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## Short Communication

### Executive Summary of the XXIII Annual State Conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM): Forensicon 2020.

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#### Abstract

The XXIII Annual State conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) - FORENSICON 2020 was hosted virtually by the Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, T.N.M.C. & B.Y.L. Nair Ch. Hospital, Mumbai as a part of the Centenary year celebrations of the Institute on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The intent of the conference was to educate and stimulate the postgraduates and faculty regarding newer pursuits in the field of Forensic Medicine. More than 500 delegates attended the conference, which included experts from the field as well as clinical practitioners and medical officers who were inclined towards Forensic Medicine. The e-release of the souvenir & MLAM Official Journal- Journal of Forensic Medicine, Science & Law was done at the same time. Sessions were conducted by dividing the lectures into Ante-mortem, Post-mortem and Academics. Engrossing topics were chosen which were delivered by established experts of that field. On day two of the conference, oral and poster presentations were done by faculty, postgraduate students and undergraduate students.

#### 1. Introduction

The "XXIII Annual State conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) - 'FORENSICON 2020'" was organized by Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, T.N.M.C. & B.Y.L. Nair Ch. Hospital, Mumbai on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021; as a part of the institute's Centenary Year celebration.<sup>1</sup>

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual State Conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) - 'PRAVARA FORENSICON 2019' had been held on 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at the Pravara Institute of Medical Sciences (Deemed to be University).<sup>2</sup>

The COVID pandemic prevented a conference to be conducted in the year 2020, but in order to avoid skipping the 2020 conference it was decided to conduct the same early in the year in 2021.

Accounting for the restrictions of the pandemic, the conference was hosted on a virtual platform. The conference was hosted by T.N.M.C. & B.Y.L. Nair Ch. Hospital, Mumbai as part of its centenary year celebrations under the eminent leadership of Dr. Ramesh Bharmal, Dean & Director (ME & MH), TNMC & BYL Nair Ch. Hospital, Mumbai.

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The organizing team (**Photograph No.1**) had been successfully proved the task of the organizing this conference abiding the COVID 19 pandemic norms. Objectives of the Conference was to inform and educate the attendees about the various upcoming avenues in Forensic Medicine & Toxicology after completion of M.D. degree in the field, apart from the traditional route of following an academic career. The sessions were divided into “Ante-mortem, Post-mortem and Academic” with topics chosen to intrigue and inspire the postgraduates and undergraduate students with the prospects in the field<sup>3</sup>.

## 2. Conference proceedings

The conference had 507 number of delegates registered from all over the country, which was a boon from having to conduct the conference virtually (**Photograph No. 2**). We also had 152 undergraduate students registering and attending the conference virtually. A Poster presentation competition was held for the undergraduate students, the topics for which were Medical Negligence, Violence against doctors or Violence against Women and children.

**Photograph No. 2 (a & b) : Virtual Platform on which the conference was being held and live presentation.**



**Photograph 1: Organizing Committee FORENSICON 2020** (Left to Right sitting: Dr.S.S.Patil, Dr.R.B.Sukhadeve, Dr.S.C.Mohite, Dr. R.N.Bharmal, Dr.R.B.Deokar, Dr. P.R.Sabale . Left to Right Standing: Row 1: Mrs. S. S. Shinde, Dr. S. Hinnawi, Dr. A.H. Hosmani, Dr. V.N.Waghmare, Dr. S.G.Sawardekar, Dr. S.B.Tonse, Dr. P.P.Kumar, Dr. R.P. Tahiliani, Dr. P.B.Waghmare; Row 2: Mr. V.Patil, Dr. S. Kolle ).

On April 10<sup>th</sup> 2020, between 09:00am and 09:30 am the conference was declared open by our respected Dean and Director Dr. Ramesh Bharmal (**Photograph No. 3**).

**Photograph No. 3: Lamp lighting ceremony by Respected Dean & Director (ME & MH) Dr. Ramesh Bharmal.** From Left to right : Dr. A. Hosmani, Dr. S.C.Mohite, Dr. R. Bharmal, Dr.R.B.Sukhadeve, Dr. P. Waghmare.



**Photograph No. 4: JFMSL V30-Issue 1 of January- June 2021.**



The Inauguration speech and e-release of the FORENSICON 2020 Souvenir<sup>3</sup> and JFMSL V30-Issue 1 of January- June 2021<sup>4</sup> (**Photograph No. 4**) was done by our Chief Guest – Respected Dr. Sanjay Oak, Head of the State COVID Task Force, Ex. Dean & Director (ME & MH).

Mr. Sudhakar Yarlagadda, the Joint Director of the Maharashtra Judicial Academy delivered the Keynote Address on “Importance of Medical Witness & Scientific evidence in dispensing justice”. Dr. Shailesh Mohite, Professor & Head of the Department then felicitated eminent faculty in the field like Dr. V.L. Deshpande, Dr. A.C. Mohanty, Dr. V.V. Wase, Dr. A.P. Dongre, Dr. S.S. Gupta, Dr. S.D. Nanandkar and Dr. A.J. Keoliya for their contribution to the field for more than 30 years. Dr. K.D. Chavan, Dr. Ajit Pathak were felicitated for their academic contribution in the subject of Forensic Medicine. Dr. V.V. Apte Madam was recognized for imparting the importance of the field to the public and starting a cell for violence against women and children. Dr. Rajesh Dere, Dr. Rahul Peddawad, Dr. Ravindra Deokar and Dr. Indrajit Khandekar were also felicitated for their specific contribution to the forensic field and otherwise.

The scientific sessions of Antemortem and Postmortem were held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The session on Antemortem series are as follows: “Setting-up private Medico-legal Practice” by Dr. Mahabalesh Shetty, “Recently passed acts of Medico-legal significance” by Dr. Mukesh Yadav, “Pending Bills of Medico-legal significance” by Dr. C.B. Jani, “Non-uniformity of Medical & Medico-legal certificates in the state” by Dr. K.U. Zine, “Potency examination: Clinical perspective and challenges” by Dr. Priyank Kothari, followed by a very informative lecture on “Current scenario and challenges faced by police & Judiciary” by Dr. Swapnil Akhade. Dr. Meenakshi Iyer educated us on “Examination & reporting of vaginal swabs”. This session was concluded by Dr. Tejas Prajapati who lectured us on “Clinical toxicology: Challenges and opportunities”.<sup>3</sup> The moderators for this session were Dr. G.S. Chavan, Dr. Indrajit Khandekar & Dr. Pawan Sabale.

The second session which was the Post-mortem session was held in the afternoon, the lectures of which were as follows; “Organ registry, NOTTO, ROTTO, SOTTO: Challenges in organ transplantation” by Dr. Vatsala Trivedi, “Infective autopsies in Indian mortuary setup...A way forward” by Dr. Jayanthi Yadav, “Protocols for handling the dead bodies- infective cases, surgical implants, etc” by Dr. Rajesh Dere, “Setting up Embalming center: Protocols and procedures for storage and transport of deadbodies” by Dr. Vinesh Shah, “Crime scene examination: role of a Forensic scientist” by Dr. Sandeep Chetty and “Crime scene examination: Role of a doctor” by Dr. Manish

Shrigiriwar.<sup>3</sup> The moderators for this session were Dr. Amit Patil, Dr. Ajit Malani and Dr. B.H. Tirpude.

The second day of the conference was commenced with a tribute to the late Dr. K.S. Narayan Reddy who left us on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The Academic Scientific session of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021 included the following lectures “CBME and Forensic Medicine: Challenges ahead” by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, “Medical and medico-legal audit: Need of the hour” by Dr. Mohan Pawar, “Virtual learning: Pros and cons” by Dr. Sandeep Kadu, “Basics of research and publication” by Dr. Ravindra Deokar, “Ethical hearings in MMC” by Dr. Shivkumar Utture and the “Use of Maxillofacial radiography in Forensic Investigation” by Dr. Frenny Karjodkar<sup>3</sup>. The moderators for this session were Dr. Rajesh Bardale, Dr. Ajay Patil and Dr. Ashesh Wankhede.

A total of 37 scientific presentations were made by postgraduate students and faculty. Topics chosen and the presentations made were appreciated by the Chairpersons and all the delegates in the conference<sup>5</sup>. A total of 5 posters were presented by the undergraduate students on the topics provided. On the second day of the conference the afternoon session

included the following lectures; “Role of JJB and CWC in handling child related issue” by Mr. Santosh Shinde, “Do’s & Don’t’s for forwarding exhibits to FSL in Medico-legal cases (AM & PM)” by Dr. Sandeep Chetty, “Utilization of hospital diagnostic facilities for Medicolegal services and its acceptability in court” by Dr. P.G. Dixit and the last lecture for the conference was given by Dr. S. C. Mohite on the “Art of giving medical evidence”.<sup>3</sup> The moderators for this session were Dr. Sudhir Ninave and Dr. Naresh Zanjad.

The penultimate programme for the conference was a panel discussion on the topics “Role of Media, opinion of self-proclaimed experts while dealing with sensitive medicolegal cases: Ways out” and “Is there a need for revamping the Forensic Science Laboratory?”. The esteemed panelist for this discussion were Dr. S.M. Patil (Police surgeon, Mumbai); Dr. Krishna Kulkarni (Director, FSL); Dr. Saurabh Tripathi (DCP(Protection), Mumbai); Dr. Mohan Joshi (Dean, LTMMC, Mumbai); Dr. B.G. Chikhalkar (Prof & Head, GGMC, Mumbai) Ms. Rohini Salian (Ex.Chief Public Prosecutor, Sessions Court, Mumbai ) and Mr. Vinod Kumar (City Editor, Mid-day). The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. S.C. Mohite (**Photograph No. 5**).



**Photograph No .5: Virtual Panel discussion.** (From left to right and top to bottom): Dr. S.C.Mohite, Mr.Vinod Kumar, Dr. Mohan Joshi, Dr. B.G.Chikhalkar, Dr. S. M. Patil, Dr. Krishna Kulkarni, Ms. Rohini Salian & Dr. Saurabh Tripathi.

The conference was concluded by the valedictorian ceremony where the winners for the poster and paper presentation were announced and the vote of thanks which was given by respected Dr. S.C. Mohite. Dr. Sarah Al Hannawi won the first place in Scientific Paper presentation for Faculty and Dr. Atul

Keche won the second place. Dr. Meenaskhi Malhotra and Dr. Rutuja Kanekar won the first and second prize in scientific paper presentation amongst the Post graduates respectively. Dr. Shashank Tyagi won the first place in scientific paper (poster) presentation and Dr. Pragmesh Parmar won the second place. Dr. Jaya

Vashist and Dr. Harit Saha won the first and second place in scientific paper presentation (poster) respectively.<sup>5</sup> When the conference was concluded and accounts were settled, the organizing committee

(Photograph no. 6) unanimously decided to donate leftover funds for COVID relief work and to set up web based online submission and review system for the MLAM Journal.



**Photograph No.6:** Conference War room. ( From left to right ): Dr. S. Kolle, Dr. S. Hinnawi, Dr. V.N. Waghmare, Dr. S.G. Sawardekar, Dr. P.R. Sabale, Dr. Saurabh Tripathi, Dr. S. M. Patil, Dr. S.C. Mohite, Dr. A. Hosmani , Dr. S.S. Patil, Dr. P.B. Waghmare, Dr. M. Wankhede , Dr. P. P. Kumar, Dr. S.B. Tonse.

### 3. Concluding Remarks:

In spite of the arrival of the second wave of the COVID pandemic, the conference was a success because of the exhaustive delivery of the lectures and the well-chosen topics for discussion. The objective of rousing the interest of the delegates was achieved, and they were all appreciative of the distinguished speakers.

It was decided that all over the state of Maharashtra, all proforma's of medico-legal significance especially those being used for Ante-mortem cases should be uniform. It was proposed that, there must be a standardised operating protocol for the formation of a Panel of doctors while conducting post-mortem in sensitive cases. It was also felt by delegates that the format for forwarding the viscera samples to Forensic Science Laboratory shall be made concise.

Academically, it was felt, that with the rising responsibilities in keeping with the CBME teaching methods, there must be an increases in faculty in the subject to ensure that the present faculty is not overburdened and quality of education can be achieved.

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