

Silent Witnesses Speak Out

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Received July 08th, 2020; Revised July 22nd, 2020; Accepted July 24th, 2020

ABSTRACT

Sexual abuse of female of all ages and socio-economic strata is become most common crime in India, among which incident of rapes with minors are also rising. Mostly, in minors rape cases the involvement of known person is found common who commits the heinous crime and ends up with murder in order to hide the identity. Many times, the criminal find it safe to execute such devilish activities in an abandoned area. Though the criminal identity could hide for a small period of time after crime, but the evidences cannot be hidden at all. The proper examination of each and every small evidence can lead to reconstruct the sequence of events of the crime and withdraws the perpetrator(s) identity as well. This paper is also to bring focus on a rape and murder case of a 7-year-old girl who was reported missing from her residence. Her body was found 15 km away in an abandoned area and the lower part was found naked. The clothing of her lower part was tied on her own neck. Vaginal tear and excess bleeding with other multiple injuries on her body were also found. During the investigation of crime, a doubt arose on a known suspect. He was interrogated and examined in appropriate manner which align the story that revealed by the evidences. Finally, the suspected person was found guilty and the justice prevailed as death sentence under the section 302, 376, 363 and 366 of IPC.

Keywords: Forensic Evidences, Reconstruction, Asphyxia, Homicide, Sexual assault

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse is most common type of crime reported worldwide [1-3]. In India, some found child sexual assaulters are closely related or well-known persons to the victim and in her family [2-8]. Being known to the family of the victim or victim itself make the situation beneficial for the perpetrator to commit such heinous crime in silent prospect [9]. But the evidences also speak silently to reveal the hidden facts of the crime with reliable authenticity [3,10]. Forensic evidences play vital role in the investigation of crime and create a link between the crime and the criminal which may be sufficient to reveal the truth about crime and criminal identity [11]. In this case, a minor girl dead body was found naked under a big stone and indicates the sign of viciously sexual abused. Her neck was tied with her own cloth and the signs on the body reveals strangulation as cause of death. On the basis of scientific investigation and the examination of evidences it was crystal clear that the death was due to asphyxia which results by strangulation and before that the little girl was raped brutally. The potential evidences were not found on the crime scene but only some traces of

evidences were observed and collected for further examination that was linked later to the perpetrator and the crime. The suspected person was the neighbor of the victim's family. In this way, the small trace evidences give high strength in the investigation of the case as well as their collection shows the skill of the crime scene investigators during investigation of crime that induce the judgment which was highly justified on the basis of with reliable evidences. Generally, in minor rape cases 30% of child abuse are committed by family members, 60% of cases committed by other connections such as neighbors, teachers, friends etc.

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Citation: Dhingra V, Chaudhary R, Sharma H & Sathpathy DK. (2020) Silent Witnesses Speak Out. J Forensic Res Criminal Investig. 1(2): 42-45.

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and only 10% of cases with minors committed by strangers [12,13].

CASE HISTORY

In the mid of 2005, a missing report of 7-year-old girl was registered by her father. After prevalent search and enquiries, the dead body of the victim was spotted on the next day morning near a pond in an abandon area which was approximately 15 km away from her residence. The dead body was examined scientifically, and thorough investigation of the crime scene leads to the following observations.

Investigation and examination of the spot and body

1. The body was found partially hidden under a big stone (Figure 1); lower portion was naked, and her own lower part of cloth was found tied around the neck. The plenty of grass, mud, and vegetation was found stuck on the clothing and the body of victim due to smudging (Figure 2).



Figure 1. Partially hidden dead body under stone.



Figure 2. Neck tied with lower part clothing where grass entangling is evident on the knot.

2. Multiple injuries were present on the body along with ligature mark on the neck (Figure 3) the tongue was found between the teeth (Figure 4) eyes were partially opened, including injury on the vagina with tear and bleeding (Figure 5).



Figure 3. Ligature marks on the neck Figure.



Figure 4. Tongue between teethes.



Figure 5. Genital areas where contusion laceration tear was visible.

3. Bluish discoloration of the body indicates cyanosis and red patches in eye indicate petechial hemorrhages [14-16] (Figures 6 and 7).

From the above observations it was inferred that she had been sexually violated and died due to asphyxia. The manner of death was homicidal.

0Mostly, in these types of minor cases, the rape is committed by the known one and subsequently offender also commit

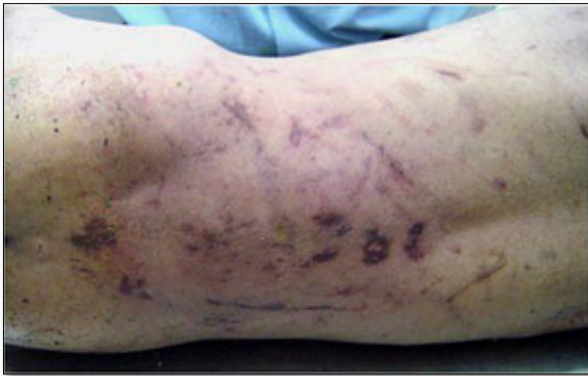


Figure 6. Bluish discoloration of the body with multiple injuries



Figure 8. Trouser and sleepers' sole portion of the accused where algae were evident also with crime spot mud samples sticking at the places.



Figure 7. Red Patches in eyes shows petechial haemorrhages.



Figure 9. Clothing of accused where mud was evident sticking.

murder due to the fear of disclosure of the identity. The further investigation was proceeded on the basis of above leads and with these clues one suspect was identified who was known to the family. He was living near the victim's house. The suspected person was interrogated and examined scientifically to corroborate all the available evidences and to facilitate the prosecution.

Forensic analysis of available recovered forensic evidences from the spot

1. The recovered mud and green algae from the spot and from the body of the deceased was found same through diatom test on the clothing and slippers of the accused (**Figures 8 and 9**).
2. The vegetation of victim's body and surroundings matches the vegetation stick to the accused clothing also (Figure 10).
3. Postmortem examination was conducted on the body and they also supported our view. The vaginal smear and also examined the preserved clothing and also examined the clothing of the accused for spermatozoa all of these were found positive for spermatozoa and blood (**Figures 11 and 12**).

CONCLUSION

In such cases where witnesses are not a living person but are the small potential evidences, the investigating officer must be that trained to understand the small noticeable hint given by these silent witnesses. And let them speak in the court to induce a justifiable decision.

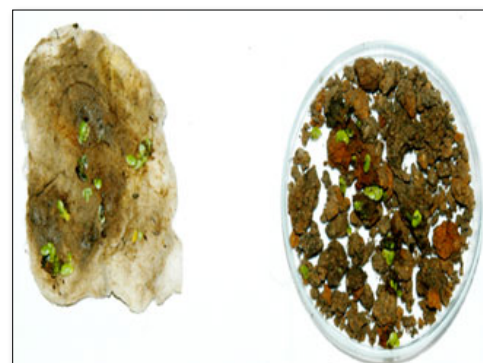


Figure 10. Cotton swab taken from victims shows presence of green algae and mud same as at crime spot.



Figure 11. Undergarment of the accused spermatozoa.

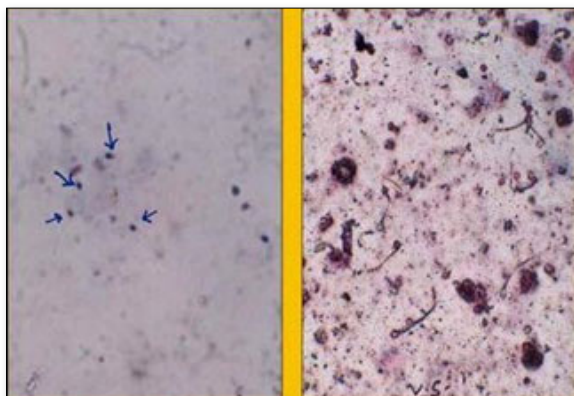


Figure 12. Spermatozoa presence on underwear of accused, presence in the VS of victim.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are thankful to S.P., D.I.G and I.G of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India, for providing necessary Facilities.

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