



Pathology Biology Section – 2010

G10 Forensic Medicine in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Fawzi A. Benomran, MD*, Dubai Police, Dubai Medical College, PO Box 39844, Dubai, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The goal of this presentation is to present the medicolegal features of the United Arab Emirates with different culture and spectrum. Interest to the audience would include the type of cases examined compared to that of their own countries, and this presentation will contain some interesting statistical information.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by presenting information on a topic where little information is published about this region of the world, as far as forensic science is concerned.

Various characteristics of the medicolegal scene in Dubai are described, along with an overview of all cases examined over a period of six years. During the period of study, a total of 17,683 cases were examined in the Department of Forensic Medicine of Dubai Police General Headquarters. This constituted a yearly average of (2,947). The average annual increment was 11.13%, the percentage of increase between 2002 and 2007 being 68.96%. This rate of increase represents the actual increase of referral by the prosecution and the police, as well as the increase due to population growth of 7% to 8% annually. Clinical cases of injuries were found in 10,165 (57.48%), 5,404 (30.56%) postmortem examinations, 1,525 (8.62%) clinical cases of sexual crimes, 409 (2.3%) age estimations, 58 (0.32%) medical responsibility, 20 (0.11%) criminal abortion, 61 (0.34%) civil actions, and 38 (0.21%) miscellaneous cases. Males represented 4,846 (89.7%) of postmortem examination; females 558 (10.3%). The age ranged from (0-90) years, with a mean age of 40.5 years. The peak incidence was in the age group (20-50) years, where the extremes of age were least represented. Only in 361 cases (6.68% of the grand total) the deceased was a local citizen. Autopsies amounted to 394 cases, which constituted 7.29% of the total deaths examined. The four manners of death in descending order of frequency were natural 3003 (55.57%), accidental 1,727 (32%), suicidal 498 (9.2%), homicidal 164 (3%). The manner was undetermined in 12 (0.22%) of the cases over the six-year period.

As anywhere else, interesting cases have been seen occasionally. These include all manners of death, even a natural manner of death that occurs in circumstances that puzzle the crime scene investigators. Unusual cases previously reported include a case of homicidal strangulation that was staged by the perpetrators to simulate suicidal hanging; masking and bondage in suicidal hanging; accidental death due to inhalation of sulfuric acid fumes; postmortem sole incisions in a morphine overdose; an unusual case of accidental positional asphyxia; and, accidental sand inhalation which was misdiagnosed by the doctor in the hospital. Unpublished cases of note are several: a man was found dead in the passenger seat of his own car, which was locked and his trousers and pants were half way down his thighs, which was found later to be due to massive cardiac infarction: a man alleged by his family to have been found dead in his bed was discovered later to have committed suicide by hanging and the family cut him down and put him in bed to avoid loss of life insurance policy if the fact of suicide death was known; and in the drug scene arena, during 2008 three accidental fatalities from misuse of Tramadol (Ultram) tablets were reported for the first time. Bloody death scenes are often found when the police suspect homicide, but the forensic evidence confirmed that the death was suicidal. In one case self mutilation was so extensive that it really took some courage from the forensic medical examiner to face the suspicious and skeptical crime scene officers.

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