

## **Medico-legal interpretation of casualties presented with physical assault to the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya**

**D.M.G. Fernando<sup>1\*</sup>, S.U.B. Tennakoon<sup>2</sup> and W.M.M.H.P. Wickramasinghe<sup>1</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, <sup>2</sup> Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka,  
\*dineshmgfdo@yahoo.com*

We explored factors related to assaulted casualties presented to the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. The objectives were to identify demographic factors related to casualties; ascertain types of weapons involved; and classify injuries and category of hurt.

Data was collected from medico-legal examinations carried out by the first author from January 2007 to August 2012. Demographic factors, examination findings and circumstances related to the assault were analyzed.

Amongst the 519 assaulted casualties, 400(77.1%) were males and 115 (22.2%) were females. The majority of the casualties (29.9%) were between ages 20-29 years. The mean time of incident was 3:18 p.m. (SD 4.93). Considering the category of hurt, 66% amount to non-grievous injuries, while 31.8% had grievous/endangering life/fatal in ordinary cause of nature. One hundred and sixty two casualties were presented with blunt weapon injuries, while only 17 were presented with sharp weapon injuries. Seven (1.7%) were presented with stab injuries. Two hundred and sixty three (50.7%) had abrasions, 249 (48%) had contusions, 155 (29.9%) had lacerations, 64 (12.3%) had cut injuries, 106 (20.4%) had fractures, and only 2 (0.4%) casualties were presented with burn injuries. Thirteen (2.5%) of the casualties had breath smelling of alcohol while 503 (96.9%) of them were not under such influence.

It is a common perception that the rate of violent crime is increasing through the years, but Sri Lanka lacks a database of reported assaults of any sort to analyze the trends; while in other countries it is shown that there is a decrease in this trend. A high proportion of young male casualties that were reported correlate with other similar study results which found that they were most likely to be victims of violence.