

DIRECTORATE OF FORENSICS SERVICES, HIMACHAL PRADESH

INTRODUCTION:

The journey of Directorate of Forensics Services commenced with the creation of State Forensic Science Laboratory on 13-12-1988 at Police Headquarters, Shimla. The organization primarily caters to the needs of investigation agencies viz. Police, Vigilance, CID. Also, rendering services to judiciary, universities, boards, banks, enquiry commissions and other government departments. Before it came into existence, the said departments were dependent on central government institutions: Central Forensic



Science Laboratories, Government Examiner of Questioned Documents and Serologist to the Government of India, Kolkata. The FSL started functioning from barracks of Police Complex Bharari, Shimla with two divisions encompassing four specialities namely Biology & Serology and Chemistry & Toxicology. Then moved to Junga in 1996 and started functioning from the premises of Police Training School. Two more divisions viz. Documents & Photography and Physics & Ballistics were created in 1997 and became functional in the year 2000. In order to ensure independent functioning of investigation agencies working on scientific principles, the laboratory was placed directly under Home Department in the year 2005. Thereafter in the first meeting of HP Forensic Science Development Board (2006) two new divisions viz. DNA and NDPS were created at State FSL, and two Regional Forensic Science Laboratories were created each in the Northern Range and Central Range at Dharamshala and Mandi. For the continuous development of Forensic Science in the Himachal Pradesh, the First Five year Perspective plan (2014-19) was approved in the 8th meeting of HPFSDB in the year 2014.

A First: Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) cells were established in State FSL & RFSLs in 2014-15 as per Interpol guidelines. Voice analysis & Digital Forensics at State FSL, DNA facility at RFSL, NR Dharamshala, RFSL, CR, Mandi and First District Forensic Unit (DFU) at Bilaspur were sanctioned in 2015-16 and subsequently operationalized. The Forensic Psychology Division was sanctioned in 2017 and the Digital Forensic and Forensic Auditing

facilities, the latter being first of its kind in the country, to detect frauds through digital evidences was created at RFSL, NR, Dharamshala in 2017-18. Likewise, the voice analysis facility was extended to RFSL CR, Mandi. Himachal Forensics has taken a lead by making amendment in the HP Police Act, 2007 in the year 2018 to bring administrative reforms wherein the Forensics Directorate would be headed by the Director General (Forensics), Forensic set-up at Range would be headed by the Range Director and District Units would be headed by the Assistant Director/Dy. Director besides integration of Finger Print Bureau with the Directorate of Forensics Services to bring all forensic facilities under one umbrella. Further, two more District Forensic Units one each in Northern Range and 2 Southern Range were created and operationalised in Police District Nurpur and Police District Baddi (2019-21).

The Director was declared Head of the Department in the year 2009 for more administrative and financial autonomy. The new nomenclature Directorate of Forensic Science (DFS) was approved by the Govt. in accordance with the HP Police Act, 2007 and notified in the Business of the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh (Allocation) Rules, 1971 in the year 2015-16. Now nomenclature of Directorate of Forensic Science (DFS) has been amended as Directorate of Forensics Services in the Business of the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh (Allocation) Rules, 1971 in January 2020.

A scheme was designed, approved and operationalised in 2017 for disposal of BioMedical Waste from the labs. The H.P. Forensic Document Examiner and Finger Print Examiner Authority (2017) for private practitioners were approved by the Government.

Himachal Forensics scaled new heights to emerge first amongst State & Central Forensic Labs in the country after becoming member of Asian Forensic Sciences Network (AFSN). Also, DFS, HP appeared on the global map when succeeded in getting ISO/IEC 17025:2005 (2018) and thereafter ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation from NABL and became fifth State FSL & first RFSL NABL accredited labs in the country. Likewise, NDPS division of State FSL got registered with the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) to participate in the International Collaborative Exercise (ICE) as a measure of quality assurance programme with the United Nation Lab.

Two Cyber Training Centres, State-of-the-art cyber forensic labs, at State FSL & RFSL Dharamshala were established with the funds received under Prevention of Cyber Crime against Woman & Children scheme (CCPWC/MHA, GOI) and strengthened the DNA and Cyber labs under Nirbhaya Fund MHA, GOI. All the laboratories of the DFS H.P. are the approved centres for crime case analysis of Central Investigation Agencies viz. National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the department earned appreciation from the NIA and many other investigation agencies of the state and the country.

This Directorate in consonance with the budget speech assurance (2020-21), took stride to solve cold cases and repeat offences; an initiative was taken to set up DNA Database. Accordingly, Small Pond DNA database software was procured by incurring expenditure of 55 lacs and thereafter started making database of the samples analyzed in the DNA laboratories (2022).