

PAPIYA GHOSH MURDER

THE FOGGY BOTTOM

THE CHARGESHEET FILED IN THE PAPIYA GHOSH MURDER CASE IS SILENT ON THE LARGER DESIGNS OF THE MURDERERS



THE CRIME SCENE: the residence of Papiya Ghosh (below) at Pataliputra Colony, Patna

ANAND ST DAS
Patna

THREE MONTHS after the gruesome murder of professor Papiya Ghosh (53), and her maid Malti Devi (70) in Patna's posh Pataliputra Colony, the Patna Police has filed a chargesheet in a fast-track court here which officially endorses the police's initial claims that the double murder was the fallout of a mere burglary bid.

But the slain historian's family and friends say that the chargesheet has helped widespread suspicion gain ground that the police's dacoity theory was concocted to put the lid on a cold-blooded murder that took place on December 2 last year.

"The police investigation has been callous," Jaya Ghosh, Papiya's US-based elder

Papiya's friends say the police investigation was so high-handed that it created fear among them



still unanswered

Why didn't the fingerprint samples collected from the crime scene match that of any of the accused?

Why didn't Papiya's dogs bark when the accused entered her house if they were strangers planning a dacoity?

How could the six accused load all the heavy domestic items in her Maruti 800 and leave the crime scene in the same car in one trip?

sister, told TEHELKA. "Instead of tracing the masterminds, they have caught the small fry used by the ruthless backseat killers. We are contemplating if we should request a probe by the CBI."

The fact that Papiya's neighbours — who include senior IAS officials like state Home Secretary Afzal Amannullah — had been silent over the incident was more puzzling. One of the neighbours, requesting anonymity, said: "Everybody was shocked. Yet nobody came out with any clue. When big people have chosen to be silent, there is danger for others."

Of the six accused — Shankar Sao, Manohar Kumar, Ashish Ray, Anil Kumar, Mushtqim and Sanjog Ray — the last two are yet to be arrested. The fingerprint bureau of Patna police took nearly 22 samples from the crime scene. While the fingerprint report is yet to be submitted to the police, sources told TEHELKA that the samples didn't match any of those arrested. Fingerprint samples of 11 others who had access to Papiya's house also didn't match.

The wife of a senior official who stays near her house revealed that Papiya was threatened by "unknown people" almost six months before the murder.

"While working on her new book late night, she had seen two luxury cars parked in front of her gate for almost half-an-hour on several occasions. She narrated this incident to all of us and we informed Pataliputra

station in-charge and DSP Amar Singh about it. The same thing happened six times," she said. A colleague of Papiya said the police probe didn't cover a piece of information given to them. "We told the sleuths that we were informed by some local people about a police jeep parked near Papiya's house that fatal night. They just brushed it under the carpet," she said.

The prosecution, meanwhile, is accusing Papiya's relations of not cooperating with the investigation. "Papiya's sisters and friends didn't come to identify the valuables recovered. They didn't even register an FIR. Their non-cooperation has thus put us under stress to depend heavily on the circumstantial evidence," said a source close to the prosecution.

But her relations dismissed these claims. "It was impossible for us to register a case when we all live away from Patna. The non-cooperation accusation is false," said Papiya's younger sister, Tuktuk Ghosh, an IAS officer.

According to Papiya's friends, the investigation was so "high-handed and unsympathetic" that it created a kind of "fear and unwillingness" among them.

"All of us were afraid as much of the killers as the police. The killers even called us from Papiya's mobile, days after the murder. It was terrifying to see Papiya's name on our mobiles," said an elderly neighbour of Papiya, who did not wish to be named.

Uday Kumar Singh, a defence lawyer, is confident of getting the accused legal relief. "The police didn't look into crucial angles like the missing manuscripts of Papiya and her relationship with some minority community leaders," charged Singh.

What makes Papiya's murder more mysterious is that her father, a former civil service officer, UK Ghosh, was also killed exactly on the same date 50 years ago. Ghosh's murder by poisoning, allegedly by a nurse at a Patna government hospital, still remains unsolved.

» Writer's e-mail: anandstdas@gmail.com

THE TRUTH
@ 100 RS
A YEAR

Tehelka has pushed editorial boundaries further than most — BBC

Tehelka
India's Fastest Growing Weekly

Tehelka is one of the best sources of news in India — THE GUARDIAN

Jhoot bole kauwa kaate

» FOR INSTASUBSCRIBE SMS 'TEHELKA' TO 3636

NAME
ADDRESS
PIN CODE
TELEPHONE MOBILE
PAYMENT (CASH/CHEQUE)*

* Make the cheque/draft in favour of 'Tehelka' payable in New Delhi

* Offer valid for limited period only. Rates applicable only for subscription within India.

CUSTOMER SIGNATURE

DELHI » TEHELKA, M-76, 2nd Floor, M-Block Market, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi 110048, Tel/Fax: 91-11-41638750-55

MUMBAI » Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Mithilla Shopping Centre, J.V.P.D. Scheme, V.M. Road, Vile Parle (W), Mumbai 400056, Tel: 91-22-26184660

