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Saturday, May 9th, 2015 | Posted by [admin](#)

## Saanich Murder-Suicide Involved Indo-Canadian Man

Saanich police say it was a murder-suicide, but they aren't saying how 56-year-old Juile Cox and 58-year old Peter Khurana died. Khurana, who had a history of abuse, is believe to have killed his wife Julie and then killed himself.

SAANICH – Saanich police confirmed Tuesday the deaths of two people, including an Indo-Canadian man, last week in B.C. were a murder and suicide.

Saanich police say it was a murder-suicide, but they aren't saying how 56-year-old Juile Cox and 58-year old Peter Khurana died.

Khurana, who had a history of abuse, is believe to have killed his wife Julie and then killed himself.

Emergency crews were called to Cordova Bay Road on April 21 after smoke was seen billowing from the home. When crews extinguished the fire, they found the bodies of the deceased couple inside the home, reported CBC News.

“What we can say is it would appear as though the events took place inside the home that there was a tragic incident that led to the death of one of the individuals and that the other individual appears to have

taken their own life,” said Sgt. Steve Eassie.

Kelly Tarpley, Cox’s brother-in-law, claims she was in an abusive relationship and tried many times to get out.

“The police made numerous, numerous trips to that residence and would haul him to the jail for a one night stay and call it a cooling off period,” he said.

“Well after two or three times of that police should read the MO, this situation isn’t going to change.”

Khurana was convicted of assault in 2013.

Police say they are continuing to investigate the deaths and are asking anyone with information to contact them.

Tracy Porteous, the executive director of the Ending Violence Association of B.C., says while the Capital Regional District has a highly specialized domestic violence unit, it doesn’t have the resources to function properly.

“They have more cases than they have officers and counsellors that can handle them.”

Porteous says seven people have already died as a result of domestic violence in B.C. so far this year.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, B.C.’s representative for children and youth, said the public deserves a higher level of accountability to prevent similar violence from happening again.

“I’m very concerned about the cloak of secrecy around these domestic-violence cases,” she said. “To say that it’s a private matter is exactly what’s wrong in domestic violence. These are not private matters. This is an issue of public safety for vulnerable citizens, particularly women.”

Porteous said releasing information about the case could give the public information about possible warning signs of domestic violence, such as escalating abuse, drug or alcohol use on the part of the abuser, or the victim becoming increasingly isolated from family and friends.

“One very important public service the police could provide in the aftermath of these kinds of tragedies is to release the details [of] the months leading up to the death,” Porteous said. “Staying silent about domestic violence, which has historically thrived in that sort of silence, isn’t serving anyone. If we keep these things hidden, nothing changes.”

Saanich police again cited privacy rights in refusing to confirm whether they had been called to the home for domestic-violence complaints.

The case was not referred to the regional domestic violence unit, which handles high-risk cases. Turpel-Lafond wants to know why.

“How did they miss this one? ... Who is responsible to look at this?” she asked. “Why was that case not before that [specialized] unit, and what can we learn from this case to make sure that the next woman will be safe?”

Family members said there were many signs pointing to Peter Khurana’s history of violence against women. He said Julie Khurana, who was from Louisville, Kentucky, had few friends in Victoria and was isolated in the house.

Peter Khurana’s first wife, Irene Khurana, told the Times Colonist last week that her ex-husband had a violent temper and she had tried to get a restraining order against him in 2004. The couple divorced in 2006.

Peter Khurana was charged with assault causing bodily harm against Julie Khurana in December 2013, when the couple was living in Mackenzie, B.C.

He pleaded guilty to the lesser offence of assault and was sentenced to one day in jail and one year of probation. He was released on conditions that included attending counselling and avoiding alcohol and drugs. He was not allowed to contact his wife.

He breached those conditions in January 2014, but the couple continued to live together in Greater Victoria.

Anyone who may have information relevant to the investigation is asked to contact the Saanich Police Department at 250-475-4321, or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

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