

# Trace Evidence Crack a Suicide Proved Homicide: A Case Study

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## Abstract

Mobile crime scene investigating team plays an important role to sorting numerous important and sensational crimes in Rajasthan (India). It is important that the crime scene investigator recognize that physical evidence recovered from these scenes may extend well beyond the conveyance itself. The nature of the crime may give the investigator an idea of the type of evidence present. In the present paper, a sensational case in the history of Rajasthan Forensic Science, in which four members of a family were found, died at their residence. Primarily, police was under dilemma that the family members were committed suicide or the incident was manipulated by the criminal i.e. they registered the case under 174 CrPC.

During careful scientific observation of crime scene by the forensic team, it was advised to the Investigating Officer (I.O.) that it might possible homicidal rather than suicidal. On the direction of forensic scientist, the eldest son of family was arrested, which was also confirmed by laboratory examination and in postmortem report.

**Keywords:** Crime Scene; Toxicology; Suicide; Insecticide; Homicide

## Introduction

Crime-scene reconstruction is of value when reconstruction is started at the scene during the initial phases of the investigation, during the investigation, and during the adjudication process [1].

Oftentimes, evidence tells a story and helps an investigator re-create the crime scene and establish the sequence of events. If analyzed and interpreted properly, physical evidence is more reliable than testimonial evidence; testimonial evidence is more subjective in nature [2]. Physical evidence is objective and when documented, collected, and preserved properly may be the only way to reliably place or link someone with a crime scene. Physical evidence is therefore often referred to as the "silent witness" [2].

In the case of suspicious death the investigating officer/forensic connoisseur should find out the nature of death, which could be suicidal, homicidal or accidental as the silent witness. During investigation of a suspicious death case requires the greatest efforts on the part of the forensic expert who has visited the crime scene. At such crime scenes, it is generally best of the worst, a homicide. Even if, circumstances give the overwhelming appearances of suicide or accident, the investigation should be conducted in details as much as possible [3,4]. Some times culprits try to convert the direction of investigation.

In the present case, neither any special physical evidence nor any useful information was observed during the first sight of inspection, but a thorough examination of crime scene helps solve the case as exemplified. By thorough examination at scene of crime by our team few amount of liquid in the pots and presence of number of medicines at the spot indirectly suggest might have been used to homicide the victims and his family.

## Case History

Superintendent of Police called Mobile Forensic Team on dated 13/09/08 at Nivaana village, District Jaipur (Rural) pertaining a suspected suicide case of a person with his wife and two young sons were found dead in their residence at village Nivaana (Jaipur District). A case of suicide was registered under Marg No. 14/08, U/S 174 Cr.PC dated 13/09/08 in Police Station Govindgarh (Jaipur Rural).

## Observations at Spot

The forensic expert searched the crime scene thoroughly for the clue materials and following observations were made:

1. **About the spot:** Some steel utensils were found in a room of the house, two of them contain food material (*Rabdee*). One of them having characteristics smell of insecticide. No vomit stains were detected in the premises of the house. No wrapper/container of any insecticide or any poisonous material was detected. In one room of the house, significant amount of strips of medicines,



**Figure 1:** Open tin shade of the house showing cots on which body of deceased were reportedly found. No sign of vomit was detected.

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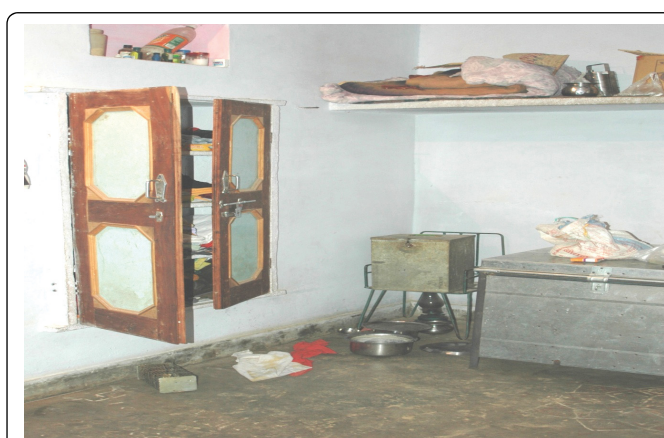
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**Figure 2:** Photographs showing rooms of the house.



**Figure 3:** Photograph showing utensils and medicines inside the room.



**Figure 4:** Close view of steel utensils found inside the room containing food material (*Rabdee*).

sealed injection vials of REGLAN, AMICIN, dextrose bottles and many packed and unused syringes were found. The utensils in the kitchen were found clean and unused (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

2. **Victim's bodies:** There were no struggle mark was detected at the spot as well as on the bodies of the victims' and his family members. (Figure 3)
3. **No matter of burglary:** All the article and ornaments inside the house were found undisturbed. (Figure 4)

### Conclusive Remarks at Scene of Crime Study

On the basis of observation of scene of crime it was concluded that:-

- a) Absence of vomit suggests that it was not a case of oral poisoning.
- b) Presence of other cleaned kitchen utensils in the house showed that it was not a case of mass suicide.
- c) Absence of wrapper/container of any poisonous material at the spot showed that it was not a case of suicide.
- d) Undisturbed articles and no struggle marks at the spot showed that motive of murderer was not loot.
- e) Presence of significant amount and different type of medicines in the house showed that someone of the family member was a medical practitioner. It was confirmed by the police that eldest son of the family was doing medical practice in another village and he was not staying in the village from the day of incident. Hence this person was targeted.

On the basis of evidence and discussion it could be possible that someone who belonged to them or someone of relatives may be involved or possibility of any familiar person may be involved. I.O. was advised to forward the viscera of all the deceased, food material (*Rabdee*), wrapper, and container, chemical and syringes, if recovered for toxicological study.

### Laboratory Examinations

Toxicologically Endosulfan, Pentazocine, Phenargan and Ketamine were detected in the viscera and blood samples of all the deceased [5]. Endosulfan was also detected in the urine sample of Mr. Chitarmal, food material (*Rabdee*) and in one syringe. Ketamine was detected in another syringe. The Postmortem examination, laboratory examination of viscera and blood of the deceased, food material and exhibits recovered from the suspect also confirmed the presence of Pentazocine, Phenargan, Ketamine and Endosulfan poison indicating homicidal poisoning.

### Results and Discussion

Our observations provided a new direction to the investigation by changing it from a hypothesis of suicide by oral ingestion of insecticide containing food material to probably intravenous homicidal poisoning. This helped in nabbing the criminal. Therefore scientific examination of crime scene is the primary, essential and most crucial step towards investigation of crime [6]. The scene of crime and laboratory findings was corroborative. In addition to these, post mortem report also revealed intra venous injection marks on the hand of all deceased.

All these evidences cumulatively suggest that the culprit must be medically trained person. On the basis of these results, the Investigating officer of the case was informed and guided accordingly and the eldest son of the deceased family was interrogated. He had no answer for our findings and confessed that he planned the murder since long before. He executed his plan on that day by injecting anesthesia followed by poison by taking all the deceased in confidence and good faith that all the injections are only for vaccination purpose. He also confessed the motive of crime that he wants to sale the paternal house to get monetary benefits.

### Conclusion

While dealing with such cases of suspicious deaths, the forensic expert should adopt a scientific approach top evaluate the incidence with logical and systematic approach at the scene of crime and during examination of the dead body, by using his/her common sense and

experience to reconstruct the actual happening. A forensic expert must have the knowledge and skills to understand fully the various causes and manner of death. One can achieved the quality by visiting as many cases (Scene of Crime) as possible.

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