

Abstract

Review of medico-legal experience involving Tsunami disaster in Sri Lanka

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The 4/5 of the coastal belt of Sri Lanka was severely affected by the tsunami disaster in late December demanding an urgent and organized disaster management scheme. As such a module was not available at the occurrence of this disaster despite having an effective medico-legal system in the country, a variable degree of response was observed from the medico-legal cadres of the northern, eastern and the southern provinces. The members of medical and legal fraternities involved in various aspects of disaster management in Sri Lanka are currently experiencing queries related to recovery, identification and disposal of the deceased victims and treatment and preventive measures adopted pertaining to survivors. The deceased represented a significant proportion of the victims in this disaster and hence the necessity of a proper death investigation system and a disposal plan cannot be underestimated. Likewise the requirement of a proper emergency care plan networking all major institutions in Sri Lanka was brought to light by the Tsunami disaster. In view of current disaster management proposals forwarded to the parliament, it is essential that Sri Lanka should have its own disaster management and emergency care plan urgently through the collaboration of all professionals and institutions concerned and implement it through constant supervision.