

Chapter 28

Forensic Science Laboratory

1. Introduction

Dispensing of justice is dependent primarily upon the evidence produced and presented before the court of law. During the course of investigation the Investigating Officer collects various kinds of evidences. These evidences are categorized as oral, documentary and scientific evidences. The various types of material and things collected from the scene of crime and other places are sent for scientific analysis, evaluation and examination to the Forensic Science Laboratories which provide scientific aid, assistance and expert opinion on various subjects for an effective, efficient and just administration of criminal justice system in their areas. A Regional Forensic Science Laboratory along with a mobile unit are being established at Ranipul, East Sikkim. Till such time these are established necessary assistance is being taken from the CFSLs.

2. Forensic Science : Its Implication

Forensic science is a dynamic field comprising mainly the application of various branches of science to the administration of justice. The criminal investigation in a way is a team effort, where the police and the forensic scientist, play a coordinated and mutually reinforcing role. Forensic science experts help the police officers in establishing the missing links between the crime and the suspects.

3. Classification

The State level FSL is headed by a senior, experienced and competent scientist, who is designated as Director (FSL). He is assisted by other scientists in the rank of Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, Scientific Officers, Scientific Assistants along with requisite support and ministerial staff. The sanctioned staff, equipment and other resources at the State FSL will depend on the type of activities it performs and the overall workload. The requirements of the State FSL are looked after by the CID but in their

collection analysis and submission of evidence they shall retain their functional independence.

4. Divisions of the State FSL

A State FSL has generally the following divisions but may have a lesser number as per the volume of cases pertaining to the various divisions in the State.

- (1) Documents Division
- (2) Chemistry Division
- (3) Biology Division
- (4) Physics Division
- (5) Ballistics Division
- (6) Toxicology Division
- (7) Serology Division
- (8) Narcotics Division
- (9) Arson & Explosives Division
- (10) Forensic Psychology Division
- (11) Photo Division
- (12) Computer Forensics Division
- (13) DNA Finger Printing Division
- (14) Polygraph Division

5. Role of FSL

(I) The role of the forensic science laboratories can be classified under the following heads:

- (i) Helping the IOs and police through recognition of evidence material at the scene of crime.
- (ii) Collection and preservation of the clue material so recognized.
- (iii) Scientific examination and analysis of clue materials.
- (iv) Evaluating the result of scientific analysis and interpreting them.
- (v) Producing the evidence in a legally admissible form
- (vi) Effective use of forensic findings in the prosecution

(II) The experts and the scientists at the FSL should perform their tasks with utmost sincerity, honesty and impartiality. The speedy and quick disposal of work at their end contributes significantly in the early and quick disposal of the cases in the courts of law. They should be always willing and ready to render all help and assistance to the IOs in the interest of the case in which their help and assistance has been requested.

6. Mobile FSLs

(i) Mobile forensic science laboratories with workable equipment and know-how can be set for immediate and instant examination of exhibits and inspection of scene of crime for the assistance of the IOs. A scene of crime is generally a veritable mine of clues of profound evidentiary value. These clues have to be preserved and prevented from contamination till the arrival of forensic science teams from laboratory or a mobile unit. Arrival of these teams at the scenes of crimes takes time depending upon the distance involved between their location and the scenes of crimes. Police personnel of the nearby police station or outpost are generally the first official functionaries to reach a scene of crime.

(ii) The responsibility for preservation of the scene of crime and prevention of clues from contamination rests on these police personnel. In many cases, due to dearth of resources, it is not possible to deploy forensic science teams to all the scenes of crimes. The police personnel mentioned above have to identify, lift, pack, and forward the clues to forensic science laboratory for examination in cases not covered by the visits of forensic science teams. The IOs should, therefore, be well acquainted with the ways of doing so.

7. Specific and Special Contexts

(i) FSLs of various categories should be well equipped in terms of scientific aids, equipment, technical know-how and the latest technology in the respective areas of their work and functioning. Availability of reasonable resources in terms of men, material,

scientific and technological contexts can alone make these FSLs competent and efficient for the performance of their various tasks. Constant modernization of FSLs should therefore be an area of priority.

(ii) An appropriate attitude of coordination and cooperation should be maintained by all the experts working at the various FSLs. Their services and assistance can be demanded at any time, and such demands being urgent in nature require that they should provide immediate, willing and instant help. Likewise the various FSLs should also maintain a healthy understanding and interaction among themselves and also with the various field formations of the police department and the PHQ.