



## Growing Responsibilities of Private Security in India: Challenges and Suggestions

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ABSTRACT

The private sector in India is vibrant and growing - accounting for a large share of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). The private security industry is one of the constituents of this sector. The industry is experiencing a period of rapid growth and with that responsibilities are also increasing. In spite of rapid growth with growing responsibilities over the last few years, the industry is facing a number of challenges. These challenges are lack of quality of man power, less use of technology and ability to acquire firearms. In this background the present paper tried to throw light on the role and responsibility of private security industry in India. The challenges faced by the private security industry are also discussed. Further it provides some suggestions to increase its future prospective.

**KEYWORDS**

Private Security, industry, responsibilities, challenges, firearms etc.

**Introduction**

The Indian markets were ruled by the government enterprises but the scene in 1990's Indian market changed as soon as the markets were opened for investments. This saw the rise of the Indian private sector companies, which prioritized customer's need and speedy service. The opening up of Indian economy has led to free inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) along with modern cutting edge technology, which increased the importance of private sector in Indian economy. The private sector is playing important role in generating employment, increasing quality of life, providing security to life and property and effected better higher education facilities especially in technical fields. The private security industry is one of the important constituents of private sector.

The private security gained importance during World War I and World War II due to fear of espionage and sabotage. The governments gave primary duties to security guards for protection of war goods, products, supplies, equipments and personnel (Hess, 2009). By the middle of the twentieth century, the private security encircled almost all the segments of the private security. The private security personnel started providing both proprietary and contracted security services to various businesses like factories, shopping malls, construction sites and home security. In 1960's private security born in India with hand full of players. Growth of private security and its responsibilities could be credited to growing urbanisation, mushrooming of shopping malls, self contained townships, frequent terror attacks, increasing insecurity, new infrastructure projects, growing need for security for movement of cash within the banking system and of course private security industry itself being a profitable business (FICCI). The concept of smart cities has also widen the scope of private security industry. The private security industry is one of the largest employers in India. According to Central Association of Private Security Industry (CAPSI) there are around 6.65 million private security personnel employed across the country as private security in India is 90% of manned guarded. According to Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Private Security Industry is estimated to be worth INR 22,000 crores and is likely to cross INR 40,000 crores by 2015. As figures above shows it has high growth rate. The importance to regulate private security also increased; in consideration to which Indian government brought the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005. Due to which the industry is shifting from unorganised sector to the organised sector with the pas-

sage of time. The industry is expected to adhere more to rules and regulations with the enactment of Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005 in states as well. The high growth potential and increase in organized play makes it an attractive market for both international as well as Indian players.

Maintenance of security and law and order in the community is being undertaken by police organisations, but in the recent times we are witnessing an increasing trend towards the use of privately funded bodies, commonly referred to as 'private security'(Nalla and Newman, 1990). Evolution of private security helps the industries in the proportionate share of major security firms and providing private security services etc. (Parfomak (2004). Private security is a very broad enterprise' (South, 1983). According to Upadhyaya (2011) most of the organizations utilizing the services of private security personnel (principal employers) have the attitude of total indifference towards the problems and concerns of private security personnel. One of the difficulties with private security is defining where it begins and where it ends (South, 1988). So, it's become very important to know the working of private security and the challenges they are facing while rendering their services. The next part of the paper tries to study the working and challenges of private security.

**Role and Responsibility of private Security**

The private security in India adopted the methodology of detect, observe and report. The security personnel don't need to make arrest, but have the authority to make a citizen's arrest, by requesting a police officer. The main duty of security guards is to enforce company rules and can act to protect lives and property for which they have given some sort of training. The main role and responsibilities of private security are:

- protect people and the property of his contracted clients;
- prevention of an incident/offense before has occurred; and
- observe and report during or after an incident/offense

The service provided by the private security personnel in an industry given by FICCI includes:

**Manned Guarding:** Providing guarding services in the client premises against the unauthorised access and guarding property against damage.

**Cash Services:** provided to the banks for safe transit of cash in the banking network and to large corporate and retail customers for collection of cash and valuables.

**Electronic Security Services:** includes services such as system integration, operations and maintenance of electronic security products in customer premises.

In giving these services, the private security industry in India is facing various challenges such as lack of manpower, lesser use of technology and duty hours etc which are discussed under next heading.

### Challenges Faced by Private Security Industry in India

The major odds which private security industry in India is facing are lack of quality of manpower, use of sub-optimal technology in work, high attrition rates and norms related to acquiring of firearms for protection.

#### 1) Lack of Quality Manpower.

As the reports shows that private security industry in India is mainly man guarded so the industry requires a considerable number of personnel to sustain its growth momentum. Majority of security guards are paid less than minimum wages due to which they get attracted to other jobs like cab drivers, electrician, painter, etc. This makes it difficult to attract and retain personnel. The industry customers always look for trained security personnel but several players ignore their training infrastructure. Mainly work force comes from less educated background and rural areas which is also one of the reasons for lack of quality man power.

#### 2) High Attrition Rates

Major causes in weakening the private security industry are poor benefits, almost no compensation packages, no proper insurance policies, improper understanding between public and private security and lack of development opportunities to grow.

#### 3) Less use of technology

As discussed earlier that private security industry in India is manpower intensive. Due to less availability of skilled manpower, mostly industry hires people to meet the basic demand of guarding entrances and exists. Many private security industries stay away from the use of technology due to higher investments for training and gadgets.

#### 4) Ability to acquire firearms

Firearms are the utmost need of security personnel who is providing security, especially if one is operating in cash services. Private security guard having firearm is always a requirement for safe transport of valuable items. But private security companies cannot get the licensed firearms due to which they have to rely on those who have got the licence to carry firearms.

#### 5) Duty Hours

A legal clause in labour act provides for eight hours of duty per day as normal duty hours and also puts limit on maximum overtime hours of work per day. But in private security industry, security personnel work more than 8 hours per day and even they don't have any specifications about overtime working hours. Majority of the security personnel have night duty.

Due to continuous night duty timings their health gets impacted quite adversely.

### 6) Regarding Leave

Most of the private security industries do not extend the benefits of various kinds of leaves to private security personnel which are extended to government employs under centre and states schemes. Even if provision of leaves is provided then also most of the personnel are not aware off due to low literacy rate.

### Suggestions

India has poor police citizen ratio and the ratio of private security guards to the police personnel is also increasing, the need of the hour is a security model which elegantly clarifies public private partnership for security. There is an opportunity to empower the private security in order to shoulder greater responsibilities along with the police. There are some suggestions which can help in solving the challenges faced by private security industry.

#### 1) Better training

There is need to open proper, recognized specialized security academies for providing advanced security training. The security training needs to be made mandatory because of advancement of technology and growing terror threats.

#### 2) Fixed Set of Standards

Private security industry is facing hindrance due lack of fixed set of standards. There is need to set fixed policies related to insurance of security personnel, proper compensation packages and minimum fixed wage rates which are major setbacks.

#### 3) Use of Latest Technology

Private security industry in India is lacking behind in use of latest technology as compared to private security industry in developed countries, even as India is developing at good growth rate so it's the demand of hour. The private security industry should produce skilled labour to handle latest gadgets for providing security.

#### 4) Amendment in Private Security Act, 2005

The private security industry in involved in variety of operations where armed guards are necessity like carrying cash, guarding jewellery showrooms, fuel stations, bank branches and hotels mainly after the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai. The Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005 has nothing defined about carrying of firearms by private security guards, the Arms Act, 1959, only allows individual applicants to hold arms licenses. So, private security industry is technically compelled to employ people who hold arms license in individual capacity. Further, firearms issued to individuals have restrictions in terms of territories in which they can be used. There is need to re-look into PSAR Act, 2005 and to explore the possibility of issuing arm licenses to private security industries.

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