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**A Study on the Problems Faced by the Scene of Crime Officers in  
Homicide Investigation Process in Sri Lanka  
(With Special Reference to Mirihana Domain)**

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According to the criminal law, a “*felony*” refers to a serious crime and “*misdemeanor*” is any lesser criminal act. Generally the police bare the major and anterior part of the crime. There is a special process which police use to locate and prove the guilt of an accused criminal is called “Criminal investigation”. To engage in this special process there is a group of trained police officers who gather forensic evidence for the investigation. Those are called “Scenes of Crime Officers” (SOCO). Homicide investigation requires the greatest effort of all major crimes; Coordinate witnesses, suspect, officers, forensic pathologist, criminalists, and medical examiner. Thus the collecting evidence is the assumed part of SOCO officer in criminal justice process. This study was based on the problems faced by the SOCO officers who engaged in collecting evidence of homicides. Sample consisted of ten SOCO officers from Mirihana, using random sampling method. In-depth interviews were used for qualitative data collection. Quantitative data were collected from police records (Mirihana) of five (05) year period ranging from 2010-2015 from SOCO unit. Police records revealed that there is 45% evidence samples of homicides are to be disclosed. 23% of cases are pending due to the contamination of the evidence. There is only 32% homicide cases were solved with the help of biological and physical evidence collected by the SOCOs. Lack of training, less number of officers, Weak transportation and communication, deficiencies of collecting evidence, Lack of preserving instruments, Inadequate training and Unawareness were recognized as the major problems faced by the SOCOs in homicide investigation. Government should facilitate to establish new and modern SOCO labs and also empower them with the modern technology. The biggest impediment to an investigation is the removal or loss of a piece of evidence from the scene of a crime. Due to the high movement of human traffic in a crime scene, it is likely for items to be misplaced, stolen or moved. As the contamination of evidence has been an issue, making each and every person aware of the homicide investigation process could be recommended while emphasizing the government’s share of financing, recruiting and training to solve the problems faced by the SOCOs in homicide investigation process.

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