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Title : Comparison of patterns of sexual assault against male victims during and after terrorism in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: After the defeat of terrorism in May 2009, we observed a change in social, cultural, political and crime patterns. Though a lot of studies have been done on sexual assault of female victims, no in-depth study has been done on male victims. This study was conducted to compare the nature of injuries and characteristics of male victims of sexual assaults which occurred during a time of terrorism with those after terrorism ceased.

Methods: A cross-sectional study on male victims of sexual assaults was conducted at selected tertiary care hospitals. All Medico-legal examination forms (MLEFs) of 6 consented forensic medical practitioners covering a 10 year period from May-2004 to May-2014 were screened.

Results: There were 31,210 MLEF's during this 10 year period, with 102 cases (0.3%) being male victims of sexual assault. Ages of the victims ranged from 3-36 years, with 68% being 10-19 years of age. Ninety four percent (94%) had no injuries. Fresh anal tears were found in four and old scars in two. Thirty five percent (35%) were during terrorism and 65% after terrorism ceased. The place of living and the age of victims showed no significant difference ($p>0.05$). The circumstances such as time, place, perpetrator and number of incidents were significantly different ($p<0.05$). The nature of the sexual acts showed no significant difference ($p>0.05$) but there was a difference in the rate of referrals to a psychiatrist difference ($p<0.05$).

Conclusions: During the time of terrorism, sexual assaults on males occurred during daytime, outside home, by non-relatives and multiple times. After terrorism ceased, these sexual assaults occurred during night, at home, by relatives and a single episode. There was no significant difference in the nature of sexual acts during the 2 periods. The significant increase in male sexual assaults at home by relatives on teenage boys after terrorism ceased needs to be further investigated in order to develop evidence based interventions.

Key words: male sexual assault, during terrorism, after terrorism, medico-legal study