BONES UNVEILED GRUESOME MURDER

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ABSTRACT

A bundle of bone in a carton was sent to the Deptt. of Forensic Medicine, Guwahati Medical College for autopsy. Police suspected that the bones belonged to a young boy of Guwahati who was kidnapped and ransom demanded.

Systematic examination revealed that the bones belonged to a single human being, sex was male and the age was ascertained to be between 16 to 18 years. The stature was calculated from long bones to be 160.4 cm ± 3.9 cm. The skull showed one ante mortem incised wound over the right parietal bone involving both the tables. The time since death was estimated to be 1 to 2 years.

The skull, scapula, hip bone and one femur were sent to State Forensic Science Laboratory for Superimposition, DNA typing and Chemical analysis. Superimposition could not be carried out and report of DNA typing not received. Chemical analysis gave negative test for common poisons. Opinion regarding the cause of death was given subsequently as coma resulting from homicidal incised wound of the skull.

The autopsy report, corroborative evidences and subsequent investigation by the police confirmed the suspicion of police.

Key Words : DNA Typing, Bones.

Case Report

A bundle of bones were sent to the Deptt of Forensic Medicine Gauhati Medical College Guwahati on 23rd of April 2001 By the Police for autopsy. Police suspected that the bones belong to a boy from Guwahati who was kidnapped for ransom around two years back.

History of the case

As per the statements of the police and the relatives of the deceased accompanying the case property, the suspected boy was kidnapped around two years back for ransom. The boy died of some natural disease after around three months of his kidnapping, said one of the kidnappers who also led the police to the spot from where police in presence of the magistrate dug out the skeletal remains buried around one and half feet under the ground. Remnants of a gamocha (a sort of towel) and a stripped T shirt were also recovered along with the bones.

Findings during Autopsy

A bundle of bones found packed in a carton. All the bones were devoid of any muscles or ligaments found separated from one another, except a few pieces of the skull bones which were attached to one another. All the bones were dry and grayish white in colour.

On examination found the following:

Skull bones- all separated, except the left parietal, left temporal, and portion of the occipital, which were found attached together, right maxillary bone with 1st and 2nd permanent molars attached and with space for the 3rd molar, left maxillary bone devoid of any attached teeth, mandible having the lateral incisors, canine, both the premolars, 1st and 2nd molars and space for the 3rd molar in left side and the permanent canine, 1st and 2nd permanent molars and space for the 3rd molar. Both the femurs were present, the length being 42cm (in Hepburn osteometric board), both the hip bones- epiphyseal union of both the ischeal tuberosity and the iliac crest were yet to be completed. Left humerus, right ulna, right radius and upper part of the left ulna all were found separated. Both the scapulae were
found with complete epiphyseal union of the coracoid but the acromion processes were yet to be fused. Sacrum was found without the coccyx, the upper two segments yet to unite. Apart from these, there were two clavicles, 11 vertebrae and a total of 17 ribs, 9 from the left and the rest 8 from the right side.

The epiphyseal union of the bones around the lower end of radius and ulna were yet to be fused, but there was complete epiphyseal union of bones around the lower end of humerus and upper end of radius and ulna.

Angle of the mandible was everted and the shape of the bone was V shaped with broad ascending ramus.

In hip bones: Obturator foramens were large and oval, ileums were high and vertical in anatomical position with deep anterior surface, ischeo-pubic index being 80.

Injury: An incised wound measuring 5 cm x 0.2 cm was found involving both the tables on the right parietal bone extending from the right parietal eminence up to the lambdoid suture in right side, blood clots were found adherent to the cut margins.

After recording the findings, the skull, one scapula, one hip bone and one femur along with a photograph of the missing boy were sent to the State Forensic Science laboratory for superimposition, DNA typing and toxicological analysis. The toxicological analysis gave negative test for common poisons and personal identification by superimposition could not be done due to incomplete nature of the skull.

The final opinion was given as
- The skeletal remains were of human origin of one and of same individual.
- Sex was male
- Age of the individual was above 16 years and bellow 18 years.
- Height of the individual was approximately 160.4cm ± 3.9cm.
- The time since death was approximately between 18 to 24 months.
- Death of the person was due to coma resulting from the ante mortem incised wound of the skull described which was caused by sharp cutting weapon and homicidal in nature.

Photographs