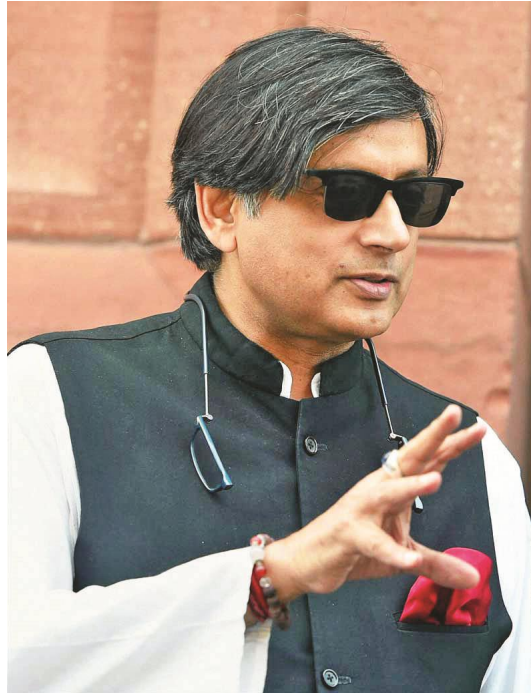


By Sidharth Mishra



The media last week went to town with Delhi Police Commissioner BS Bassi's observations that socialite Sunanda Pushkar, wife of former Union Minister Shashi Tharoor, did not die a natural death. What is the big deal about Bassi's observation? I soon got the answers from the sub-headlines, which said that the observation came after the panel of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) filed its "final" report following the receipt of inputs from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) labs in the United States. The Police Commissioner refused to share details of the report submitted by AIIMS or the inputs from the FBI lab, which the Delhi Police had forwarded to the apex medical institute for analysis. Now my acquaintances in Delhi Police tell me that the AIIMS report, complete with their analysis of the FBI report, was "inconclusive" from the police point of view and could be sent back to the institute for some clarifications before it can be acted upon for the purpose of prosecution.

Well, that could mean another exchange of official correspondence and a delay of few more months before the police can take a stand on the matter.

The FBI lab report is believed to have mentioned that traces of Alprax (or alprazolam), Lidocaine, and various other chemical substances that were found in Sunanda's viscera. The FBI report, however, has stopped short of giving any opinion on the exact cause of Sunanda's death.

This ambiguity in the police chief's statement over the report has given a fresh fillip to political play in the matter. BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, who has been running a campaign against Tharoor, has said that the former Minister was definitely a "collaborator" in the murder of his wife Sunanda Pushkar, and therefore, should be arrested. He also accused Delhi Police Commissioner B S Bassi of not revealing the exact chemical compound that was responsible for

Sunanda's death on the night of January 16-17, 2014.

Meanwhile, former Congress MP and party spokesperson Sandeep Dikshit told reporters, "It is for the Delhi Police to see whether the death of Sunanda Pushkar was natural or not. The whole thing seems to be a very big mess. Sometimes shreds of evidence say something else and sometimes something else." He went on to say that Delhi Police could be used to harass Tharoor, a "powerful" Congress leader.

There is no denying that there is more than the mere "confusion caused by the AIIMS report", which is holding the Delhi Police from acting in the matter. Dikshit is also correct that Tharoor is a "powerful" leader. Having spent all his life as a United Nations functionary, he even ran for the UN Secretary-General, before entering Indian politics. Tharoor is no ordinary personality and decision to act against him cannot be the decision of one Mr Bhim Sain Bassi alone, who anyway is about to demit the office of Commissioner of Delhi Police.

At Millennium Post, we have been reporting how Shashi Tharoor pressed hard to make his wife's death look natural. In a front-page report on July 5, 2014, we had said that on February 27, 2014, a facsimile message was sent from Shashi Tharoor's office to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at 2.47 pm forwarding a certificate from one Dr Anil Gupta of Cooper Health Clinic in Dubai to "help in determining the cause of her death". The certificate suggested that she could have died of LUPUS.

According to medical literature, patients suffering from this disease get frequent episodes of joint pains, skin problems, and renal failure, among other complications. The Dubai-based doctor, in his concluding paragraph, mentioned, "A mere injection for a blood test or bumping into a piece of furniture could result in visible bruising. I am concerned as bruising on her body is being discussed as inflicted in the media."

The news report further said that the blood sample reports of Sunanda Pushkar (MR No. 004682010; collected on 12 and 13 January 2014) issued by the Kerala Institute of Medical Sciences, a super-specialty hospital in Thiruvananthapuram, after extensive tests reported on January 12, 15, 17, and 21 that Pushkar did not suffer from the disease LUPUS Anti-Coagulant.

This firmly established the fact that Tharoor, despite the knowledge of the report from Asia's leading tertiary care hospital stating that Sunanda did not suffer from LUPUS, pushed a certificate from a family friend's clinic in Dubai to establish that she died of this particular disease.

Shashi Tharoor has preferred to remain silent on the matter and spoken only through his few

Need political will, not FBI report

Written by Administrator

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socialite friends, who have chosen to debunk the “unnatural death” theory without a shred of evidence to back their line. They could be left red-faced now that the Delhi Police too has endorsed the “unnatural death” theory.

On January 7, 2015, Delhi Police had filed an FIR in the matter blaming unknown persons for Pushkar’s death. While sharing with the media that the FIR in the case has been filed, Bassi had said, “She died due to poisoning. Whether the poison was given orally or injected into her body is being investigated.”

Among the 15 injuries the forensic team examined on Sunanda’s body, it found “injury number 10” to be a mark caused by the syringe needle. The Delhi Police has now got wise almost after a year to points that indicate the possibility of poison being injected into Sunanda’s body. But it has taken them one long year to move a step further.

What’s holding them back? Their “inability” to understand report after it was submitted by the panel of doctors from the AIIMS is certainly not keeping them in check. They are yet to receive the mandate from their political masters to act in the matter, which will not come as a matter of routine.

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