

## Case Report

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# Mysterious Gun Death- A Case Report



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## Abstract

The incidents of kidnapping and abduction are reported to be alarming in India. As per data of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt of India, 88008 persons were kidnapped in India during 2016. The abduction of female is reported to be more than male for various factors. In one case, a rifleman of Tripura State Rifles (TSR) kidnapped a police man at gun point on police vehicle. The incident was alerted to all police stations. In the course of their movement, police attempted to intercept and opened fire at the speeding vehicle. After driving some distance, the rifleman abandoned the vehicle with occupants and entered inside a house of nearby village. In order to arrest the rifleman, the house was cordoned off by the armed police personnel. Subsequently gun shots were heard. Thereafter, the rifleman was found lying dead in a pool of blood with bullet wounds. The situation was tense and local civilians alleged that the armed police shot the rifleman. The forensic analysis of undisturbed crime spot and sequence of events followed with autopsy study established the gun death to be suicidal. The details have been discussed in this paper.

**Keywords :** Rifleman; Kidnap; Gun Death; Suicide; Forensic Evidence; Autopsy Study

**Abbreviations:** NCRB: National Crime Records Bureau; TSR: Tripura State Rifles; GSR: Gun Shot Residues; INSAS: Indian Small Arms System

## Introduction

The kidnapping/hijacking is an organized crime committed by criminals all over the world and India is not exception to it. As per data [1] of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt of India, 88008 persons were kidnapped in India in 2016. The abduction of female is reported to be more than male due to male dominated society and other factors. The following are the intentions of the criminals behind committing such crime [2-6]:

- a) To take revenge
- b) For purpose of marriage
- c) Demand huge cash after post abduction
- d) Enjoy sex and force prostitution
- e) Commit organ theft for transplant (kidney, eye etc)
- f) Terrorize public to create panic
- g) Issue passenger aircraft on national/international issue.
- h) Issue pushes citizens to earn money through abduction
- i) Abduction of foreign citizens by terror groups

In the present case, one rifleman with his service firearm, INSAS (Indian Small Arms System) rifle kidnapped a police man on personal enmity. The criminal profile of the rifleman was

considerably high being armed with lethal weapon to commit such crime.

## Case Report



**Figure 1:** Vehicle showing bullet marks (encircled) & their enlarged view.

In order to take revenge on enmity ground, a rifleman kidnapped a police man at gun point on police vehicle. The incident was alerted to all local police stations. On the way of their movement, there were incidents of firing by police to obstruct the speeding vehicle. In the encounter, the vehicle was

inflicted with bullet marks. After some time, the vehicle could not move further for insufficient fuel. Out of fear the kidnapper (rifleman) abandoned the vehicle with occupants and entered inside a house of nearby village. The armed police cordoned off the house to arrest the kidnapper armed with lethal weapon. In the mean time, gun shot sound was heard. It was alleged that the kidnapper was shot dead by the police. The mystery of gun death was investigated to establish the real fact (Figures 1-8).



Figure 2: Deceased lying in a pool of blood along with firearm.



Figure 3: Blood stain pattern splashing in upward direction on the wall at a height of 1 m from the floor.



Figure 4: Entry wound showing blackening.



Figure 5: Exit wound showing brain material forced out due to blast effect.



Figure 6: Three fired empty cartridge cases on spot (one under dead body & two nearby).



**Figure 7:** Overted five holes caused by bullet/fragment on tin roof.



**Figure 8:** Reconstruction of position of shooter (sketch) based on sequence of events.

### Scene of Crime Observation

The following physical evidence detected at the spot and reconstruction on sequence of events made are:

- a) One police vehicle was having nine bullet marks (eight marks on the body both sides of the vehicle and one on tyre) used for kidnapping.
- b) The rifleman (deceased) in uniform was lying inside the room in a pool of blood having bullet injury on the head.
- c) One folded butt INSAS rifle of 5.56mm caliber bearing body number "16869494" was lying on the ground close to the dead body along with three blood stained fired empty cartridge cases.
- d) One magazine was loaded with the rifle containing 18 live ammunition and four more magazines kept in a magazine pouch containing 60 live ammunition.

- e) The rifle was at burst mode having blood stain on its body.
- f) The entry wound was found in between chin and throat of the deceased with blackening.
- g) The exit wound was wide open and irregular in size and shape due to blast effect on the skull resulting in bulging out of brain materials.
- h) The left palm of the deceased shows blackening.
- i) Four small fragments of skull bones were found on the bed near the dead body as "throw down product" produced due to impact on skull.
- j) Blood stain pattern in upward direction as splashing was observed on the mud wall at a height of 1 m to 2m. The smaller diameter of blood drops is suggestive of high velocity impact.
- k) There were five fresh overtred holes of different sizes on the tin roof almost, in vertical alignment with respect to the deceased against three ammunition fired. The four small holes were created due to passage of fragmented bullets, formed by impact of high velocity bullets passing through hard skull.
- l) Fingerprint on the body of the firearm could not yield successful result.
- m) Spot test for gun powder particle detection on the left palm of the deceased responded positive.
- n) Further, the forensic test on different physical evidence collected was done in the laboratory to link between deceased, firearm & crime spot.

### Autopsy Study

The deceased was male, age 28 year, average body weight. The body was found to contain three injury marks as follows:

- a) One entrance bullet wound almost oval in shape on mid part of floor of mouth situated just below the chin, measuring 7cm×4cm. The margins of the wound were inverted and abraded. This wound is surrounded by burning and blackening of skin.
- b) The track of bullet passes upwards & slightly backwards, slightly towards right and exits on right side of vertex of skull situated just right to mid line. Size of the exit wound is 13cm×12cm. Fragments of skull bone and brain matters are coming out through the exit wound. Skin and muscles of floor of mouth, tongue, meninges, both cerebral hemispheres, scalp are lacerated through the track of bullet. The palates, base of skull bone, both parietal and right frontal bones are fractured into multiple fragments through this bullet track.
- c) Abrasion is found on posterior aspect of right elbow, size 3cm×2cm.

d) All the above mentioned injuries are anti-mortem in nature and age of both injuries were fresh at the time of death. Injury mentioned in (a) is caused by firearm and Injury mentioned in (b) is caused by friction against some hard & rough object. Time since death is 24 hr to 36 hrs. The cause of death is coma resulting from injuries over head by firearm. The range of firing was point blank and the manner of death is suicidal.

### Forensic Evidence Results

a) The SEM-EDX analysis of the swab samples collected from different body parts of the deceased and also from the areas of bullet holes on police vehicle contained the elements lead, antimony, barium confirming the presence of GSR.

b) The microscopic examination/comparison of three fired cartridge cases conclusively proved to be fired from the deceased's service firearm.

c) The blood evidence collected from stained exhibits and crime spot belonged to the deceased.

### Discussion

It is observed, crime committed by firearm is usually violent in nature. In this case, the deceased (rifleman) died of close range firing by high velocity projectile leading to heavy bleeding/damage. The position of dead body showing entry/exit wound, position of firearm, fired cartridges, blood stain pattern

on the wall, also bullet holes on the tin roof are suggestive of firing in kneeling position almost vertical to the ground. The reconstructed schematic diagram is shown in Figure 8, based on sequence of events. The ballistics test of three fired cartridge cases and gunshot residues (GSR) analysis confirmed the service rifle was fired by the deceased. The different physical evidence tests on vehicle, deceased, spot, firearm, fired cartridge cases and autopsy study confirmed the gun death was suicidal.

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