

Abhirama Testimony June 2026

Professional Analysis From Abhiram Prabhu:

I have now reviewed both the Requisition Letter (2019) and the Truth Labs Forensic Report (2024) relating to the alleged cadmium poisoning of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada. In my opinion, both documents contain significant scientific, methodological, and forensic deficiencies that substantially undermine their reliability and admissibility. I summarize the key issues below, along with supporting scientific literature where appropriate.

1. Framing Bias in the Requisition Letter

The initial instruction to Truth Labs is not framed as a neutral scientific inquiry but instead presupposes poisoning and potential culpability. The questions posed are leading (e.g., whether poisoning occurred, whether caretakers were responsible), which introduces a clear risk of confirmation bias influencing the subsequent analysis. This approach is inconsistent with accepted forensic practice, which requires objective evaluation of evidence independent of investigative hypotheses.

Relevant literature:

- Dror IE. Cognitive and human factors in expert decision making: six fallacies and the eight sources of bias. *Anal Chem.* 2020.
- Risinger DM et al. The Daubert/Kumho implications of observer effects in forensic science. *Calif Law Rev.* 2002.

2. Fundamental Misinterpretation of Hair Toxicology

The central conclusion of the Truth Labs report relies on cadmium concentrations measured in hair. However, hair is not a validated biological matrix for diagnosing cadmium poisoning, and no accepted toxicological thresholds exist for cadmium in hair. Hair is highly susceptible to external contamination, and concentrations do not reliably reflect systemic dose or body burden.

Relevant literature:

- ATSDR. Toxicological Profile for Cadmium. 2012.
- Nordberg GF et al. Handbook on the Toxicology of Metals. 4th ed. 2015.
- Eastman RR et al. Hair as a biomarker of environmental metal exposure. *Environ Res.* 2013.

3. Absence of Decontamination Procedures

The report explicitly states that hair samples were not washed prior to analysis. This is a critical methodological failure. Standard forensic and environmental protocols require washing procedures to remove external contamination. Without this, results cannot distinguish between surface deposition and endogenous incorporation.

Relevant literature:

- Society of Hair Testing (SoHT). Consensus on hair testing for drugs of abuse. *Forensic Sci Int.* 2012.
- Pragst F, Balikova MA. State of the art in hair analysis for drugs and metals. *Clin Chim Acta.* 2006.

4. Invalid Use of “Normal Average” Comparisons

The report compares results to “normal average levels” and expresses findings as multiples (e.g., 177–284×). This is scientifically inappropriate. Population averages are not toxicological thresholds, and no dose–response relationship exists linking hair cadmium concentrations to toxicity.

Relevant literature:

- WHO. Environmental Health Criteria for Cadmium.
- Jarup L, Akesson A. Current status of cadmium as an environmental health problem. *Toxicol Appl Pharmacol.* 2009.

5. Lack of Corroborative Toxicological Evidence

No measurements were obtained from validated matrices, including:

- Kidney or liver cadmium concentrations (target organs)
- Urinary ca[2026-06-26, 11:03:11 AM] Gaura: dmium (gold standard biomarker of exposure)
- Renal tubular markers (β 2-microglobulin, NAG)



Without such data, a diagnosis of cadmium poisoning cannot be established.

Relevant literature:

- Bernard A. Cadmium & its adverse effects on human health. Indian J Med Res. 2008.
- Kjellström T, Nordberg GF. Biological monitoring of cadmium exposure. Environ Health Perspect.

6. Absence of Clinical and Pathological Correlation

Cadmium toxicity has well-characterized manifestations, including:

- Proximal renal tubular dysfunction
- Proteinuria and renal impairment
- Osteomalacia (chronic exposure)
- Severe pneumonitis (acute inhalation)

The report acknowledges that such findings were not documented, which is inconsistent with its conclusion of chronic poisoning.

Relevant literature:

- Nordberg GF. Histor

[2026-06-26, 11:03:11 AM] Gaura: 7. Unsupported Toxicokinetic Assumptions

The report asserts that cadmium in hair reflects blood levels and ingestion patterns. This is incorrect.

Cadmium toxicokinetics are dominated by renal accumulation and metallothionein binding, and hair incorporation is poorly correlated with systemic burden.

- Satarug S et al. Cadmium toxicokinetics and mechanisms of toxicity. Toxicol Lett. 2010.

8. Compromised Sample Integrity and Chain of Custody

The hair samples were described as religious relics stored for decades in uncontrolled environments. There is no documented forensic chain of custody. Such conditions make environmental contamination highly probable and preclude reliable forensic interpretation.

9. Speculative and Unfounded Homicide Conclusions

The report advances a detailed theory of chronic homicidal poisoning over ~18 months, including assertions regarding administration, access, and intent. These conclusions are not supported by toxicological data and represent speculative reconstruction beyond the limits of scientific evidence.

Relevant literature:

- NAS. Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States. 2009.
- PCAST. Forensic Science in Criminal Courts: Ensuring Scientific Validity. 2016.

10. Internal Inconsistencies

The report simultaneously concludes:

- Chronic cadmium poisoning occurred, yet
- No characteristic organ damage or clinical findings were present

This contradiction further undermines the reliability of the conclusions.

In my continued professional opinion, the Truth Labs report:

- Relies on a scientifically unreliable matrix (hair)
- Employs methodologically flawed analytical interpretation
- Lacks corroborative toxicological, clinical, and pathological evidence
- Advances speculative conclusions beyond the data

Accordingly, the report does not meet accepted standards of forensic toxicology and would be highly vulnerable to challenge under Daubert/Frye criteria.

Kind regards,

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