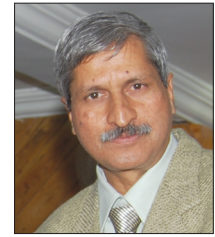


# Relevance of forensic odontology in the world today



Irrespective of the age, the word “forensic” alerts the individuals who hear it, especially when it is clubbed with specialties like medical/dental. The professionals get even more interested to know more about it. As we are aware, the Web has made the world smaller in terms of access and very vast in terms of source of knowledge that it can give for the person who is interested to learn more and who wants to contribute for a better world.

Though the speed of the earth spinning on its axis (24 h) and its time taken to orbit around the sun have remained constant, however, people living on the earth are moving around more frequently and swiftly, so keeping a tab on them and precisely identifying them has become more important and essential. With the change in lifestyle of these people, it has become even more challenging to collect and assimilate the data of each individual in the diverse societies of every country. The latest technology should be put to best use in compiling and retrieving the data of individuals both at national and international levels as and when required by agencies like INTERPOL.

*“No identification is better than wrong identification”*

So, it is very important that the professionals and members concerned with forensic science are sufficiently trained at an international level to positively and accurately identify the individual who has gone missing or is lost or deceased or victimized. The sustained and dedicated efforts of the members of IAFO and their associates, with the help of good publications like journals, seminars, workshops, and conferences held in the last 10–12 years have helped forensic dentistry see good light and also have stimulated more and more dental professionals to pursue their quest for knowledge in the field of forensic dentistry.

With the DCI introducing the study of forensic dentistry at


UG level and also recently approving the proposal to start MDS in forensic dentistry, they have brightened the chances for interested dental professionals to enhance their knowledge in the same and contribute to the field both at national as well as international levels. They can also be important members of the Disaster Management Team which has been set up in every country as the need for the same is more significant in the present world scenario. The technology of stem cell preservation also could be used in forensic dentistry if the AM and PM data are properly stored and retrieved accurately.

The digital OPG of every individual can also be stored in the chip of the ADHAR like card, along with other information of the individual. The same could be retrieved and analyzed when necessary using the required software.

With more than 40,000 dead bodies going without identification in our country annually, it is very important that forensic odontologists find best ways and means to help in identifying the deceased accurately and also economically, since DNA profiling is more expensive and at times not practical.

The DCI should make it mandatory for all dental colleges and dental clinics to maintain and preserve the patient records, including updating the same periodically. The students should be trained from UG level itself in this regard. They should be encouraged to participate in forensic debate and discussions and familiarize with different software used globally for the process of identification, age estimations, sex determinations, etc.

The most encouraging and satisfying observation is that dental identification is looked upon today as a reliable methodology which is highly accurate when used correctly in identifying the individual concerned. This fact also is helping in motivating the young and senior dental professionals to take up more research work in this field.

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