

## 東日本大震災現地活動報告

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私は警察庁・日本法医学会の派遣により3月13日から17日までの5日間を宮城県岩沼市、4月30日から5月5日までの6日間を宮城県角田市・名取市・東松島市・石巻市・女川町において災害時死体検案支援・身元確認作業に従事しました。日本法医学会は阪神淡路大震災での経験を活かし、災害時死体検案支援対策本部を設置し、震災直後より警察庁の要請により岩手県・宮城県・福島県へ会員の派遣を行いました。3月11日の金曜日に地震が発生しましたが、日曜日の夕方に警察庁に集合せよという連絡を受けて、同日未明に現地に入りました。現地は非常に寒い時期で、かつ余震も多く発生していたため、宮城県警より安全確保への配慮があり、宿泊は山形市内でした。朝6時過ぎに山形県警のマイクロバスで宮城県警本部に移動し、そこから分散して宮城県各地の検案会場に向かいました。夜は全員が夜10時頃に県警本部に帰還し、山形の宿舎に戻るのが12時頃ということで、安全は確保されていますが、時間的には非常にタイトなものでした。

宮城県に第1期として派遣されましたが、インフラはすべて破壊され、直後の震災地は混乱しており、検案会場には続々とご遺体が収容され、その甚大さは対応の限度を超えていました。地元歯科医師会と共同で検案・身元確認作業を行いましたが、現在、口腔内所見の採取方法・記載方法がシステム化されていないため、記録用紙および口腔内写真撮影・エックス線撮影等の点で地元歯科医師会との軋轢も生じました。しかしながら、共通の悲しみ、義務感を有するわけですから、その誤解はすぐに寛解したのは言うまでもありません。直後の従事において死後硬直が生じているご遺体の開口は容易ではありませんでした。5月は第11



## Impressions of the Great East Japan Earthquake 3.11

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After the March 11th earthquake I engaged in postmortem examination support and identification work in Miyagi Prefecture by request of the National Police Agency and the Japanese Society of Legal Medicine. Between March 13th and 17th, I went to Iwanuma City. From April 30th to May 5th, I was in Kakuta City, Natori City, Higashi-Matsushima City, Ishinomaki City and Onagawa Town.

The Japanese Society of Legal Medicine, having learnt from the experience of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake disaster, quickly set up postmortem examination task forces. I was first contacted by telephone on Sunday the 13th at around 2pm and was asked to be ready to leave for Yamagata at 6pm the same day. Hence, reflecting the urgency of the situation. Twelve members consisting of doctors, dentists and professors left from Kasumigaseki by police bus. We arrived at midnight. Because of safety concerns regarding aftershocks we stayed in Yamagata City. Every morning at 6am we were picked up and taken to the Miyagi Prefectural Police emergency headquarters. After a briefing on the situation we were divided into teams and dispatched to various locations. As local infrastructure was severely damaged, roads and the like, it was difficult to get from one place to another. We returned to the Miyagi Prefectural Police emergency headquarters at 10pm every day, and did not get back to Yamagata until midnight.

Due to the large number of deceased, postmortems were undertaken in gymnasiums, at the police academy, baseball and high school stadiums and even at the wholesale vegetable market, in total, eleven locations were utilized. The number of victims recovered by the Ground Self Defense Force and the Police was never ending and at times overwhelming. We worked on postmortem examination and identification in co-operation with the Miyagi local dental association. At that time, rigor mortis had set in making examinations very difficult, particularly the opening of the jaw. The procedural





期として派遣されました。3月と異なり、ご遺体数は減少傾向にありましたが、約2カ月経過しているため、ご遺体の死後変化は激しく、あらためて大震災の傷跡の深さを再認識させられました。

3月の被災地は、お亡くなりになった人々の尊厳を守るため、行政、自衛隊、海上保安庁、消防、警察の諸官は不眠不休での作業に従事しており、被災した人々、救助を行う人々すべてが未曾有の出来事の中で生と死に直面しながら必死に生きた時間だったと思います。多くの歯科医師が検案支援に従事し、社会貢献を行いました。誰もがこのような過酷な業務に従事した経験はなく、その精神的な疲労や負担は多大であり、PTSD に対してのアフターフォローも必要かと思えます。従事された先生方が帰任直後、やはり気が重くなることは致し方ないと思います。ただ、我々の従事は一日も早く、ご遺体をご家族の元にお返りする努力です。お亡くなりになった方や、ご遺体への奉仕であり、無言の感謝が存在すると信じるのが大切です。



differences for identification caused minor friction, for example points such as paperwork and the necessity for intraoral photographic and radiographic records. However, after two days the common sorrow and the difficulties we were experiencing dissolved our differences. If a common procedure had been in place, we would not have experienced disharmony. Therefore, the Japanese Dental Association needs to urgently create a standardized identification procedure for all situations involving postmortem examinations.

The second time I volunteered was in May. I was dispatched with the eleventh team (in March I was in the first team) to the Miyagi Prefectural Police emergency headquarters. Unlike March, while the number of victims had decreased, the impact of the tragedy of this great earthquake disaster was in part, more intensely felt because of the condition of the victim's bodies. Some of the cadavers did not resemble human beings. For example, bodies which were in water for a long time took on a waxy appearance, others discovered on land were in advanced stages of decomposition.

Miyagi Local Government administration staff, the Ground Self-Defense Force, the Coast Guard, the Fire Brigade, and the Police



また、今回の経験がまたいつか訪れる災害の備えになるよう、法歯学のさらなる充実や歯科医師会の緊急対応システムの構築につながることを願っています。今回のような大規模災害では、警察、自衛隊、消防、海上保安庁、医師会、歯科医師会、日本法医学会が活動していて、即時対応するために、日頃から他の組織とのチャンネル作りをすることが大切だと思います。



Force were engaged in very difficult work. They went without food, sleep and days off in order to respect the feelings of the living and the dignity of the dead, while at the same time grieving silently. It was desperate times while people faced life and death during an unprecedented disaster.

It was unlike anything most dentists had experienced before. They engaged in postmortem examinations for the first time in their careers on a volunteer basis, thus contributing to the recovery. The severe duties, the mental fatigue and burden were great. Therefore I think follow-up is needed for people who may be experiencing PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) in the aftermath of the disaster. After returning home the after-effects of the experience were expressed in many ways. For example, sleeplessness, depression and even at times imagining the spirits of the victims. After such an experience, one could not help being depressed. In the future, I feel help is required immediately after returning to normal life in these situations. But during this time, our job was to return the deceased to their families as soon as possible. It was our mission to the person who had passed away and to the bereaved. Unlike the police force, there was no direct contact with the families. However, I feel it is important for us to imagine that silent gratitude exists. For my being, belief such as this, helped in the healing of PTSD.

In conclusion, I think that it is important during large-scale disasters for people to see strong leadership and determination by the Prime Minister and Government. As well as more efficient networking by all organizations this would ensure a faster response. I hope that as a result of this tragedy the current disaster protocol can evolve in readiness for future disasters.

