ANIL AGGRAWAL'S
Internet Journal of
Forensic Medicine and Toxicology
The world's first online journal devoted entirely to forensic medicine and toxicology · Published 1 January and 1 July

VOL. 1, NO. 2
Downloaded from www.anilaggrawal.com · ISSN 0972-8074 (Online) · https://www.anilaggrawal.com/ij/vol_001_no_002/editorial.html

Editorial

Webward Ho!

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I first came to know about the wonders of the internet, sometime in March, 1996, when I was in the University of Shiga, Japan on a WHO fellowship. I and my colleague (a young intelligent doctor called Zsoldt Kozma from Hungary) were given separate computers with internet connections. I didn't know I had one, till I found Kozma ogling at some strange figures and texts in his computer. I thought initially, that these interesting texts and figures were in his hard disk, but soon I realized he

was getting them through somewhere else. I asked him more about it, and he was the one who introduced me to the wonders of the internet. Not that I had not heard about it before, but it was the first time, I was having a ***practical*** experience of it. Needless to say, I was immediately attracted to it - in somewhat morbid way, I must confess.

That was also the first place, where I made the first E-mail of my life from. It was made to Professor Anthony Busuttil, Regius Professor of Forensic Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, with whom I had spent a year in 1989-1990, and had learnt a great deal of forensic medicine from him. During the year, I had come to respect him a lot (as also his two deputies, Gyan Fernando and Basil Purdue), and had developed good friendship with him. Within a day or so, I received a message from his secretary, that he was away on some tour, and would get back to me on arrival. Here was a letter sent from Japan to UK, and I received the reply within a day! That was unbelievable, especially since I was so used to snail mail. Internet was for me for sure!

From Japan, I went further eastward, and reached US (in April 1996), where in the *Armed Forces Institute of Pathology*, Washington D.C., I continued my adventures with the internet. I had written a letter (by snail mail) to my brother-in-law Bintoo in Australia, long time back (from Japan), and had not yet received his reply. By a stroke of luck, I acquired his E-mail address, and immediately E-mailed him the phone number of the Hotel where I was staying. *Lo and Behold*! In the evening I got a phone call from him right in my hotel room. Despite having known the wonders of the internet, it was still unbelievable for me. Yes, Internet was for me for sure!

I still had no clue how to make web pages of my own, a thing which I had secretly cherished. On June 22, 1998, I visited a local book shop in Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi, and bought a book "***HTML: The Complete Reference***" by Thomas A. Powell. I was with my son Tarun, and I told him that I was gambling on that book. I didn't really know I would be able to understand it at all. But the gamble paid off. The book was well-written. Add to this my burning desire to learn this new and exciting branch, and soon I found myself making reasonably good web pages. I launched my first website - Anil Aggrawal's Forensic Toxicology Page - sometime in August 98, and quite satisfactorily for me, it is attracting good web traffic. I had entered the world of web.

Although I had succeeded in making reasonably good web pages, and was attracting good traffic, I still realized quite acutely that we could make better uses of the web. It was such a strong tool. Then during the 21st Annual conference of the Indian Academy of Forensic Medicine from 6th to 8th February 2000 at Manipal, Karnataka, I met Dr. Basant Lal, a professor of Forensic Medicine at the Medical College, Rohtak, Haryana, who had brought two very good photographs of homicidal hanging for a poster session. So impressive were the photographs that I immediately suggested him to submit them to some journal for publication. He was not the type who would bother with organizing his experiences in a rigorous journal format, and quite predictably he dismissed my suggestion. Yet I realized that somehow his interesting experiences must be brought to the notice of this world. It was at that point in time, that it suddenly dawned upon me that I could host his photographs on one of my numerous websites.

...The current issue of the journal is in your hands. I have no idea how you are going to like it. But I believe you will. I certainly have left no stone unturned in making it as readable as possible. I was on vacation in the month of June (2000), and almost the whole month was spent designing the current issue. I do admit however that there is going to be scope for improvement and I shall be looking forward to hearing from you...

One of my numerous websites? Why not start a new website altogether? Accretion of ideas continued throughout the day, and the next day, I was ready for a new website. I would call it the "*Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine*". I shared this idea with my good friends and colleagues Dr. S.K. Khanna and Dr. Anil Kumar, both Professors in my own department and they helped me further with ideas. The Internet Journal was born on February 25, 2000.

I was not sure of the response it would generate, but I found persons of repute gradually joining as you can see in the ***Editorial Board*** page. This is the second issue of the journal and we have started putting Dissertations on the journal, a feat which, to the best of my knowledge, no journal has been able to do before. In this way at least this journal has broken new paths. More advantages of the internet journals can be seen in our ***faq*** section. I, for one, certainly believe that internet journals are here to stay, and are going to pose real good challenge to our good old "paper" journals. I wouldn't be surprised if in ten years we see a great spurt in the growth of these internet journals. *Twenty first century is going to be the century of the web!*

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