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## Elementary, my dear Watson

If you are patient and observant and possess a spirit of adventure, you can make a career in sleuthing, reports **Aparna Harish**



Who doesn't like a good **detective** story, a tale of a crime solved, a mystery uncovered? And the people who crack those astonishingly difficult puzzles, the detectives, they become cult heroes of fiction — Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Miss Marple, Father Brown, or our very own Feluda.

Real life private eyes may not be as exciting as their fictional counterparts. But they are similar in that their help is normally sought in cases that are considered to be too delicate to get the police in. Private detectives can also be engaged to solve a case that harried policemen have no time to devote to.

"Crime is booming," says **Sanjay Singh**, proprietor of the Delhi-based **Indian Detective Agency**. And he is not joking. Today, there are hundreds of cases involving bank frauds and civil offences, false bio datas and misleading personal information. Cases of infidelity and other marital problems are also on the rise. Pramod Lodge, founder of the Calcutta-based **Spotlight Private Detective Agency**, points out that with the police unable to cope with the large number of civil cases, people are increasingly turning to the services of private **detective** agencies.

According to **Singh**, a private investigator is employed to solve:

- Domestic cases that involve checking the background of the prospective bride or groom, shadowing a spouse to check on extra-marital affairs, gathering evidence to help in getting custody of children in case of divorce, family disputes involving land and contested wills as well as cases of unnatural death.

- Corporate problems involving labour issues and pre-employment vetting.