

## Death on the farm

THE mystery of Lieut-Col. T. S. Anand's death has become more baffling after the police explanations. The first police theory was that he was murdered, and a case of murder was duly registered. But within two days the Inspector-General himself calls a press conference to announce that it was a case of suicide, though on his own admission the investigations have not concluded. The missing gun and the bullet were yet to be recovered when he made the statement. A more extraordinary circumstance is that the members of the family of the dead man had not been questioned, which may have been thought to be an elementary procedure in all such cases. On the other hand, there was an unusual delay in informing the local police station after the IG, Mr Bhawanimal himself had received a phone call from Mr Sanjay Gandhi on his father-in-law's death with the cryptic message that foul play was suspected.

Equally strange is the omission to find out how Mr. Gandhi first came to know of the body lying in the field and the reasons for his suspicion of foul play. Another intriguing question is why no alarm was raised when Col. Anand had been missing for two days. Again, the police observation that a decomposing body lying in an open field for so many hours need not necessarily attract vultures presents, to laymen, a hitherto unsuspected angle to bird behaviour. Quite possibly it was a case of suicide. But it is as unwarranted to jump to that conclusion as it is unfair to believe in inconclusive evidence or mere suspicion that a graver crime has been committed. A man has met with violent death and the public has the right to know whether investigating authorities have done their work properly.