

Conference on forensic studies focuses on intersection of criminology, law and psychology

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The audience heard from two eminent speakers at the plenary session - Dr. Ebru Ibish from International Vision University, North Macedonia, and Prof. Dr. Debarati Halder from Parul University. While Dr. Halder spoke about her work in cybercrimes and the role of law at the intersection of criminology, victimology, psychology and forensics, Dr. Ibish looked at criminality of juveniles from the same interdisciplinary lens. Numerous researchers, practitioners and educators also presented their research across five panel sessions, exploring the versatility of forensic criminology and law alongside other fields like psychology and sociology.

Dr Sanjeev P. Sahni, Principal Director of Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences (JIBS) said: "We are progressively moving towards a more digital and scientifically advanced world, where both crime and crime investigation is becoming technologically advanced. A new expert in crime, whether it be a forensic scientist or criminologist or forensic psychologist, can no longer operate in the silos of their discipline. A forensic scientist needs to understand about evidence law and cognitive biases, and a criminologist needs to understand cognitive psychology and digital science and cryptocurrency scams. A successful career in these disciplines require that you are able to apply and analyse based on different types of knowledge. This is why we are keen to provide a platform for the exchange of such knowledge."

Dr Sahni is a noted behavioural expert who is also a Professor at O.P, Jindal Global University and is the Director of Centre for Criminology and Forensic Studies.

The Supreme Court, while hearing on the matter of a financial scam last week, had rued the lack of forensic facilities in the country that are causing a back log in the criminal justice system. Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and M.M. Suresh have highlighted a problem that has also been flagged previously in terms of lack of resources and personnel. This is one of the few reasons why forensic evidence is yet to be used predominantly in criminal adjudications within the Indian criminal justice system. Where the aim of both - law and forensic science- is to arrive at the truth, justice cannot be held at bay due to lack of resources, poor gatekeeping or lack of research to keep up with new crime techniques.

Prof. Poulomi Bhadra, Assistant Director of the Centre for Criminology and Forensic Studies, and Assistant Professor of Forensic and Crime Studies also added that "the legal profession is still catching up to the scientific literacy in forensic sciences, meanwhile crime trends are changing and the new criminal is becoming increasingly tech-savvy. If we are to bridge the gap and address crime within the justice system, there is a strong need to improve interdisciplinary understanding between the legal and scientific professionals. We need to understand the strengths and shortcomings of each discipline if we are to use both adequately in the courtroom".

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