kidnapping for ransom and murder. "In such cases people don't come directly to us. First, they go to the police and if they are unable to trace the kidnapped person, the family members approach us through mediators. We keep their identity a secret. We also assist the police in their investigation of such cases," said Rajesh Pandey, proprietor of Corporate Intelligence Services.

Pandey who is in this business since 1991, added, "Such cases are rising since the mid 1990s ever since cellphones arrived in our country. We also look at the motive of the person who approaches us

### Kidnapping for ransom in Pune:

Nature of crime	2007	2008	2009	2010 (Till March 31st)
Kidnapping cases	121	110	104	40
Kidnapping for ransom	7	6	4	0

for investigation of kidnapping or other cases."

Private detective agencies have their own set of informers across the society. They have a large network among students, housemaids, security guards, criminals, police and politicians. They also have paid informers who dine with professional gangsters.

"Kidnapping for ransom cases are few in Pune. Whenever we get such cases we take the help of the police because they have the authority. We have found that known people are involved in most cases of kidnapping for ransom. As far as charges for investigating such cases is concerned, I look at the client's profile," said Utpal Choudhary, detective and partner, Global Detective, which has 145 staff in Mumbai and Pune and 35 branches all over the country.

Every year private detectives get 5 - 8 cases of kidnapping for ransom for investigation, but the number of enquiries about such investigations is much higher. Industry insiders say the minimum charge would be Rs. two lakh if the person comes with zero information. Other charges are added if the detectives go out of the city and if they incur any other costs. But there are others who consider it a social service and don't charge anything. One of them is Suryakant Bhande-Patil, proprietor of Spy Sanket. Patil came into this business after his son was kidnapped and murdered. Patil said, "I don't speculate about the criminal before gathering solid information against him/her. But sometimes after gathering so much evidence, the police fail to prosecute them."

Patil added, "Private detectives are the last option and hope for the people. Most of them don't know that private detectives can also investigate such cases. I am a part time private investigator and have retired police officials in my team. Everyone does investigation free of cost as this is their passion. I have other business for myself, therefore I don't charge any fee but other agencies are doing it for a commercial purpose. This is their only way to earn bread and butter."