

By Iman Sherif, Staff Reporter
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UAE aims to create DNA database in 10-year project

20,000 tests to be conducted as part of a three-month experiment

Abu Dhabi: The UAE has large plans and grandiose ambitions to create a national DNA database.

"This is a ten-year project and the UAE is set to be among the first countries to establish a DNA to all its residents and one of 55 countries out of 180 that will establish such a database," Colonel Dr Ahmad Al Marzouqi, Head of the UAE National Database Center told Gulf News on the sidelines of the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) seminar held in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

The vision is to create four labs set to examine 250,000 samples each yearly.

"The project that is estimated to cost Dh4 billion is vital to reach our goal," Al Marzouqi added.

"The project is set to be achieved in ten years which is a very high ambition and might take longer so we can't wait another ten or 20 years till accidents occur, we need to simply be ready and think ahead of time," he explained.

In a year, 20,000 DNA tests will be run in a three-month experimental phase in Al Ain Centre.

"These DNA tests will be done from saliva taken from police staff and possibly prisoners," Al Marzouqi added.

Committed to resolve

Criminal cases increased from 159 in 1990 to 800 in 2009.

The UAE is committed to providing the authorities with the proper tools and training to efficiently and rapidly solve such crimes.