

Alleged Murder In Complex Intrafamilial Relationship: Media Speculations And Its Aftermath”

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ABSTRACT:

Background: The alleged murder of daughter by media tycoon mother with suppression of fact for three years revealed and widely circulated in media in last few weeks. Almost every leading print and electronic media highlighted and broadcasted the news in prime time.

Methods: The narration of the event with media reports and introspection in the realm of psychological and forensic aspects has been made. The chronological events with drawing of family tree have been done in attempt to simplify the complex intra-familial relationship. The defense mechanisms and psychological perspectives behind this suspected murder case has been explored.

Results: The separation from biological father in early childhood and lack of proper attachment with mother figure may have caused unresolved Oedipus complex. With transition from adolescence to adulthood the hatred to mother with multiple relationships get intensified. The alleged murder and the predisposing and

precipitating factors can only be predicted as the investigation is still under progress.

Conclusions: Every day the mystery of the case is being unfolded with extraordinary media hype. The irresistible curiosity of human mind to find the newer angle of this alleged murder story and cut-throat competition between the media made this case to reach in a new height. In the twist of the tail of this event while drafting the report the commissioner of police of Mumbai get transferred which further ignited more media attention.

KEY WORDS: Intrafamilial relationship, business tycoon, alleged murder, abandonment, media coverage.

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Disclaimer: Majority of the information gathered are from media sources which don't reflect the author's own opinion.

A big businessman and television network owner family is in controversy and big trouble as Mrs IM, the owner of various media houses who was holding important portfolios has been arrested by Mumbai Police crime branch in the charge of alleged murder of her daughter Ms SB with disposal of the body in Raigad in 2012 according to media sources. The Mumbai Police probing the Ms SB murder case have learnt from the Forensic Science Laboratory that 8 of the 10 codes from DNA extracted from the skeletal remains found at Pen and accused IM blood samples have matched. To conclude that the skeletal remains belong to Ms SB, police sources said, the FSL would have to complete the tests on another eight codes. The police are expecting a report from the FSL Monday. The police had sent the skeletal remains found at Pen, along with blood samples of Mrs IM and Ms SB, brother Mr MB, to the state FSL last week. The forensic report will play an important part for the police to prove the charges against the accused Mrs IM, her former husband Mr SK and former driver Mr SR.

Meanwhile, a day before her police custody ends (on September 7), the police took her to fourth-floor residence in Worli in connection with the probe. Mrs IM entered the gates of Marlow Housing Society on Sir Pochkanwala Road, Worli, at 4.03 pm Sunday and stayed there for more than an hour.¹

Mrs IM, Mr SK and their former driver Mr SR were remanded to police custody until 7 th September. Police also claimed that Mrs IM had set up a fake account of Ms SB and sent several emails from it to unidentified individuals, in which Ms SB wrote that she was doing well in the US. “We have to speak to the nodal officer of the internet protocol service provider and gather more information about where the emails were sent

from,” Special Public Prosecutor Mr VB said. Police further mentioned three emails they claimed to have recovered from Mrs IM’ mail account, dating to March 8, May 4 and August 7, 2012. Without disclosing their contents, Police Prosecutor Mr LR said, “Printouts have been taken (of the mails) in the presence of panch witnesses.” Sources said the May 4, 2012, email could pertain to Mrs IM instructing an employee of her firm to forge Ms SB’s signature. Seeking custody of the accused, police said they needed to check Mrs IM’s bank accounts as they had come to know that she may have used a credit card to pay for the items used in the alleged murder. Police informed court that the car suspected to have been used in the crime had been traced to Khoparkhairane in Navi Mumbai and that samples taken from it had been sent to Kalina Forensic Sciences Laboratory (FSL) for examination. Opposing the extension of Khanna’s police custody, his lawyer Mr SM said police had not mentioned any grounds on which Mr SK’s custody was required. “All the points mentioned in the remand application pertain to Mrs IM. Further investigation of Mr SK is not required,” he argued. Mrs IM’s lawyer GM, who was granted private consultation with her — but within eyesight of police personnel at Khar police station — said police had failed to provide any evidence of her alleged guilt. “A person is innocent until proven guilty, but police are using the principle of guilty when arrested. Police are manipulating the investigation and creating things. There is no hard evidence on record,” she said.²

The bodyguard of a Kolkata-based businessman, who was on Thursday picked up by the Mumbai Police in connection to Ms SB’s murder, on Sunday denied that he knew media baron Mr PM and his wife Mrs IM, the deceased’s

mother, who is the main accused in the case. Mr SS, who runs a security business, was picked up from businessman Mr AS's Queen's Park residence in South Kolkata and was questioned on Friday at Mumbai's Khar police station. Late Saturday, he returned to his Belegghata residence in Kolkata. Mr AS is reportedly a friend of Mr PM. On Saturday, the Mumbai Police had told a local court that the plot to kill Ms SB's brother Mr MB was hatched by Mrs IM and her former husband Mr SK in Kolkata in 2012. Ms SB is alleged to have been killed by the two the same year. The application filed by the Khar police station stated that preparations were made by Mrs IM and Mr SK to kill Mr MB in Kolkata. Investigations had to be carried out in Kolkata as a result, police said.

Sources said the Mumbai Police was also trying to find out if there was anyone else in the car used in the crime apart from Mrs IM, Mr SK and driver Mr SPR. It was the wife of Mr SD had received a text message on Thursday afternoon from her husband saying he was being taken to the airport. When he did not return in 24 hours, his family went to the office of Mr AS on Friday evening but could not meet him. Following this, they went to the police. At Taltala police station, a general diary was recorded with wife of Mr SD claiming that he has been taken away by Mumbai Police. Claiming that the media was publishing erroneous reports, which were affecting his reputation, Mr SD said: "Publishing houses are printing whatever they wanted. My family is getting affected. The neighbours are looking at us with suspicious eyes and I am being subjected to a lot of social ignominy. This is why I had decided to speak to you (mediapersons) directly," he said.

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The Mumbai Police told a local court on Saturday that the plot to kill Mr MB was hatched by Mrs IM and her former husband Mr SK in Kolkata in 2012. MB's sister SB is alleged to have been killed by the two the same year.⁴ Mr MB had told police last week that he was served an alcoholic beverage mixed with a poisonous substance in Worli in 2012, but had got suspicious and escaped. Mr MB had told police that he was served an alcoholic beverage mixed with a poisonous substance in Worli in 2012, but had got suspicious and escaped. The Mumbai Police told a local court on Saturday that the plot to kill Mr MB was hatched by Mrs IM and her former husband Mr SK in Kolkata in 2012. According to an application filed by the Khar police station on Saturday in the Bandra Metropolitan Magistrate Court, preparations had been made by Mrs IM and Mr SK to kill Mr MB in Kolkata. Investigations had to be carried out in Kolkata as a result, police said.

Police told court that Mrs IM had forged Ms SB's signature on the letter sent in her name to the owner of an apartment in Marol, Andheri East, terminating her rent agreement. She is believed to have shared the apartment with Mr RM, the son of Mrs IM's husband Mr PM.⁵ Police also claimed that she had set up a fake account of her daughter and sent several emails from it to unidentified individuals, in which her daughter wrote that she was doing well in the US. "We have to speak to the nodal officer of the internet protocol service provider and gather more information about where the emails were sent from," Special Public Prosecutor Mr VB said.

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Mrs IM is a former HR consultant and media executive. She is the wife of Mr PM, a retired Indian television executive.⁷ In 2007 she co-founded INX Media with her husband, where she took on the role of CEO. In 2009 she resigned from the company and later sold her stake in it. In August 2015, she was arrested by Mumbai Police and charged as the main accused in the alleged murder of her daughter, Ms SB (Fig 2).⁸

BRIEF PERSONAL LIFE AND CAREER OF MRS IM

Mrs IM was born 1972 in Guwahati to Mr UKB and Mrs DRB. After completing school in Guwahati, she moved to Shillong to pursue higher education. In 1986 she met Mr SD with whom she had a daughter, Ms SB, in February 1987 and a son, Mr MB, in September 1988. Mr SD in an interview said that he was not married to Mrs IM and that the two children were born out of wedlock.⁹ In 1990 Mrs IM left the children under the care of her parents in Guwahati and moved to Kolkata. A few months after her move to Kolkata, she met Mr SK. They got married in 1993 and had a daughter named Ms VK in 1997. In 2001 they moved to Mumbai. In 2002, Mrs IM met Mr PM and moved in with him while awaiting her divorce from Mr SK. In November 2002, Mrs IM married Mr PM. After this marriage Ms VK moved in with them. In 2005 Mrs IM introduced her children, Ms SB and Mr MB, to Peter as her younger siblings. The daughter was legally adopted by Mr PM. In 2006 Ms SB also moved in with them. Since April 2012 Ms SB was not seen again.¹⁰

In 1996 Mrs IM founded INX Services Private Limited as a recruitment company in Kolkata and in 2001 she moved to Mumbai where her recruitment firm considered Reliance Industries as her most important client which also handled recruitment for STAR India. In 2005, the firm formed a partnership with IMD International Search Group (Switzerland based), which appointed her as its regional director, Asia Pacific.^{11,12} In March 2007 Mr PM and Mrs IM became promoters of the INX Group and Mrs IM was appointed chairperson of INX Group. They held a 50% stake in INX Media.¹³



In November 2008, The Wall Street Journal named Mrs IM as one of 50 Women to Watch.¹⁴ With the company running out of cash and outstanding payments to creditors mounting, they resigned from their management positions. In March 2009 Mrs IM left her husband following a month later.¹⁵ In 2008 two executives at INX Group filed legal notices claiming fraud by the organization. In 2008 Mrs IM, as the chairperson of INX News, wanted greater control of the organization and found herself in conflict with Mr VS, the CEO.¹⁶ On 25 August 2015 Mrs IM was arrested by Mumbai Police in connection with the alleged murder of her daughter in 2012. She was charged under sections 302 (murder), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) and 34 (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).¹⁷

MS SB EARLY LIFE, FAMILY HISTORY AND DISAPPEARANCE

Ms SB, an executive working for Mumbai Metro One based in Mumbai went missing on April 24, 2012. She moved to Mumbai in 2006 and was introduced by Mrs IM to everyone as her younger sister. She graduated from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree (2006-2009). In 2009, she joined Reliance Infrastructure as a management trainee. In June 2011 Ms SB joined Mumbai Metro One as an assistant manager. During her initial days in Mumbai, she got introduced to Mr RM, son of Mr PM and the duo had a romantic relationship leading to cohabitation from 2009 to 2012 which Mrs IM did not approve. On 24 April 2012, Ms SB took leave of absence and while she was on leave, she "sent in her written resignation". On the same day, Mr RM received a breakup SMS from the mobile phone of Ms SB. Her mother claimed

that she had gone to the United States for higher studies and hence a missing First Information Report was never filed. When Mr RM questioned Mrs IM as the passport of Mr SB was in his custody to which Mrs IM told him that they got "another passport" made for her.¹⁸

KILLING AND AFTERMATH

Mrs IM after the arrest was produced before the Bandra Metropolitan Magistrate court, which remanded her in police custody. On August 26, 2015 the ex-husband of Mrs IM, Mr SK was arrested in Kolkata and charged under sections 364 (kidnapping), 302 (murder), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) and 120-B (conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code. For four months, preceding the arrests, Mumbai Police had kept Mrs IM under surveillance. On 23 May 2012, local Police officials found a decomposed body on the crime spot after villagers complained of foul odor. The police was unable to identify the dead-body and sent the recovered skeletal remains to JJ Hospital in Mumbai. The Forensic Science Laboratory has confirmed on September 7th that the DNA samples of skeletal remains found from Raigad forest are that of Ms SB and they match with the DNA of Mrs IM. The police had last week exhumed remains of the body and FSL report now stated that digital superimposition of the profile of Ms SB had matched with the skull recovered from the forest.¹⁹

The various statements of important key personal as well as accused of the case are given below (Table 3)

Statement of Mr RM, CP, Mumbai.



Mr RM, Mumbai Police commissioner, told the press that a **fair idea behind motive of murder** has been found. Mrs IM had gotten a third person to forge the signature of Ms SB in her resignation letter to the company she worked in and to her landlord. According to CP, with regard to the resignation letter, letter to landlord, tracing and interrogating the forged signatory and confirming all the theories the Mumbai Police is satisfied with the brisk pace of investigation in this high profile case. He also told the media that, the skeletal remains of Ms SB were recovered today and sent for DNA test. He also acknowledged that her passport had been recovered from Dehradun.^{20,21}

Statement of Mr UKB, the grandfather of the victim.

Mr UKB too disputed his daughter's claim that murdered Ms SB was his daughter. "She is not my daughter. I am her grandfather," 80-year-old grandpa, whose name was said to have been given by Mrs IM as father in the birth certificate of Ms SB born in February, 1989. He acknowledged Mr SD, the first husband of Mrs IM as biological father of Ms SB and Mr MB.

Statement of Mr SK.

The Mumbai Police on Thursday got a five-day transit remand for Mr SK and according to television reports; he has admitted that he was present in the car on the day of murder. **ACCORDING TO MEDIA SOURCES, MR SK** reportedly told the police that he was inside the car in which Ms SB was murdered, but did not confess to the killing. This was confirmed by public prosecutor Mr SG.²²

Statement of Mr RM.

Mr RM, son of Mr PM was questioned three times in a span of 24 hours about his long relationship with Ms SB, his step-mother Mrs IM, why he didn't pursue the "missing person" complaint filed after Ms SB disappeared and other related aspects. According to reports that Mr RM told the police that after her disappearance he did try to look for her and get in touch with her but he remained unsuccessful. He also told the police that his parents told him she had gone to study abroad. Later, he was escorted to his two flats in Khar and Bandra where he and Ms SB spent time together.^{23,24}

Statement of Mr MB.

Mr MB (Fig 1), brother of Ms SB confirmed the fact that Mrs IM was their mother. When asked whether Mrs IM and Ms SB had any reason for conflict, he said, "Yes, many times." However, he refused to specify what the arguments between the two were regarding. He told **MEDIA** that he didn't believe that the murder had anything to do with property or money. "I want her to reveal everything herself. If she lies, I will give all evidences. I have all the evidence and photos. I will provide it to the media," he said. He also reportedly said to media that his sister had been living with him and his grandparents in Guwahati for a long time and Mrs IM had been living in Mumbai. He said that Ms SB had gone to Mumbai for higher study after which she had been working in Mumbai. In 2012 she came back to Guwahati for the wedding of her friend. After that she disappeared. Mr MB said that whenever he asked his mother about his elder sister he used to receive vague answers from mother like she was abroad and had got a job there. As he was dependent on funds from Mrs IM to take care of his ailing grandparents and alleged drinking habits

and his stake was vulnerable on asking too many questions he remained silent over years. In Guwahati, Mumbai policemen questioned him and he told them that he will be the next victim after his sister if he visits Mumbai for the murder probe. "I do not know. I may be the next target of my mother. She is very powerful. She can do anything she wants," he told the media. "I can go to Mumbai only if the Assam government ensures that two nurses take care of my (ailing) grandparents. They are both in their 80s and suffering from dementia," he said.^{25,26}

Statement of Mr SD.

A week into the increasingly convoluted Ms SB murder mystery, her biological father Mr SD has been tracked down and finally spoke up (Fig 3). In a brief interview he opened up about Mrs IM, his children, and his relationships with all three of them. In response to a question about whether he thinks Mrs IM was capable of killing Sheena, he said it was possible, citing her penchant for the "high life". "There's a chance (she did it)," said Mr SD, adding, "She was money-minded of course. She always had ambitions for better living and high society." In an television interview, Mr SD said that if Mrs IM had killed their daughter, "she should be hanged."^{27,28}

The Statement of Mr PM.

Mr PM claimed that in media that he was unaware of the whole ordeal and was in a 'state of shock'. Reacting to the revelations, he said to **MEDIA** that he had no clue whatsoever about this fact. Mr PM claimed that Ms SB had an affair with his younger son Mr RM and which was disliked by Mrs IM. He said that he did not know about the conversations between Ms SB and Mrs IM used to be in Assamese, and so he did not understand

them." "When she disappeared in 2012, I was told that she was studying in the US. I asked her and she showed me pictures of Ms SB at a Diwali function there," According to media reports he said: "I am dumbstruck by this level of criminality."²⁹

The Statement of SPR, the driver.

Mr SPR, the driver acknowledged that he had been paid INR 1 lakh and in his statement said that the murder was pre-planned. Allegedly Mrs IM had done a recce of the dumping ground an evening before the murder. On 24 April 2012, Mr SK flew down to Mumbai and checked in Hotel Hilltop at Worli. She had rented Opel Corsa for the abduction, killing and for disposing off the body. She had earlier asked her daughter to meet her on the evening of 24 April 2012 but she was reluctant. On the evening of 24 April 2012 (around 18:00 hours), Mrs IM picked up her ex-husband Mr SK from his hotel in Worli. Ms SB was dropped off by Mr RM near National College on Linking Road in Bandra around 1900 hours where she was met by her mother sitting in the front seat, stepfather sitting beside her on back seat. She was taken in to one of the by-lanes in Bandra where Mr SK strangled her. After the murder, her body was taken to Mrs IM's house on Worli where the body was put in a bag and stuffed in the boot of the car. The same night (early morning of 25 April 2012), all three accused drove to village Gagode in Pen tehsil, Raigad with dead-body through the highway. At 4:00 am on 25 April 12, the accused dragged the dead body out of the car in an isolated spot in the forest, stuffed it in the bag, poured petrol over the bag and set it ablaze (Table 2).^{30,31,32}

Theories behind the murder.



According to some media, Mr PM and Mrs IM had siphoned a lot of money from INX media, a company they later stepped down from. To avoid suspicion, a lot of this money had been transferred to their relatives' accounts. One of those accounts may have belonged to Ms SB, who later refused to return the money. As per this media report "Singapore based company Temasek invested in the media company and after the global recession, Temasek got the media company

audited which was find irregular." Ms SB alleged murder case has been in the limelight for the last few days due to its twists and turns and shocking revelations. The intrafamilial relationship has been described in the flowchart here (Table 1). It makes Mrs IM and Ms SB as mother-daughter as well as stepsisters (Fig 4) and Mr RM and Ms SB were in a romantic relationship actually became brother-sister.³³

Table 1: Flow chart of intrafamilial relationship.

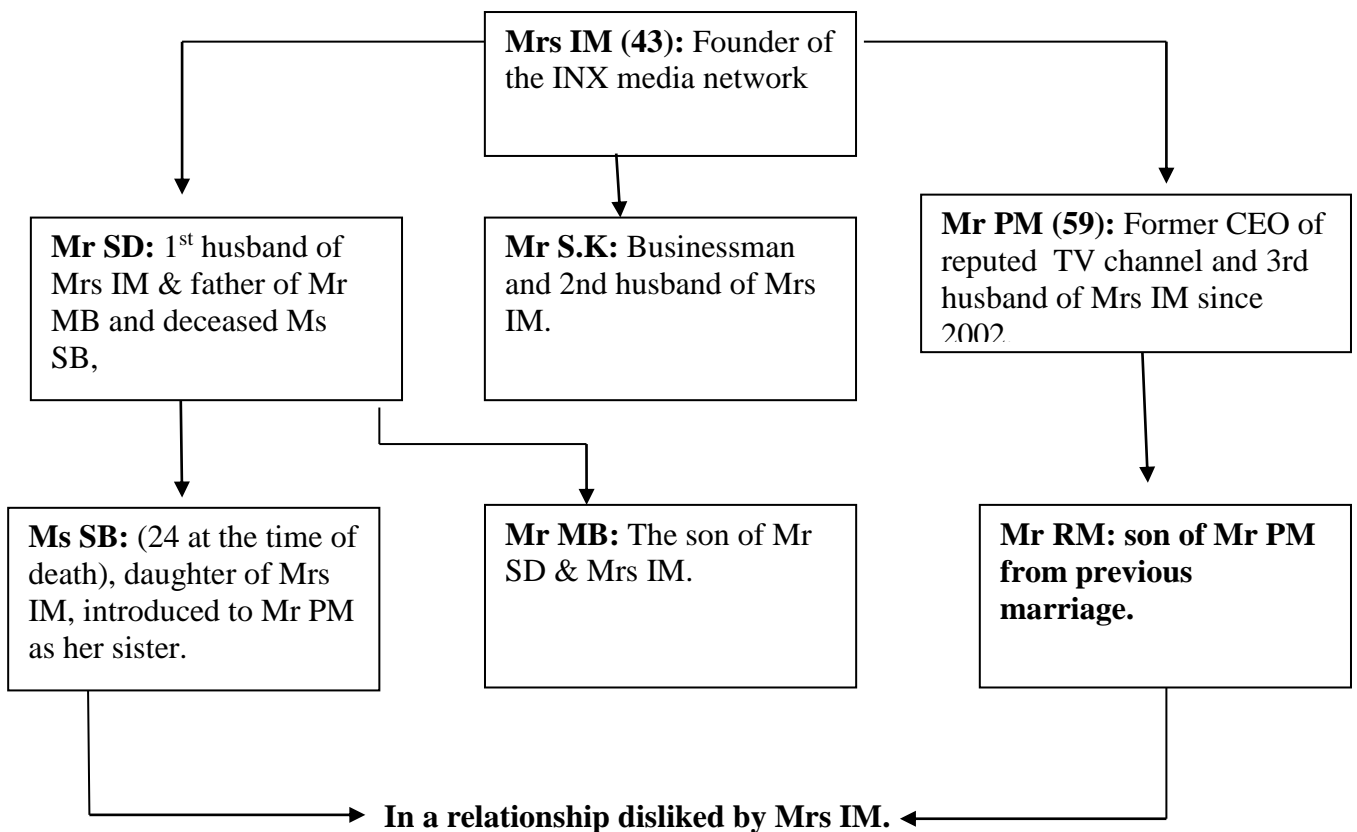


Table 2: The chronology of crime

| Date | Crime |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 24, 2012 | Ms SB takes a leave of absence from work at Mumbai Metro and sends a resignation letter to her employer. She is not heard since then. |



| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | |
| May 23, 2012 | Police find a decomposed body after villagers at Gagode in Pen tehsil, Maharashtra, complain of foul odour. |
| August 21, 2015 | Mr SPR is arrested following the seizure of a 7.63-bore pistol from him. |
| August 26, 2015 | Mrs IM opened up that Ms SB was her daughter from a previous marriage and not sister as maintained. |
| August 27, 2015 | Mr SK, a Kolkata based businessman and ex-husband of Mr IM was arrested from Kolkata. Mr SPR, the driver of Mrs IM, confessed that he murdered Ms SB and disposed of her body, on the direction of his masters. |
| Aug 28, 2015 | Mr SK confessed to his "complicity in the crime." He had earlier said that, the body of Ms SB was lying next to him in a car in which they were travelling together in Mumbai on April 24, 2012. |
| Aug 29, 2015 | Maharashtra Police has ordered a probe into why the Raigad Police did not register an Accidental Death Report (ADR) after they found a burnt corpse, suspected to be of Ms SB, in 2012. |

Table 3: The statements reported in media ³⁴

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|



| | |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr SPR | Discloses that he, Mrs IM and Mr SK together strangled Ms SB inside a car on April 24, 2012. The car with the body inside is parked in garage till the next day when the body is burnt and dumped. |
| Mr MB | Says he knows the “exact reason” for which his sister was murdered and reveals that Ms SN was Mrs IM’s daughter and not sister as had been made public. |
| Mrs IM | Accepts that Ms SB was her daughter. |
| Mr PM | Says he never knew Ms SB was Mrs IM’s daughter but knew that she was in a relationship with Mr RM, and that Mrs IM disapproved the relationship. |

DISCUSSION:

Globally, it's a crime that baffles psychiatrists over decades. Since the 1950s, there have been attempts to understand motivation for killing one's own child. It's not as if we haven't heard of controversial cases involving mothers: In 2008 Aarushi Talwar case and the Nirupama Pathak murder case of 2010 sensationalized by the media. According to Dr Manju Mehta, former head of child psychology of AIIMS, New Delhi, Most mothers who kill their children usually are suffering from mental illness like severe depression, personality disorders, unexpressed anger, intense frustration and stress in their lives. Usually, women who purposefully kill their children tend to be older. With some kind of

personal loss and hatred and unresolved Electra complex (term coined by Carl Gustav Jung, opposite of Freudian Oedipus complex) they suddenly change from being devoted mother to a murderer and usually perform violent methods with weapons like knives or guns. However psychosexual angle had not been proved as yet as per media evidences. Those parents, who kill their children by neglect or accidentally, tend to be younger, coming from lower socioeconomic background and usually commit the crime by strangulation or smothering,. Many such women have borderline personality disorders and unable to control their rapid mood shifts, constant emotional swings between inappropriate intense

rage and sadness, unstable relationships, erratic self-image and acute fear of abandonment.³⁵

Researchers say that the brain appears to process aggression and violence through its reward circuits and people tend to view violent crimes, especially murder, as an intellectual challenge that stirs them into wondering about the victim, the perpetrator and the circumstances. "They don't have to personally experience the loss or suffering of the murder victim, but can experience the chills down the spine, the revulsion, the disgust and the horror," said Ruth Penfold-Mounce, a sociologist at the University of York in the UK who has studied public obsession with death and murder. "People wonder about the circumstances, they search for reasons why they are not likely to find themselves in a similar situation or why they do not face a similar threat," said Paul Mattiuzzi from Sacramento, California, an expert in criminal forensic psychology. The most heinous of crimes coupled with the rich and famous double the impact," Penfold-Mounce said. But extremely violent crimes can generate sustained interest even without celebrity involvement. Researchers cite the 1993 Lorena Bobbit case in the US, an incident in which Lorena severed her husband John's penis with a kitchen knife. "Neither person was famous at the time, but the nature of the domestic crime was so sensational that it dominated the news media for years," said Crawford. The murder of Aarushi Talwar, a 14-year-old schoolgirl in Noida in May 2008, and the brutal gang rape of a 23-year-old trainee physiotherapist in Delhi in December 2012 are also crimes that have generated intense public attention without celebrity victims or perpetrators.³⁶

Much of it is based on crude judgments, extrapolated at speed from what is an essentially

raw footage contradictory, confusing, testimony extracted by the media from some of the main protagonists, as well as mostly unnamed relatives, neighbours and family friends (Fig 5). Words like deviant, debauched and dysfunctional, uttered with saintly facial expressions and tones of deep relish, dominate studio patter. Trite comparisons are being aired every day between "good mothers" and "bad mothers". Much of this chit-chatting crowd has, of course, already convicted Mrs IM for killing her daughter well before she has even been formally charge-sheeted. The same media that has hauled up and judged almost every member of Mrs IM's complicated extended family (Fig 1), with rent-a-quote professionals, minor Bollywood actors and chick lit novelists holding forth on "What do you think X is hiding, and do you think Y is guilty?" This is also the media that's been airing on front pages and prime time the so-called "incest theory" about the case, based on leaks from police investigators who are clearly loathe to put this spicy stuff on record, but not perturbed about having it out in the ether. This "incest theory" contradicted by a welter of other theories in the public domain carelessly shreds the reputation of Mr UCB, an 80-year old bedridden man in Guwahati, who has actually had, according to a report a TV cameraperson climbing up to his window (to avoid his guards) to ask him questions. Some media already found the psychodynamics by telecasting the breaking news that "not many know Mrs IM had a traumatic childhood in a dysfunctional family and was often whipped by her drunken father."

ROLE OF MEDIA

Back in the day when the Aarushi case was playing out, with a similarly insatiable quest for the salacious, some journalists were part of the



minority that took a stand against trial by media and the purveying of smut. Some media are searching out, in explicit detail, the “incest angle”. The media is aggressive for their own competitiveness and quest for gaining TRP. There is also the little matter of a legal proscription on revealing the identity of victims of sexual abuse. Ever since this crime being covered by electronic and print media, the social networking sites and blogs are being flooded with comments due to curiosity and attraction of the case with criticism of media directly or by posts in blogs and sites full of satire. The SB murder may well replace the Aarushi saga as the most talked about, viewed and net-searched case few years back causing mental trauma and agony to the accused before the verdict itself. As before, the media seems to feel hugely secure about stigmatising those caught up, in one way or another, in murder investigations, knowing it will probably never be called to account. Mr Avirook Sen narrates in his recent book, **AARUSHI**, a false story was planted the media and picked up by some of the country’s major news channels that the parents of the deceased little teenager were part of a wife-swapping ring. “The CBI issued an official denial,” writes Sen. “And the channels? Not a word of the story was recanted. No apology was offered.”

The media is safe because almost no fear of defamation as legal battle that could last years, least of all those who have been caught up in a murder case. The dead are of course even less likely to go to court, so they can be opened up early on for speculation and defamation. Some speculation has reached the extreme commenting that “They took care to burn the body as the objective was to destroy the foetus that Ms SB was carrying in her womb.”³⁷ In the twist of the

tail, the CP of Mumbai Mr RM got promoted and new CP Mr AJ promises to give impetus on the investigation. Mr SK, ex-husband of Mrs IM meanwhile has been remanded to judicial custody till September 21 by the court.³⁸ The psychological trauma on repetitive telecast of such shocking incident can affect the vulnerable individuals. For psychological well being at large it is recommended that the media should be responsible with proper coverage.

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FIGURES



Fig 1: Mr MB, brother of Ms SB



Fig 2: Mrs IM produced in the court



Fig 3:Mr SD, the first husband.



Fig 4: Mother and daughter.



Fig 5: Media covering every bit of sensational story.