INTRODUCTION:
The neck is an important part of the body housing vital structures which are important for sustaining life. Though it seems asphyxia to be the main cause of death in hanging cases, injury to many of the vital organs/ parts in the neck plays a major role in the process of death. In compression around the neck, cause of death may be in various ways, like venous congestion, airway obstruction, cerebral anoxia, cardiac arrest (following vaso-vagal arrest) and injury to spinal cord. In hanging cases depending on the type of hanging, ligature material and various factors, injury to neck muscles, vessels, cartilage, bone and spinal cord may be seen. The present study was undertaken to study various neck structure injuries in hanging cases brought for autopsy in A.M.C.H. The present study tries to find out the injuries of neck structures which may singly or associated with asphyxia responsible for the cause of death.

MATERIALS AND METHOD:
The present study was conducted in the Mortuary, Department of Forensic Medicine, Assam Medical College & Hospital, Dirughar, Assam for a period of two years from January 2015 to December 2016. A total of 2747 autopsies were done in the said period. 210 cases were found to be died from hanging. All hanging cases were included for this study. The various data were collected as follows:

1. Documents and materials supplied by the investigating officer
2. Thorough postmortem examination findings
3. Histopathological investigations

The data obtained were put in proforma and various findings were observed and analysed. The findings were discussed and compared with other similar studies.

RESULT AND OBSERVATION:
210 (7.64%) cases were found to be died due to hanging. All hanging cases were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspension type</th>
<th>No. of case</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the victims seen to use soft material as ligature, 133 cases (63.3%).

Level of ligature was found above the level of thyroid cartilage in maximum number of cases 157, (74.7%) and in 53 (25.2%) cases it was found at level of thyroid cartilage.

Atypical hanging seen in 136 (64.8%) cases whereas rest of the cases were found to be typical hanging.

In 98% cases ligature mark found to be distinct whereas in 2% case the ligature mark were faint.

Palpebral and conjunctival haemorrhage was seen in 98 (46.67%) cases.

Various types of neck structure injuries were found which are tabulated below.[Table 3]
Carotid artery injury seen in relation to type of ligature material was as follows. [Table 5]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ligature material used</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Carotid artery injury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft material</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard material</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION:

Cause of death from hanging occurs not only from compression of trachea but also depends on various factors. From our study it is reconfirmed that in cases of hanging though only asphyxia is commonly mentioned as cause of death but it is most of the times is associated with other contributing factors like venous congestion, cerebral anoxia, vasovagal attack, spinal injuries etc. Hence during dealing with autopsy of hanging cases it is always important to look for these aspects to avoid any erroneous interpretation.

References: