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Short Communication

Executive Summary of the XXVII Annual State Conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM)-FORENSICON 2025

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Abstract

FORENSICON 2024, the XXVII Annual State Conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) was successfully hosted on the 7th and 8th of December, 2024 by the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Government Medical College (PAH GMC), Baramati, serving as a vital platform for practitioners, academics, and researchers in the forensic and medicolegal field. The conference focused on emerging trends, ethical dilemmas and technological advancements crucial to modern forensic practice, encompassing themes likely centered around clinical forensics, toxicology updates, and medicolegal jurisprudence. FORENSICON 2024 brought together experts from across the state and beyond, featuring keynote addresses, interactive workshops, and robust scientific sessions including numerous paper and poster presentations, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration between medical professionals, law enforcement, and the judiciary. More than 350 delegates attended the conference, which included faculty and postgraduates from the forensic medicine field as well as medical officers, lawyers, police officers with MBBS undergraduates and interns. The successful organization of the conference was steered by the dedicated organizing committee, led by Dr. Amol Shinde, Organizing Secretary, Dr. Manoj Patekar, Joint Secretary and Dr. Ashish Pathak, Treasurer. FORENSICON 2024 reinforced MLAM's commitment to advancing forensic science and education in Maharashtra, leaving participants equipped with enhanced knowledge and a strengthened network to address the complex challenges in medicolegal practice.

1. Introduction

A The "XXVII Annual State conference of of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, Punyashlok Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) - Ahilyadevi Holkar Government Medical College, 'FORENSICON 2024'" was organized by Department Baramati on the 7th and 8th December

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Photograph 1: FORENSICON 2024 Organizing team.

2024. The previous conference “26th Annual State Conference of Medicolegal Association of Maharashtra (MLAM) ‘FORENSICON 2022’, was held on 28th & 29th October 2023 hosted by the Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, H.B.T Medical College & Dr. R.N. Cooper Municipal General Hospital, Mumbai (Maharashtra) India.¹

Photograph2: The inauguration with lamp lightening ceremony**Photograph 3: Organizing Secretary Address.**

2. Executive summary

The objective of the conference was to underscore the vital role of innovations in forensic medicine plays in enhancing the justice system. The

conference was held at the newly inaugurated central auditorium of Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Government Medical College, Baramati under the eminent leadership of Dr Amol Shinde. The conference was attended by almost 350 registered delegates and above, from various states. The Delegates were the Faculty, Medical Officers, Postgraduate students, interns, undergraduates and researchers as well as lawyers and police officers deputed from various parts of the Maharashtra.

The Organizing team was presided by Patron, Dr. C. B. Mhaske (Dean), PAHGMC, Baramati, Organising secretary Dr. Amol Shinde, Joint secretary Dr. Manoj Patekar, and Treasurer Dr. Ashish Pathak (**Photograph 1**).

Photograph 4: MLAM Secretary Address.

The theme of the conference was ***"Innovative Forensic Medicine: Pioneering Research for Justice through Medico-Legal Expertise"*** as the name suggests it aims at the intersection of medical science and law. The inauguration ceremony held at the central auditorium of the college building.

The inauguration was started with lamp lightening (**Photograph 2**) by the dignitaries followed by Sarswati vandan performed by undergraduate students and then Organising secretary's address (**Photograph 3**) and MLAM Secretary's address(**Photograph 4**). This was followed by release of souvenir of FORENSICON 2024 (**Photograph 5**) along with the **Journal of Forensic Medicine, Science and Law**-the official publication of MLAM (Editor-in-chief-Dr Ravindra Deokar, associate editors- Dr S.S. Bhise, Dr. S.S.Patil)(**Photograph 6**).

Day 1 Proceedings (7th December 2024)

The first scientific session of the FORENSICON 2024 conference commenced by **Dr. Amit Patil**, Professor and Head of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at AIIMS Patna, focused on the

Examination of Human Skeletal Remains, Utilizing both Standard Forensic Approaches and Advanced Techniques. This presentation explored the sophisticated methodologies employed in forensic examination of skeletal remains, integrating traditional morphological assessment with cutting-edge forensic technologies to enhance identification accuracy and establish critical parameters such as

cause and time of death. The importance of this topic cannot be overstated, as forensic analysis of skeletal remains serves as a cornerstone when only bones are retrievable at crime scenes, disaster sites, or in cases of decomposed remains, providing crucial evidence for medico-legal identification and case resolution.²

Photograph 5: Release of Souvenir of Forensicon 2024.



Photograph 6: Release of Journal of Forensic Medicine Science and Law (Scopus indexed journal).



The second session transitioned to the **Digitalization of Medical and Medico-Legal Records**, addressing the critical transformation from traditional paper-based documentation to electronic health and legal records. This comprehensive exploration examined the multifaceted implications of digital record keeping, including enhanced accuracy, improved security protocols, increased

accessibility for authorized personnel, and compliance with medico-legal requirements. The session was presented by **Dr. Kailash Zine**, Dean of GMC Buldhana, a renowned academician with vast experience in medical education administration.³

The prestigious **Dr. C. A. Franklin Oration: "Honesty and Integrity in Medical Profession"** by **Dr. Rajesh Dere**, Professor and Head-FMT TNMC &

BYL Nair Charitable Hospital, Mumbai occupied a prominent position in the day's program, delivering a keynote address that emphasized the foundational role of ethics, honesty, and integrity in both medical and forensic professions. This distinguished lecture addressed the moral imperatives that underpin professional conduct, highlighting how these fundamental values ensure trustworthiness, maintain professional standards, and guarantee quality patient care—all essential elements for establishing and maintaining forensic credibility in legal proceedings.

The next topic, **Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) Curriculum Reforms**, emphasizing enhanced forensic knowledge and skills development within the modern medical education framework. **Dr. Sandeep S. Kadu**, Controller of Examinations at MUHS Nashik and an expert in medical education assessment and curriculum development, provided comprehensive insights into how these reforms align forensic medical education with contemporary competency standards for improved clinical and investigative effectiveness. The session explored how CBME transforms traditional teaching methodologies by focusing on measurable competencies that directly relate to real-world forensic practice, ensuring graduates possess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills essential for modern forensic medicine.^{4,5}

Photograph 7: Panel discussion at conference.



The afternoon session addressed the contemporary issue of **Professional Misconduct** by **Dr. Shailesh Mohite**, Dean, TNMC & BYL Nair Charitable Hospital, Mumbai, offering a critical overview of various types of misconduct, recent high-profile examples, and existing regulatory frameworks that govern medical practice. This discussion promoted awareness of misconduct

patterns and advocated for preventive strategies designed to uphold medical and forensic standards while protecting both patient and practitioner rights within the healthcare system.

Ethical complexities took centre stage during the session on **Rights of the Unborn Child and Ethical Dilemmas Surrounding Late-Term Pregnancy Termination** by **Dr. Shailendra Dhawane**, Professor and Head-Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, GMC, Chandrapur. These discussions centred on the intricate medico-legal rights of the unborn child and the complex ethical decisions that healthcare providers must navigate when considering late-term pregnancy termination, addressing issues vital for both forensic and obstetric practitioners who must balance legal mandates with ethical imperatives in their professional practice.⁶

The next session by **Dr. Jayesh Lele**, Hon. Secretary General, IMA HQ, New Delhi, on **An Examination of the Prosecution of Medical Professionals and Litigation Challenges**, exploring common causes of litigation against healthcare providers while recommending comprehensive strategies for legal protection and risk mitigation. This session addressed the growing concern of defensive medicine and its impact on healthcare delivery quality.⁷

The day concluded with the session of the panel discussion on **The Medicolegal Issues in Day to Day Practice** brought together a range of experts who discussed key initiatives and challenges in improving the quality and efficiency of medicolegal services in Maharashtra. The esteemed panellist included **Dr. S.C. Mohite**, **Dr. B.G Chikhalkar**, **Dr. Mandar Karmarkar**, **Dr Rajesh Dere**, **Dr Jayesh Lele**, **Shri Rajendra Mavle**, **Forensic Scientist** and **Mr Kale**, **Police Official** (**Photograph 7**). This session explored how diverse stakeholders, including police, healthcare professionals, legal experts, and activists, are working together to enhance medicolegal services in Maharashtra, aiming for a more integrated and effective system.⁸

General body meeting of MLAM was held around 5:45 pm in the central auditorium of PAH GMC Baramati. Various issues pertaining to members were discussed and possible solutions were advised. It was followed by the election for next MLAM executive committee. The returning officers for the election were Dr R.V. Kachare and Dr. H.V. Godbole, and the election was conducted uneventfully.

Day 2 Proceedings (8th December 2024)

The second day commenced with **Medical and Medicolegal Documentation: Current Practices and Need for Change** was delivered by **Dr. Rajendra Bangal**, Registrar, MUHS, Nashik, providing a thorough analysis of current documentation standards while identifying significant gaps and advocating for comprehensive reforms. This session emphasized the urgent need to improve accuracy, enhance legal robustness, and increase reliability in medico-legal case handling, recognizing that proper documentation serves as vital evidence in legal proceedings and supports continuity of patient care.^{9,10}

The next topic on **Research Publications from a Forensic Perspective** formed the focus of the subsequent session, where encouragement and guidance on forensic research publication processes were provided, emphasizing scientific rigor and measurable impact on the discipline. **Dr. Ravindra B. Deokar**, Additional Professor of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at Seth GSMC & KEM Hospital Mumbai, shared his experience as an active forensic researcher and educator, highlighting the importance of quality research in advancing forensic medicine and contributing to the global body of forensic knowledge.¹¹

The next topic by **Designer Drugs in Forensic Toxicology** occupied a critical position in the day's scientific program. **Dr. Naresh Zanjad**, Professor and Head of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at Dr. VMGMC Solapur, addressed the complex challenges presented by new psychoactive substances, including forensic detection complexities and their far-reaching legal ramifications. This topic holds crucial importance for accurate forensic toxicology in drug abuse cases and legal proceedings, as designer drugs continue to evolve rapidly, outpacing traditional detection methods and creating significant challenges for forensic laboratories worldwide.

Followed by interesting topic of **Impact of Artificial Intelligence in Forensic Medicine and Toxicology** by **Dr. Nilesh K. Tumram**, Professor and Head of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at GMC Nandurbar and a researcher in AI applications, presented comprehensive insights into how AI technologies are revolutionizing forensic diagnostics, data analysis, and predictive modelling. The adoption of these technologies promises to enhance forensic case efficiency, improve accuracy rates, and

drive innovation across multiple forensic disciplines, representing a paradigm shift in how forensic investigations are conducted.¹²

Legal challenges in the justice system were examined through an analysis of conviction rates in relation to **Common Mistakes Made by Doctors, Police and Lawyers** by **Dr. Indrajeet Khandekar**, Professor at MGIMS Sewagram and a legal-forensic expert, provided systematic analysis of errors that contribute to low conviction rates in medico-legal cases, emphasizing the need for collaborative corrections among all stakeholders in the criminal justice system to improve outcomes and ensure justice for victims.

The pressing issue of **Violence against Healthcare Professionals** was addressed through a discussion of legal provisions for handling assault on doctors at the ground level. **Dr. Rajeev Joshi**, Founder-Proposer of the Medicolegal Society of India and a medico-legal policy advocate, examined existing laws designed to address violence against medical professionals while highlighting significant challenges in enforcement and implementation of protective measures.¹³

Technical and legal aspects of forensic practice were explored through a session on the **Adversity of Viscera Collection and its Legal Implications** by **Dr. Rajesh V. Bardale** Professor and Head Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, GMC, Miraj, addressed the complex challenges associated with proper viscera collection, preservation, and analysis, along with the legal frameworks that govern these critical forensic procedures.

The conference concluded with the topic on **The Legal Landscape of Cybercrime** by **Mr. Sandeep Gadiya**, Cybercrime Investigator & Cyber Forensic Expert, Pune. This session provided a comprehensive overview of current cyber laws, advanced forensic investigation tools and techniques, and the significant challenges facing law enforcement in cybercrime prosecution, reflecting the growing importance of digital forensics in modern criminal investigations.¹⁴⁻¹⁶

Parallel scientific activities in the form of Podium and poster presentations separately held for the faculty and postgraduate students, and also poster presentations for undergraduate on the theme of future of forensic medicine enriched the conference experience. These presentations were coordinated and judged by senior faculty members, encouraging scientific communication and

knowledge sharing among participants while fostering academic exchange and student engagement in forensic research and practice.¹⁷⁻¹⁹

Photograph 8: Prize distribution at Valedictory ceremony.



Photograph 9: Delegates at Valedictory Ceremony.



These comprehensive sessions collectively provided delegates with deep understanding of forensic medicine's evolving scientific, ethical, legal, and educational frontiers, effectively shaping best practices and establishing future directions for the discipline while addressing contemporary challenges facing forensic practitioners in India and globally.²⁰

The two day conference concluded with valedictory session presided by the Dr A K Batra and Dr A G Pathak. Awards for faculty, postgraduate podium and poster presentation along with undergraduate poster presentations were distributed (**Photograph 8**). Delegates expressed their gratitude and views about successful conduction of the conference and congratulated the organizing team (**Photograph 9**).

Contributor ship of Author: All authors equally contributed. **Conflict of interest:** None to declare.

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