

CRIMINOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

The United Provinces Dossier

DR. MRIDUL SRIVASTAVA

SECRET

Location: United Provinces, British India

Date Range: 1937-1939

Subject: Anatomy of Colonial Bureaucracy

Secure the Range: The 1939 Bullet Recovery Protocol

THE SECURITY BREACH



Salvaging Undamaged Bullets

Tribesmen were collecting fired but practically undamaged .303 bullets from range stop butts.

Illicit Re-manufacturing

Tribal factories fitted salvaged bullets into empty cartridge cases to create functional ammunition.



THE RECOVERY PROTOCOL

Supervised "Lead Picking"

Lead collection must occur immediately after firing under the supervision of the firing party.



Mandatory Weight Records

All recovered lead must be weighed and recorded before being returned to Government Arsenals.

Personnel Restrictions

Indian contractors are banned from collection; range chowkidars must be verified ex-soldier.



*Copy of letter no. 26/7/39-Police, dated the 20th February, 1939, from the Under
Secretary to Government of India, to the Chief Secretary to Government of the
United Provinces*

SECRET

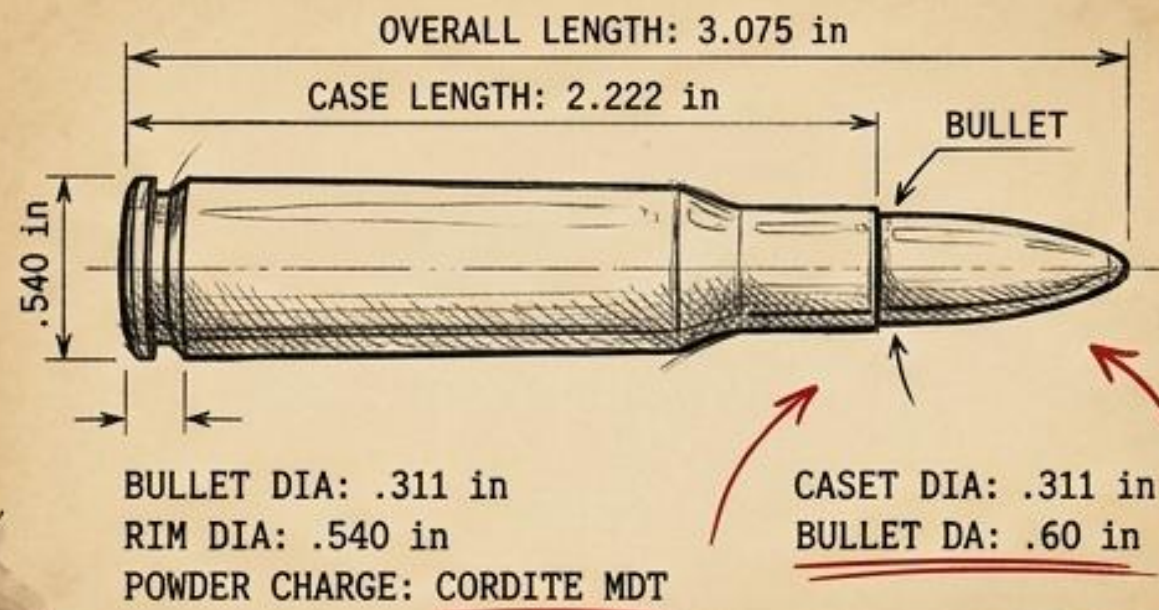
The United Provinces Dossier



Location: United Provinces, British India
Date Range: 1937-1939
Subject: Anatomy of Colonial Bureaucracy

The scale of administrative control

FILE 01 - BORDER THREATS



Editorial

DOCKET

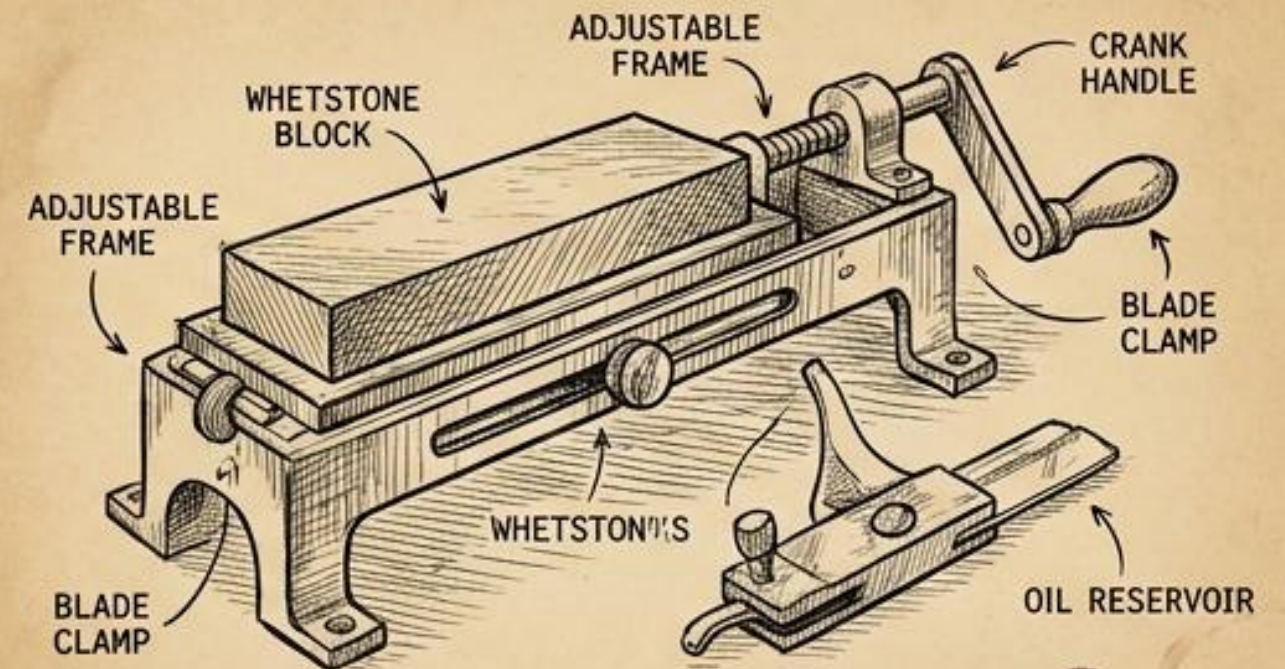
Tracking the illicit supply chain of Small Arms Ammunition to tribal territories (I939).

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INTELLIGENCE BUREAU

DECLASSIFIED
DATE: [REDACTED]

FILE 02 - PRISON RESOURCES



DOCKET

Granular, step-by-step technical maintenance of the 'San' razor sharpener across provincial jails (I937).

PRISON SERVICE

MAINTENANCE LOG

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ARCHIVE REF. 732/AA5

The 1939 ammunition leak directive

DECLASSIFIED
DATE: [REDACTED]

Copy of letter no. 26/7/99-Paliss, dated the 20th, February, 1939, from the Under Secretary to Government of India, in the Chief Secretary to Government of the United Provinces

SUBJECT: Measures to be adopted for controlling the supply of Small Arms Ammunition to the Tribesmen

I am directed to forward for the information of the Provincial Government a copy of the instructions, no. 44075/U.S.D.-2, dated the 2nd February, 1939, issued by the General Staff Branch on the subject mentioned above and to request that, if there is no objection, similar instructions may be issued to the armed forces under the control of the Provincial Government.

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

No. 192/VI-234-1939

JUDICIAL (Criminal) DEPARTMENT

Dated Lucknow, April 1, 1939

Copy, with a copy of the instruction forwarded to the Tribesmen

Copy, with a copy of the instruction forwarded to the Inspector General of Prisons, United Provinces, with the request that he will take necessary action for the issue of suitable instructions to all Superintendents of Jails, United Provinces, on the lines of these issued by the General Staff Branch for controlling the supply of Small Arms Ammunition to the tribesmen.

By order,
HARISH CHANDRA,
Secretary.

SECRET.

Copy of instructions no. 44075/U.S.D.S, dated the 2nd February, 1939, issued by the General Staff Branch

SUBJECT: Supply of Small Arms Ammunition to tribesmen.

1. It has come to notice that tribal ammunition manufacturers are able to purchase used, but practically undamaged, .303 bullets, which are collected from range stop butts and field firing ranges. These are made up again with empty .303 cartridges cases. As the tribal arms factories are incapable of manufacturing bullets, the collection of used bullets is their sole source of supply.

2. It is realized that this source of supply cannot be completely stopped, as it is impracticable to search field firing areas, or collect every bullet that is fired on ranges, but it is important to reduce the leakage as much as possible.

3. The attention of all unit commanders will be drawn to Small Arms Training, Volume I, Paragraph no. 1. India Weapons Training 1967, section 3, paragraph 37 (ii) "The collection of metal from the butts will be made daily under regimental arrangements, and disposed of as prescribed in Regulations for the equipment of the Army, Part I. All recovered lead is to be returned to Arsenals, and Indian contractors are not to be employed to collect it."

4. The following additional measures will be taken by unit commanders:
(i) Careful supervision of "lead picking" which must be done immediately after firing by the firing party and/or markers and not left to range chowkies. Lead recovered will be weighed and a record kept.

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Tribal ammunition factories can manufacture powder and cases, but lack the capability to cast the actual bullets.

Military range stop butts have become the primary source of perfectly intact .303 bullets for tribal re-use.

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DATE: [REDACTED]

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ARCHIVE REF. 732/AAS

The tribal ammunition leakage loop

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ARCHIVE COPY

STAGE 1: FIRING RANGE

British military units fire into range stop butts and field firing areas.



STAGE 2: SCAVENGING

Practically undamaged .303 bullets are illicitly collected from the dirt.



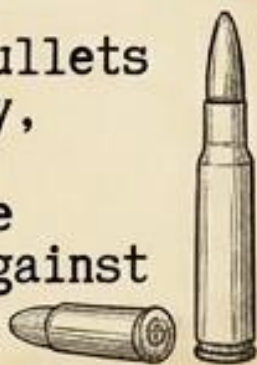
STAGE 3: MANUFACTURING LIMIT

Tribal arms factories use the salvaged metal; they are incapable of manufacturing raw bullets from scratch.



STAGE 4: RELOADING

The salvaged .303 bullets are mated with empty, re-primed cartridge cases to create live ammunition to use against colonial forces.



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MAP OVERLAY - INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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UNAVAILABLE

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DECLASSIFIED
DATE: [REDACTED]

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ARCHIVE REF. 732/AAS

The lead picking countermeasure protocol

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTERMEASURES (PARAGRAPH 4)

PERSONNEL

- Range chowkidars must be ex-soldiers.
- Must be strictly vetted by police for character.
- No Indian contractors permitted for collection.

PROCESS

- Supervision of lead picking must occur immediately after firing.
- Conducted directly by the firing party and markers.
- All salvaged metal returned directly to Arsenals.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Recovered lead is physically weighed.
- Records kept to verify a reasonable amount is collected per session.

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STRUCTURAL SECURITY DIAGRAM

REF: ORDER No. 26/I/99

APPROVED: COLONIAL STAFF

Delegating the macro threat to the micro manager

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Government of India -> Provincial Government (General Staff Branch)

Inspector General of Prisons, United Provinces
(May 3, 1939)

STAMP

(2)
CIRCULAR MEMO

No. ⁴²_{J-31-G.S.II} or 1939

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS,
UNITED PROVINCES

Dated Lucknow, May 3, 1939

Copy forwarded to all the Superintendents of Jails for information and guidance with the remark that Reserve Head Wardor should be made responsible to collect undamaged bullets. An account of the lead, etc., collected and disposed of should be kept.

An acknowledgment is requested.

H. M. SALAMAT ULLAH,

LIEUT.-COL., I.M.S.,

Inspector General of Prisons,

United Provinces.

The burden falls on the Reserve Head Warder, who is now personally responsible for collecting undamaged bullets and maintaining the strict accounting ledger.

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ARCHIVE COPY

Obsessive control over scarce resources

SENDER: H.M. Salamat Ullah, Inspector General of Prisons (Same author as the Ammunition directive).

SUBJECT: Maintenance and use of the 'San' (razor sharpener).

CONTEXT: Before disposable blades, straight razors were critical prison hygiene infrastructure. Maintaining the sharpening tool required a five-point technical directive sent to all Jail Superintendents.

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CIRCULAR MEMO,
No. 92C(19)PC of 1937

FROM
LIEUT. COL. H. M. SALAMAT ULLAH,
M.O. K.L.H., D.S.S.I., P.A.T.E., I.M.R.,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS,
UNITED PROVINCES.

TO
ALL SUPERINTENDENTS OF JAILS,
UNITED PROVINCES.

Dated Lucknow, October 23, 1937.

SUBJECT:— Maintenance and use of San

This office circular memo, no. 11 of 1935.
Has the honor to issue the following instructions for the maintenance and use of San.

(1) The San should be put on two straight pegs and seen by pulling leather straps whether it moves straight. If the San is straight then first hold the handle of razors in your right hand and put the blade of razor on San with the thumb of the other hand. Take care that the blade gets down from one end to the other. When one side gets clean the blade should be turned and cleaned in the same way. It should be sharpened on both sides slowly and lightly. The brick which is placed under the San should be held fast with both feet while the San is in motion.

(2) If the San gets black on edges the recer should be taken off and the San should be moved on the brick for a little while till it becomes bright.

(3) If the San becomes uneven remove the roller from the San and place it in the san either on an even plank or a stone equal to the circumference of the San. When the San sets right on the plank coat it by pouring a little cold water on it.

(4) If the San gets cracked put a hot iron "patti" in the cavity and put another hot iron "patti" over the cracked spot. The cracked space will join.

(5) If the edges of the San get spoiled put the San on pegs, move it slowly by putting a heated iron "patti" held along with the brick underneath. When the edges become even, cold water should be poured on San gently to cool it. Finally pour a brick underneath and move the San to clean its edges.

A copy of instructions in Urdu is also enclosed for guidance.
An acknowledgment is requested.

H. M. SALAMAT ULLAH,
Lieut. Col., I.M.R.,
Inspector General of Prisons,
United Provinces.

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The San maintenance diagnostic matrix

Condition (If)	Action (Then)	Tools Required
Uneven	Remove roller, place in sun on even plank/stone, cool with cold water.	Stone equal to circumference.
Cracked	Put hot iron patti in cavity, overlay second hot iron patti to join the cracked space.	Dual heated iron pattis.
Spoiled Edges	Put on pegs, move slowly with heated iron patti held against brick, pour cold water, move on brick to clean edges.	Pegs, heated iron patti, brick, cold water.

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The translation layer of colonial execution

(4) If the San gets cracked put rat hot iron " patti " in the San and place it in the san either on an even plank or a stone equal to the circumference of the San. When the San sets right on the plank cool it by pouring a little cold water on it.

(۳) اگر سان کا منہ خواب ہو جائے تو سان کو کھولنے پر چڑھا دو اور ایک مٹی دھری
اوپر کی گرم کر کے ایک اوست کے سپارے اوڑی کر کے سان کو چھڑ مگر وہ حیل رہے نہ سان کو
بہت دھڑکے سے کہنا چاہیئے۔ جب سان کا منہ ایک سا ہو جائے تو پالی ڈال کر سان کو
نہایتی تراو اور بعد کو ایک ایضت لگاؤ۔ سان چھڑ - جبکہ سان کا منہ بالکل صاف ہو جائے
پور کام کو ختم کر دو *

While the administrative officers operated and corresponded in formal English, the actual physical maintenance of prison infrastructure fell to local staff. The inclusion of the Urdu translation acknowledges the limits of English-only governance when mechanical execution is required.

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The unified mechanics of administrative control

CASE FILE:
ADMIN-CTRL

	1939 Ammunition Security	1937 San Maintenance
Primary Objective	Neutralize a macro-level military threat.	Extend the longevity of micro-level operational resources.
Target Audience	Unit Commanders and Reserve Head Warders.	Jail Superintendents and local maintenance staff.
Mechanism of Control	Strict audits, physical weighing of lead, and character vetting.	Exhaustive technical instruction and localized repair protocols.

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Paperwork as the ultimate technology of empire



The United Provinces dossier reveals a singular administrative truth: the colonial state made no procedural distinction between a stolen rifle bullet and a cracked whetstone. Both required memos, both required hierarchies, and both required strict accountability.

The true power of the administration was not just its military force, but its obsessive, all-encompassing capacity to manage every detail of existence through paper.

FILE CLOSED