EVERYTHING ABOUT MALARIA IS MOULDED BY LOCAL CONDITIONS THAT BECOMES A THOUSAND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL GIANT PUZZLE. LIKE CHESS, IT IS PLAYED WITH A FEW PIECES BUT IS CAPABLE OF AN INFINITE VARIETY OF SITUATIONS.

LEWIS WENDELL HACKETT (1884-1962) AN AMERICAN PHYSICIAN WHO WORKED IN ITALY AND SOUTH AMERICA TO COMBAT MALARIA.
Greetings to all MSPTM members!
It gives me great pleasure to welcome and to touch base with all of you in this MSPTM NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2/JULY 2022. Sincere thanks to our new Editor Dr. Azdayanti Muslim and her team for their efforts for this publication.

Established in 1964, the Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine (MSPTM) is one of the oldest non-profit organizations in the country serving the professional and scientific needs of academicians, researchers, industries and individuals in related disciplines. To date, MSPTM has more than 543 members affiliated with various educational institutions, private industries and government health agencies.

Under MSPTM, we have a lot of activities which I strongly believe have benefited many members in this society. The highlight of MSPTM is its Annual Scientific Conference, held in March annually. Each year, experts, scientists, members and students gather to exchange scientific information. We have also successfully conducted the Annual General Meeting of MSPTM with a high record of participation from members.

Other than that, the MSPTM has started to contribute more towards the community by organising awareness programmes such as Dengue Awareness Drawing Competition for school children and teenagers, Animal Awareness Day, Tree Planting Program, funding for building a Student Lecture Hall, donation drives for COVID-19 Frontliners and Children with special needs. We are also very keen to fund various Community Research Projects that can impact our society.

The MSPTM is also famed for her journal; which is the internationally acclaimed Tropical Biomedicine that provides open access of the general sciences of parasitology, tropical medicine, entomology and microbiology.

As President of the 59th Council, I plan to continue the legacy of MSPTM with its future in mind. I will strive in every way and work closely with my council members, continue to promote and increase the visibility of MSPTM to the general public, and encourage more communication and collaboration between our members from various institutional and agencies, in order to benefit our community and nation. Thank you.

“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.” – Mother Teresa

Dr. Chen Chee Dhang
President of 59th MSPTM Council (2022–2023)

EDITOR’S NOTE: MOVING FORWARD

Assalamualaikum & Salam Sejahtera to all!
For many of us, new tasks are always challenging. Definitely the same goes to me. We have seen a great improvement in MSPTM newsletter under our previous editor, Dr Farah Haziqah Meor Termizi. CONGRATULATIONS for the job well done! As a new editor, this issue gives a mixed feeling to me especially on how to keep the momentum going and to make sure all things are perfectly done. But, perfection is truly impossible and here I will try my best to maintain the quality of the newsletter and that is all i need to do. I also would like to thank my team for their time and contribution for this July issue.

This issue covers the last 3 months of activities and events organized by the society as well as other relevant information pertaining to the field of Parasitology & Tropical Medicine. Sincere appreciation goes to Dr Pakeer Oothuman for his contribution on our cover page for this edition. The cover page on malaria is just parallel with the World Malaria Day which is marked annually on 25th April. In conjunction with that, we are also very delighted to have a special article on malaria entitled “Simian malaria a threat to malaria elimination: Who cares?” written by our prominent scientist, Datin Prof Dr Indra Vythilingam.

In this issue, we also would like to introduce our new council members for 2022–2023. This term, we have a very good line-up of council, from various universities and Institution located in different regions in Malaysia which include northern Peninsular and Sarawak. For section ‘MSPTM personality– Interview with the expert’, we are very grateful to have Dr Azlina Aziz from Universiti Putra Malaysia. Go directly to page 17 if you want read about her amazing journey in research! Nevertheless, every page in this issue matters, in ways that work for you. To all members, do contribute articles and information pertaining to your activities that relevant to our society and community. Happy reading and let’s get to work!

Dr. Azdayanti Muslim
MSPTM Newsletter Editor
Countries in Southeast Asia are working towards malaria elimination by 2030. Although there are five species of *Plasmodium* infecting humans, only the four are considered for the elimination of human malaria (*P. falciparum*, *P. vivax*, *P. malariae*, and *P. ovale*). *Plasmodium knowlesi*, the 5th malaria parasite to infect humans is not considered in malaria elimination. However, a recent report by WHO malaria policy advisory group (MPAG) meeting has some concerns regarding *P. knowlesi* and malaria elimination. It reports that “when countries are reporting hundreds or thousands of *P. knowlesi* cases, certification of malaria-free status should be postponed.” An arbitrary low threshold might be applied, e.g. 10 or fewer cases per year, below which a country can be potentially certified as having eliminated malaria, as the risk of zoonotic transmission might be considered negligible. *Plasmodium knowlesi*, a simian malaria parasite has been reported from all countries in Southeast Asia with the exception of Timor Lesti.

Malaysia has reported the highest number of *P. knowlesi* cases in Southeast Asia. With the reduction of human malaria cases, *P. knowlesi* cases have increased in Malaysia. From 2010–2018 Malaysia has reported 18687 cases while Indonesia has reported 418 from 2008–2015 which is second highest in the region. The low number of cases from other countries in Southeast Asia may be due to the fact that cases are being overlooked or misdiagnosed through microscopy. Besides, a number of tourists visiting the region have also exported the cases to their own countries.

When the first case of *P. knowlesi* was reported in an American Surveyor working in the jungles of Pahang, many studies were conducted after which it was reported that simian malaria would not occur in humans and the first case was a rare incident. However, since the publication of the landmark paper in 2004, we know that it is not true anymore. Currently, there are other species of simian malarials like *P. cynomolgi* and *P. inui* infecting humans.

The main hosts for the simian malarials are the long-tailed (*Macaca fascicularis*) and the pig tailed (*Macaca nemestrina*) macaques. Studies have shown that besides *P. knowlesi*, *P. cynomolgi* and *P. inui* are present in high percentages of the macaques in the region. Most macaques have mixed infection of various species of the parasites.

With regards to the vectors, *An. hackeri* was the first species incriminated as vector in the 1960s. It belongs to the Leucosphyrus Group of *Anopheles*. This mosquito was only biting the macaques and was positive for all five species of simian malarials. Current studies have incriminated other vectors of the Leucosphyrus Group as vectors namely *An. balabacensis*, *An. cracens*, *An. dirus*, *An. inui*, and *An. latens*. There are some studies that have incriminated species besides the Leucosphyrus Group but these need further confirmation. The vector mosquitoes are mainly biting outdoors and in the early part of the night (1900 to 2100) and thus current control measures that target human malaria vectors namely insecticide treated nets and indoor residual spraying will not be effective to reduce vector density. A recent study showed that there was no correlation between use of ITNs and *P. knowlesi* cases.

As human malaria cases are being reduced in the region and with deforestation more cases of simian malarials would be reported in humans. Thus, it is timely to study various new tools that could be used to control the vectors. Firstly, we need to have a good distribution map of the vectors for the country. Secondly, we need to determine the resting habitats of the vectors. What about the macaque population? Something must also be done to reduce vector macaque contact. Perhaps feed macaques with ivermectin so that when mosquitoes feed on the macaques they would be killed. However, studies need to be conducted to decipher if these would work.

In forested areas if people will use ITNs at night they might be protected but if the vectors are biting early even in the forest this may not work. Studies have been carried out with Poly Zone (a new pyrethroid formulation) for outdoor residual spraying on walls of houses and nearby vegetation. Results on mortality of *An. balabacensis* varied on various wall types and outdoor mortality was lower than indoors. However, effect on target organisms remain unknown.

Thus, due to the lack of information on vectors and macaques from various places and due to increasing number of *P. knowlesi* and other simian malaria cases it is timely to join forces and work towards a malaria free status. The new ruling by MPAG has made it clear that we need to have a good surveillance based on multidisciplinary approaches. Thus, let us work together to control simian malaria in the region.
WELCOME NEW 59th COUNCIL!

The function of the Council is to organize and supervise the activities of the Society and to make decisions on matters affecting its running within the framework of the constitution. It shall furnish an annual report to each General Meeting on its activities during the previous year.

How to reach us?

Address
Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine (MSPTM)
21-5-2, Block E, Diamond Square Jalan 3/50, Off Jalan Gombak 53000 Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

Secretary Email: secretarymsptm@gmail.com
Treasurer Email: treasurer.msptm@gmail.com

https://msptm.org/
The 58th Annual Scientific Conference of the Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine was held successfully on 21-22 March 2022 via virtual Zoom platform with the theme “Sustainable Pandemic Planning: Towards A Healthy Nation”. This year, we managed to gather a total of 167 participants from various institutions including universities, government bodies and private sectors, companies and laboratories.

The two days virtual conference highlighted several significant issues faced globally such as emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, combating the infections through one-health approach and current diagnostic tools while living in COVID-19 pandemic era.

Our first keynote speaker was Prof. Dato’ Dr. Mohd Hair Bejo from Universiti Putra Malaysia. He delivered a keynote entitled “One health approach to ensuring Malaysia’s resilience against emerging and re-emerging (ENRE) pandemic zoonotic diseases”. In his speech, he stressed that a strategic planning through One Health approach by strengthening multi-sectorial engagement and collaboration for effective preparedness, early detection and response, sustainable financing and reducing bureaucracy are vital to ensure Malaysia’s resilience against ENRE pandemic zoonotic diseases. Another keynote address entitled “Supporting ASEAN’s preparedness for emerging infectious diseases and pandemics” was given by an international renowned scientist, Dr. Filip Claes from Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Thailand.

The plenary speakers for this year event were Prof. Dr. Naresh Kumar Rakha (Indian Institute of Technology, India), Prof. Dr. Andy Paul Shinn (Senior Technical Support Manager (Disease Management), INVE (Thailand), Dr. Susheela Balasundaram (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Malaysia) and Prof. Dr. Benjamin L. Makepeace from the University of Liverpool. A total of 64 scientific papers were presented which consisted of 16 oral presentations, 9 rapid oral presentations, 20 rapid oral presentations (student competition) and 19 e-poster presentations.

Sincere appreciation goes to our sponsors for funding and supporting the event. We had Platinum sponsors from Imaspro Resources Sdn Bhd (IRSB), Qiagen, Valent Biosciences, Lab-Ind Resource Sdn Bhd & GeneSEQ Sdn Bhd and Accuflex Sdn Bhd. The gold sponsors were Syngenta Crop Protection Sdn Bhd, Nuclix Biosolution, BIO3 Scientific Sdn Bhd, NHK Bioscience Solutions Sdn. Bhd, Tree Code Sdn Bhd and Agricultural Chemicals (M) Sdn. Bhd. (ACM). The Society would like to express its appreciation to all participants, organizing committee and secretariats for supporting and making this conference a successful one.
PAST EVENT - 58TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE MSPTM

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Presidential address by Dr. Sam Mohan Arupatham during the opening ceremony

Announcement of Sandosham Medalist 2021 recipient, AP Dato Dr Vellayan

Announcement of Nadchatram Medalist 2021 recipient, Dr Paul Cliff

The first keynote session by Prof Dato Dr Mohd Hair Bejo

Prof AA Sandosham Memorial Lecture by Dr Nazni Wasi Ahmad.

Sponsored session - GeneSEQ Sdn. Bhd

Special talk by AP Dato Dr Vellayan

A very interesting talk by Dr Andy Paul
PAST EVENT - 58TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE MSPTM

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Announcement of the winners for the MSPTM Photography Competition 2021.

Winners for the MSPTM Community Fund 2021

Rapid Oral Presentation (Student competition)
Assoc. Prof. Dato' Dr. Vellayan Subramaniam
Universiti Teknologi MARA

Assoc. Prof. Dato' Dr. Vellayan Subramaniam was born in Carey Island, Selangor and completed his primary schooling at the Methodist National Primary School (Methodist Boys’ School) in Port Swettenham (Port Klang), and secondary education at Anglo Chinese Secondary School in Klang. Till this day, he is a life member of the ACS Old Boys’ Association and once served as its EXCO member for several years.

On completing his pre-university studies in S.I.V.E.T College, Madras University and his Bachelor of Veterinary Science from the Madras Veterinary College, Madras, India he returned to Malaysia and joined Malaysian University of Agriculture (UPM) in 1978 as a tutor in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science.

Dr. Vellayan completed his Master of Science on Primate Nutrition (Lar Gibbon) at UPM in 1981, funded by National Health Institute, USA via University of Cambridge under the Primate Conservation Research Programme. He then joined Zoo Negara Malaysia as a Zoo Veterinarian. At Zoo Negara, he held positions as Head of Zoo Hospital/ Zoology/Veterinary Services, Assistant Director and Acting Director and retired on 1st June 2008. His contributions for his service at Zoo Negara earned him the Malaysian Book of Records as the “Longest Serving Zoo Veterinarian”.

In 1982, he joined the Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine as an ordinary member and was upgraded to Life Member in 1985. During his tenure at Zoo Negara Malaysia, Dr. Vellayan made many significant contributions to the overall development of the zoo and in the field of Wildlife Medicine in the country. Among others, he was involved in establishing a reputable Zoo Veterinary Hospital of high standard, and achievement of the ISO 9001 status for the zoo.

During his time at Zoo Negara, Dr. Vellayan was directly involved in the training of zoo keepers and industrial training for undergraduate students from Malaysia and foreign universities. These contributions were well acknowledged by the 1st Chairman of the Malaysian Zoological Societies, the late Tan Sri V.M. Hutson. During his 28 years of working at the zoo, Dr. Vellayan had developed a cordial working relationship with local universities and institutions (UKM; UM; UPM; IMR; VRI) and the Regional Diagnostic Laboratory Petaling Jaya, (Department of Veterinary Services). He developed sound networking and linkages with the laboratory staff and members of MSPTM of the above institutions. Over the years, he has received valuable support in disease investigation from this association, a fact which Dr. Vellayan remembers with fond memories. In all, Dr Vellayan has clocked 40 years of experience in Zoo, Wildlife and Exotic Animal Medicine and Surgery, and has given over 100 talks on animal health and related matters over local radio and television stations, including Radio UFM, UiTM and foreign television networks. He has also to date contributed his expertise towards over 80 news features in local newspapers.
In 2013 he joined the Faculty of Medicine, MAHSA University and taught medical parasitology for six (6) months. In 2013, he joined the Faculty of Pharmacy, UiTM Selangor, Campus Puncak Alam, where he served as the 2nd Coordinator of the Laboratory Animal Facility and Management (LAFAM). During this period, he initiated major improvements to the laboratory animal facility. Apart from teaching Pharmacology and Veterinary Pharmacology, he has conducted to date, fifteen (15) rodent and five (5) rabbit workshops for researchers. Additionally, he has also been in the Animal Ethics and Research Committee of the Ministry of Health (IMR), UKM (Medical Faculty), currently at the UiTM CARE and SIRIM. Dr. Vellayan prides himself for having taught students in such diverse fields, from Veterinary (UPM), Dental (UM), Pharmacy (UiTM and KPJ) to Biology (UiTM, Sunway University, UniMAS). In the field of Veterinary Sciences, he has been responsible for creating vets both locally and abroad.

In the MSPTM, his contribution started way back in 1985 and is still continuing up to this day (37 years in all). He started as a council member and has served for 6 terms. Throughout the years he was a member of many sub-committees; as the organising chairman of Annual Conferences; Mid-year seminars; Honorary Auditor (3 terms); Co-editor of Newsletter (4 terms); member of the Fundraising Committee (3 terms); Editor of the 4th and 8th Membership Directory Booklet; Honorary Secretary (3 terms); Vice President and President (3 terms). He has also represented MSPTM in government bodies. He has also published 15 papers in the Society’s journal (Tropical Biomedicine), delivered 35 oral presentations at the MSPTM conference and seminars.

Dr. Vellayan is known as a pioneer researcher on parasites of zoo animals and wildlife and over the decades, he has reported on zoo parasites in numerous new hosts. He has also magnanimously donated all the parasite samples isolated by him to MSPTM (future museum) and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UPM.

In addition, Dr. Vellayan has held offices in over 100 government entities and NGOs, as well as in research institutions and universities in the past 40 years. He is the former President of the Malaysian Professional Centre, (BIM), Fulbright Alumni Association Malaysia, (FAAM), and Past President of Veterinary Association Malaysia (VAM). It must be mentioned here that Dr. Vellayan is a two-time awardee of the Fulbright Professional Scholar (2000 & 2005). He has continuously rendered professional assistance to more than 40 relevant organisations, both in Malaysia and abroad. In recognition of his work, Dr. Vellayan has received several awards and honors, both locally and internationally. He has also been awarded fellowship from the Nutrition Society of Malaysia, Veterinary Association Malaysia and the Malaysian Scientific Association.

In his personal capacity, Dr. Vellayan has been giving free treatment to rejected and sick wildlife brought to his attention by Klang Valley residents over the past 40 years. He is married to Poornam Sagathevan (retired teacher). His daughter Hema is a teacher and holds a Master degree in Education and son Shanker is a fourth-year medical student. He has a 3 years old grandson, Harin Vinnaeishwaran.

Malaysian vet bags Sandosham Gold Medal for research on parasitology

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Dr. Paul Cliff Simon Divis
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Dr Paul Cliff Simon Divis is currently the Director of the Malaria Research Centre (MRC), at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). He graduated with a BBiomedSc degree (2001) from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and began researching on malaria in 2002 as a Research Assistant at UNIMAS. He subsequently graduated with an MSc degree (2007) in Molecular Parasitology from UNIMAS and with a PhD degree (2018) from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London. He was a joint recipient of the Garnham Prize, awarded for the best PhD thesis, by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK.

Dr Paul Divis is renowned for his work on the molecular epidemiology and population genetics of *Plasmodium knowlesi* and other simian malaria parasites. His most significant contribution to parasitology is that in Malaysian Borneo there are two divergent sub-populations of *P. knowlesi*, associated with either long-tailed or pig-tailed macaques. He was the first to describe a real-time PCR assay for *P. knowlesi* and developed a simple toolkit to identify the two *P. knowlesi* sub-populations. His population genetic studies revealed that there is a third *P. knowlesi* sub-population in Peninsular Malaysia. He is the main author or co-author for 21 papers in high impact factor journals. His papers have been cited 1,855 times and he has an h-index of 14 according to Google Scholar. Furthermore, he has been invited as a reviewer of manuscripts submitted to PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases, Emerging Infectious Diseases, The Lancet Microbe and Acta Tropica.

Dr Paul Divis joined the Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine (MSPTM) in 2004 and has been an active member. He has either presented or been a co-author for 13 oral presentations at MSPTM Annual Scientific conferences. In 2005 he was awarded the 1st Prize for the Student Oral Presentation at the 41st Annual Scientific Seminar of MSPTM. Currently, he is a Member of the MSPTM Council, where he participated as the bidding committee for the 16th International Congress of Parasitology (ICOPA) and the Chairman for the MSPTM Webinar 2022. From UNIMAS, Dr Paul Divis has received the Excellent Service Award in 2017 and the Award for Highest Cumulative Publications in Impact Journals (Science) in 2021. He has supervised and co-supervised 2 PhD and 4 MSc students. He has succeeded in securing research grants of approximately RM 575,000. His research has been conducted in collaboration with scientists from UK, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia. At the national level, Dr Paul Divis’ research expertise has been recognised by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia who selected him in 2018 as a Member of the Young Scientists Network. He has given 5 invited talks at conferences and workshops in Malaysia. Recently, he has been appointed as member of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia Sarawak Chapter.

Outside Malaysia, Dr Paul Divis has presented his work on the population genetic structure and genomics of knowlesi malaria in conferences held in the UK, USA, Germany and Australia. He was the recipient of the Best Poster Presentation Prize at the Molecular Approaches to Malaria 2016 Conference in Melbourne, Australia, and at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Poster Day in 2015.
Thank you to all sponsors & participants of the 58TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE of the MSPTM 2022. See You all again in 2023!

Special appreciation to the organizing committee of the 58th MSPTM conference for the hard work and dedication.

On-site crew for the MSPTM conference 2022. We would like to thank Universiti Malaya as our venue host for this virtual conference.
On behalf of the 58th Council of the Malaysian Society of Parasitology & Tropical Medicine, we would like to THANK YOU for attending the 58th MSPTM Annual General Meeting held virtually at 3pm on Friday, 25 March 2022.

Date: 25 March 2022 (Friday)
Time: 3 pm

THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO THE 58TH MSPTM COUNCIL FOR DEDICATION, HARD WORK AND CONTRIBUTIONS!!
The Webinar **RABIES APA YANG SAYA PATUT TAHU** was successfully conducted via online platform on 25 Mei 2022. The webinar was organized by The Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine (MSPTM) in collaboration with Ministry of Health (MOH), Persatuan Pegawai Tadbir dan Ikhtisas Universiti Malaya (PEKERTI UM) and Majlis Pegawai Tadbir Universiti Awam Malaysia (MASTI).

Event snapshot: one of the important information given by our distinguished speaker, **Dr Vickneshwaran Muthu**

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Our president, Dr Chen Chee Dhang had given a talk on dengue fever at Luyang Community Centre, Kota Kinabalu Sabah. This event was successfully conducted on 11/6/2022.
DENGUE AWARENESS: A VIRTUAL EXHIBITION,
is a collaborative project between the Malaysian Society of Parasitology & Tropical Medicine and the College of Creative Arts, UiTM. This exhibition was established in conjunction with ASEAN DENGUE DAY 2022 and is a great platform for students and our fellow citizens to explore social responsibility through an awareness campaign. This important annual event allows ASEAN members, in coordination with WHO, to consolidate dengue prevention and control measures.

It all started with a Dengue Awareness Drawing Competition in Klang Valley, the project spread its wings to Sabah and Perak. Our young and talented artists in primary and secondary schools have showcased their skill, effort, and dedication through visuals in projecting the objective. With the objective of promoting dengue awareness among the community, we should together collaborate to spread the awareness and of course, the ultimate aim of conducting this event is to create a better and healthy country for the next generation. Community empowerment is a key aspect of the strategy as it allows the local population to drive the eradication of the disease in their environment.

Please visit and enjoy our first virtual art exhibition at link below: https://www.artsteps.com/embed/62a23744623544b77ee3c0a/560/315

Some snapshots taken from the virtual art. Please share the link above to everyone!
UPCOMING MSPTM EVENT

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

MSPTM MID-YEAR SEMINAR

COMBATING VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE: FROM TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH TO ELIMINATION

12 AUG 2022 • 08.30 AM – 12.30 PM

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH (NIH), SETIA ALAM

Dengue: Post-pandemic New Normal
Datuk Dr. Rose Nani Mudin
Director
Sabah Health Department

Malaria Outbreak Investigation: Behind the Scene
Dr. Tam Jien Zhuang
Principal Assistant Director
Vector Borne Disease Control Sector
Ministry of Health Malaysia

What Happened to The Research Findings?
Dr. Raden Shamilah Radin Hisam
Head of Parasitology Unit
Infectious Diseases Research Centre
Institute for Medical Research

Moderator
Dr. Nazni Wasi Ahmad
Senior Research Officer,
Medical Entomology Unit,
Institute for Medical Research

✔ MMA CPD
✔ Physical Meeting
✔ Free Registration

Register Now!
Scan QR code or visit: https://msptm.org/

Date: 12 August 2022 (Friday)
Time: 8.30 am – 12.30 pm
Venue: Auditorium 2 (D1A-L5-4), Aras 5, Wing A, Blok D1, NIH, Setia Alam
For enquiry, please email: msptmevents@gmail.com
Congratulations!

Click on the links below to read the latest open access articles:

Interview with the expert

Dr. Nor Azlina Abdul Aziz

Institution:
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Years working:
5 years

Area of expertise:
Veterinary Parasitology

Academic background:
DVM, MSc (Veterinary Parasitology) UPM, PhD in Biological Sciences (Veterinary Parasitology) Bristol, UK
Q1: Do you mind sharing with us about your research background and research interest?

I graduated with Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Universiti Putra Malaysia before completing Master of Science in Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UPM. My Master research focused on parasitic gastroenteritis (PGE) in small ruminant, the anthelmintic resistance and the management factor affecting PGE.

Subsequently, I did my PhD in University of Bristol and my work focused on responses of two important parasite in United Kingdom (UK) which is Angiostrongylus vasorum and Nematodirus battus towards climate change. Currently I am a Senior Lecturer of Veterinary Parasitology in Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Universiti Putra Malaysia. I am also the Lab Coordinator for Veterinary Parasitology Lab where we do diagnosis, research and teaching in the lab.

Current research focuses on epidemiology of veterinary important and zoonotic helminth diseases particularly in small animal. I also have interest in tick-borne diseases and tick role as vector in disease transmission. Our current ongoing research includes the cat liver fluke prevalence, epidemiology in Malaysia, the rat’s lungworm energy metabolism pathway and characterization of this parasite in Malaysia. Among completed past research was the molecular characterization of tick-borne diseases in dogs in Peninsular Malaysia.
Among interesting findings, we observe in our research is the ability of metacercaria of *Platynosomum fastosum* (cat liver fluke) to be excreted from the liver of house gecko. For this study, we trapped house geckos indoor on the wall of buildings and liver of house gecko were isolated through post mortem. When the liver was observed in petri dish with a little bit of water under the microscope, we could observe a large number of metacercaria excreted once a gentle pressure is applied to the liver. In general, based on previous knowledge, cats could get infected with this fluke by ingesting the paratenic host which is house gecko. However, based on this finding, we think that by playing (biting) the abdominal part of the house gecko, the metacercaria will be easily squeezed and enter the cat’s mouth for ingestion. Liver of house gecko was also one of the biggest organs inside the abdominal part of the house gecko, making it easily accessible to cats during biting. Secondly, we also observe cats with high burden of fluke in the liver have negative ova in the fecal. This is interesting as we could assume most of the cats could have the fluke infection but diagnosed negative due to this problem. This could indicate diagnosis of fluke infection is difficult and prevalence of this disease in Malaysia might have been underdiagnosed. In the bile duct of the infected cats, we observe similar burden of egg in the bile juice. This indicates the bile aspiration could serve as the gold standard in diagnosing the fluke infection. However, this method appeared to be quite invasive and most owner might refuse to take the risk. Therefore, better diagnostic technique needs to be explored to aid in diagnosis of cat liver fluke infection.

Q2: Can you share some of your interesting observations throughout your research?

Q3: Please share with us your latest research publication.

Here are some of my latest publications:

Q4: Any advice to other young researchers?

As a young researcher I want you to believe,

‘Success is the result of perfection, hard work, learning from failures, loyalty and perfection’. (by Colin Powell)

You might feel stuck, tired and want to give up but never think about failures, always keep going no matter what. Any obstacles and problem is just a sign to show you towards the right direction.

Be passionate about your work as by being passionate nothing can stop you and keep learning and humble, learning from successful people, learn from people who have more experience. There is always something new to learn from others although it could be a stranger you meet along the way.

Lastly, your journey is beautiful on your own and remember this:

"I am in competition with no one. I run my own race. I have no desire to play the game of being better than anyone. I just aim to improve, to be better than I was before. That’s me and I am free".

In this quote, we should understand that we don’t need to compete with anybody, you compete with your own self to try to be better each day, to learn something new and to challenge your self with new things which lead to endless motivation. Good luck on your journey as a Researcher.

Dr Azlina is currently serving as a senior lecturer at Universiti Putra Malaysia.
Q5: Could you share a few words with us about your aspiration for MSPTM?

I hope MSPTM will continue to support new researcher in many ways and come out with new ideas in bringing out the best and guide new researcher in grooming them to be a good leader and researcher. Remembering the first time joining the MSPTM as postgraduate student to join the MSPTM conference, I was impressed by the smooth and grand conference event organized by MSPTM and adore the well-known parasitologist who obtained the Sandosham and Nadchatram Award at that time.

By looking at this well known parasitologist have inspired me to become them one day. I also able to meet new faces in parasitology field not only veterinary based but also medical and biomedical based and observed how people with various background can work together in MSPTM.

In the future, I hope MSPTM could have more programs and awards not only for researcher but also for the postgraduates. These postgraduates need more grooming and networking in order to be a good researcher. Therefore, MSPTM can be a good platform for them to grow as well as to serve the society when they become the researcher. Lastly, I would like to congratulate MSPTM for all these years of awesomeness and endless contribution in every level, not only, the researcher, student and also the communities and stakeholders. Continue to do the best for the society and nation in general!
Welcome new members!

We welcome new members to the society and we look forward seeing them in the upcoming event organized by MSPTM.

1. Dr. Kenny Voon Gah Leong - Life Time Member
2. Ms. Nur Fariha Binti Amir - Ordinary Member
3. Dr. Marina Binti Zainal - Ordinary Member
4. Dr. Noor Hasliza binti Zainol - Ordinary Member
5. Dr. Cheong Yoon Ling - Ordinary Member
6. Mr. Dek @ Frederick Bin Dalusim - Ordinary Member
7. Dr. Anizah Binti Rahumatullah - Ordinary Member
8. Dr. Vinoth a/l Kumarasamy - Ordinary Member
CALLING MSPTM EXPERTS!!

The purpose of this activity is to form **MSPTM in-house expertise of scientists** with the ultimate goal to build a network of collaboration for sharing resources and expertise with agencies/individuals from within and outside the country.

To achieve this, we would like to collate data from our **MSPTM** members by filling up the form available at the following link.

[shorturl.at/ceV89](shorturl.at/ceV89)
CALLING for the nomination of the
NADCHATRAM SILVER MEDAL 2022

The Nadchatram Silver Medal shall be awarded under the following conditions.

- The medal shall be awarded annually to a living person in recognition of outstanding scientific contribution in parasitology and tropical medicine in Southeast Asia.
- Only members of 45 YEARS OLD OR BELOW (by year on 31st December 2022) shall be eligible.
- There shall be no restriction as to sex or profession of the candidates, nor as to the period during which the research was conducted.

WHO CAN NOMINATE?

Any member who has subscribed to the Society for TWO FULL YEARS shall be entitled to nominate a candidate.

HOW TO NOMINATE?

The proposer of the candidate shall email the Honorary Secretary (secretarymsptm@gmail.com) not later than 30th September 2022 with detailed reasons for the nomination and the claims of his nominee, giving the following details.

- The full name of the candidate with satisfactory evidence of the date of birth and the candidate's address, qualifications and academic distinctions.
- A list of the candidate's publications, including papers accepted for publication.
- Reasons why the proposer feels that the candidate is worthy of consideration for the medal.
- The nomination must be seconded by any MSPTM member who has subscribed to the Society for two full years.

For more information, kindly visit the MSPTM website msptm.org/nominations-for-medals/
On behalf of the Department of Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya, we are pleased to announce that the **International Conference of Medical Parasitology and Entomology** will be held virtually on 17th – 18th August 2022.

For registration and more information, please visit: https://icmpe2022um.wixsite.com/icmpe2022
The Institute of Medical Science and Technology, Universiti Kuala Lumpur (MESTECH, UniKL), will be hosting the

3rd International Conference on Medical Science Technology (ICMST)

Date: 23rd and 24th November 2022
Venue: Online (via Microsoft Teams)
Topic of discussion: Multidisciplinary Medical Science topics
Publication opportunity: Malaysian Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences (MJMHS)
Participation opportunities: Oral and Poster presentation

Target audience: Academicians, students, post-docs, research scientists, laboratory technologists, postgraduate students, professional bodies, medical practitioners and the industries.

For registration and more information, please visit:

icmst.unikl.edu.my
The Department of Medical Microbiology and Parasitology (MMP) & Institute of Medical Molecular Biotechnology (IMMB), Faculty of Medicine, UiTM invite you to a **Hands-on Workshop on Laboratory Detection of Intestinal Parasites.**

The details of the workshop are as follows:

**TENTATIVE PROGRAMME**

**HANDS-ON WORKSHOP: LABORATORY DETECTION OF INTESTINAL PARASITES**

**Save The Date**

4 - 5 August 2022
08.00 am - 16.30 pm

**Fees**

- Staff: RM200
- Student: RM150
- Others: RM250

**Demonstration & Hands-on**

- Direct Wet Smear
- Formalin-ether concentration techniques
- Floatation Techniques
- Kato-Katz
- Beermann Technique
- Trichrome Staining & Ziehl Neelsen

**REGISTER NOW!**

for more information please contact:

**DR. AZDAYANTI: 0125740014**

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**Organized by:** Department of Medical Microbiology and Parasitology (MMP) & Institute of Medical Molecular Biotechnology (IMMB), Faculty of Medicine, UiTM.
The Department of Parasitology & Medical Entomology, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia would like to invite you to a Basic Malaria Microscopy & Diagnostic Workshop 2022.
**KOTA SAMARAHAN**: A team from UNIMAS has conducted a malaria preventive workshop with selected local representatives from longhouses in Kapit.

Headed by Dr. Angela Siner, the team organised interactive community activities in Kapit, on May 25 and 26, which were held to mark the World Malaria Day 2022.

The main objective of the project is “Creating A Malaria–Mindful Society” (CREAMMS). The team intends to create a local team that will be able to respond to local Malaria needs in a timely manner.

Kapit records the highest cases of malaria in Sarawak, it said and the team brought its research findings into the project, to elevate the levels of awareness and preventive actions that can be carried out by the local residents.

According to the director of Malaria Research Centre, Dr Paul Cliff Divis UNIMAS has been conducting research to understand the transmission of zoonotic malaria in the Kapit division for over 20 years, in collaboration with the Sarawak State Health Department. As such now is the time to contribute to the community on malaria prevention.

The programme is aligned with UNIMAS’ vision of being a community-driven university, drawing on the university’s regional strengths in research and scholarship.

Date: 27th May 2022
The good thing about the ‘new norm’ is we were able to organise virtual activities with a very good attendance, compared to previous face-to-face (F2F) meetings of yesteryears. And we were able to get the participation of council members from outside the Klang Valley - including those from the peninsula’s east coast and East Malaysia - something that was nearly impossible before. "This allowed all members an equal opportunity to attend our events and participate or contribute holistically," Dr Sam said at the 58th MSPTM annual general meeting that was held virtually.

His vice-president Dr Chen Chee Dhang will succeed Dr Sam as MSPTM president. He added that good attendance at meetings was important because the key performance indicators these days encouraged national contribution and networking. "Even students who intend to do overseas attachments require experience in these types of activities. "And the virtual meetings and conferences greatly assisted them, by reaching out to just about anyone," Dr Sam said. Due to the pandemic, he added, MSPTM decided to do more seminars the past year. "The seminars have proven to be very successful. The last seminar in January had more than 400 participants. "On the other hand, our annual conference was successful in getting foreign speakers at a low cost, although most members missed the F2F atmosphere and annual gala dinner. "It is our sincere desire to conduct a F2F conference next year before our 60th year celebrations," Dr Sam said.

He recalled how his second term as MSPTM president began at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. "I started this role when the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown began, and now I step down just as the country opens its doors at the borders. "Feels like it was premeditated," he said in jest.

Dr Sam added that the ‘new normal’ had made him the first virtual MSPTM president as they could not organise any public events in the last 24 months. "In one way, I leave with a heavy heart but in another, I feel like I have not really experienced a true president-ship. "Even the president’s medal that I am wearing (as I speak) was in the closet for two years," said Dr Sam.
The MSPTM, he added, had embarked on an active membership drive around the medical schools in Malaysia. "We use slides to show our society’s activities and also educate academicians and students on the benefits of joining MSPTM. “I am proud to say that we have recruited 30 new members this year due to this programme.”We will continue to do so in the coming years and we hope that our members will do the same,” he said.

He added that when he took over the MSPTM reigns from Prof Dr Siti Nursheena Mohd Zain, one of their projects was focused on redesigning their ‘Journal of Tropical Biomedicine’. "We decided to digitalise our journal. This is a three-to-five-year project which is helmed by Datuk Dr Chandraawathani Panchadcharam. “She and the editorial management team have been working very hard to ensure we improve on the index ranking and quality rating,” said Dr Sam.

He also praised Dr Stanley Tan and Dr Adela Jiram for working on MSPTM’s social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin and Twitter to ensure they stayed relevant with their younger generation. "We are in the midst of upgrading our society’s website to be a one-stop centre for MSPTM. “This new website will include all our printed materials like old newsletters, journals, photographs and archives of our prominent members and their contributions to science.

“This way we will always stay relevant and future proof our society,” said Dr Sam. He stressed that the new Plain Language Summary (PLS) promotion on tropical biomedicine was one of the projects in this regard. "We will also include our virtual MSPTM museum in the new website.“Our society is famous for three things: Mid-year seminar, annual scientific conference and the Tropical Biomedicine journal. "We have also started to prepare our 60th anniversary coffee-table book,” Dr Sam said. This project is in collaboration with MSPTM’s former journal and newsletter editor Prof Dr Pakeer Oothuman.

Dr Sam also credited senior MSPTM members Dr Reuben Sharma, Datuk Dr S. Vellayan, Prof Wan Kiew Lian, Prof Dr Yvonne Lim, Prof Dr Rehana Sani, Prof Dr Suressh Kumar, Prof Dr Stephen Ambu, Datin Dr Indra Vythilingam, Dr Lee Han Lim and Prof Dr. Fong Mun Yik for their contributions.

"To smoothly assist the serving executive council, we will have an advisory panel of past presidents each term. "This will also allow the council to be filled with younger members to encourage future leaders,” he said. He added that due to virtual meetings, MSPTM had many requests from younger members to join the council.

"Previously, the pandemic proved it difficult for older past-presidents to attend council meetings to discuss important matters, as they were not Internet savvy. “As such, an advisory panel will be mooted each year to assist the young council members in the legacy of MSTPM,” he said.

Dr Sam paid tribute to Dr Chen who had been working with him for the last few years in many roles. "He ran the 'Dengue Awareness Programme’ successfully in three states, and now will continue with the other states.

"He has also organised the last two conferences and worked very hard on all MSPTM marketing activities,” said Dr Sam. He praised very senior members like Dr Vellayan, who recently won the Sandhosam Gold Medal (highest distinction for parasitology and tropical medicine in South-East Asia), for volunteering to be the in the first advisory panel.

Dr Sam also thanked MSPTM administration executive Victoria Foo who had taken the society to another level with her expertise in event management and professional administration. His final wish was for members to keep contributing to MSPTM and keep the society at heart.

Date: 6 April 2022
Google Doodle Celebrates Malaysian Zoologist Dr Lim Boo Liat

Google Doodle pays tribute to Malaysian zoologist Dr Lim Boo Liat

Google chose to honour Dr Lim today because it was on this day in 2003 that he became the first South-East Asian and fourth Asian to receive an Honorary Membership to the American Society of Mammalogists (ASM).

Born in 1926, a profile on the Merdeka Award website explained how Dr Lim had to stop schooling at 16 to support his family due to World War II. He had to do some odd jobs including selling vegetables. Then in 1947, Dr Lim worked his way up from a temporary lab assistant at the Institute of Medical Research (IMR) in KL to becoming a permanent staff member later in 1952. He was involved in a number of scientific expeditions in places like Cambodia and Vietnam, focusing on areas such as the study of parasites and small mammals. From 1955 to 1969, Dr Lim published more than 80 scientific papers and was then asked to head a newly-founded Medical Ecology Division at IMR. Dr Lim was also offered a Sino-British Fellowship Trust Award under the British Council where he spent one and a half year studying animal ecology at the British Natural History Museum.

He then received the opportunity to pursue a Master’s Degree in Science at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. In 1972, Lim return to Malaysia and continue to work at IMR as a full-fledged zoologist. He received his PhD in Zoology at Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1977 and was then invited to be a part of the Vector Biology Control Research Unit at the World Health Organisation (WHO). Dr Lim was also credited with reviving the Malaysian Nature Society after World War II. In a series of Behind the Doodle videos, it was also revealed that Dr Lim worked closely with FRIM (Forest Research Institute Malaysia) from 1999 to 2004 for research which led to a discovery of a new mountain reed snake species, only found in Genting Highlands, Pahang. Dr Lim passed away in 2020 at the age of 94.

Click this link to watch a video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYJ0ynvmRw0
MEMBERS IN MEDIA

JOM AMBIL PEDULI CACAR MONYET

RABU, 25 MEI 2022
9.15 PAGI

MEMBERS IN MEDIA

DR. VICKNESHWARAN MUTHU
KETUA PENOLONG PENGAHARAN
BAHAGIAN KAWALAN PENYAKIT
KEMENTERIAN KESEHATAN MALAYSIA

AWAS! CACAR MONYET

25 MEI 07

RABU
PAGI

BEKANSA
DR. VICKNESHWARAN MUTHU
Ketua Penolong Pengarah Kajian
Bahagian Kawalan Penyakit
Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia

OK VICKNESHWARAN
Muthu
(Ministry of Health)

Penyakit Tangan, Kaki & Mulut
(HFMD)

SIHAN LUNG
AHAD | 29 MEI 2022 | 5.30 PETANG
FACEBOOK @HELODOKTORTVS

DENGARAN SIMAR

ZALYA

Produk

RAYA

DENGARAN SIMAR

ZALYA

Produk

RAYA
MEMBERS IN MEDIA

NOOR AFIZAH AHMAD
(Institute of Medical Research)

PERANGI GIGITAN MAUT Aedes DENGAN NYAMUK BERWOLBACHIA

NOOR AFIZAH AHMAD
Unit Entomologi Perubatan, Pusat Penyelidikan Penyakit Berjangkit (IDRC) Institut Penyelidikan Perubatan (IMR)

AWANI PAgI
ISNIN ● 31 JAN 2022 ● 8.30
Tonton di Saluran 501 | Live TV – astroawani.com & Aplicasi Astro AWANI

DR KUA BENG CHU
Department of Fisheries Malaysia

MERENCANA PERANCANGAN SEKURITI MAKANAN NEGARA

JABATAN PERIKANAN & JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR

DR. KUA BENG CHU
Timbalan Penangkapan Kanak-Bahagian Penyelidikan Jabatan Perikanan Malaysia

DR. SURATAN KAMARUDIN
Timbalan Kebakuan Fisik (Pembangunan) Jabatan Perkhidmatan Veterinar

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We are very delighted to share the information from PARASITESWITHOUTBORDERS as below. In MSPTM, we have a lot of prominent or renowned female scientists. It is time for us to nominate them to be featured in PARASITESWITHOUTBORDERS to increase our visibility in a global scale.

WOMEN IN PARASITOLOGY

We’re highlighting some of the powerful females who have made a real difference in the field of parasitology. Today, we welcome Julie Jacobson. Julie is a global health leader and physician with a life-long commitment to addressing complex public health problems with creative problem solving, innovation, and development of collaborative partnerships for delivering global results. Trained at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as in clinical tropical medicine, she is dedicated to serving the underserved and building equity. Julie pulls from experience as a health care provider, researcher, and initiator of pioneering programs. She has tackled large-scale global problems, removed barriers to success, and built trust amongst diverse stakeholders to achieve health impact for some of the world’s most marginalized populations. Julie brings wide-ranging experience from clinical care, disaster response, product development, and immunization as well as in-depth disease specific knowledge, particularly in neglected tropical diseases. Julie is the immediate past President (2020 – 2021) of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH). Established in 1903, ASTMH is the largest tropical medicine society in the world with members from 117 countries around the world.

Julie Jacobson

If you would like to nominate a woman in parasitology for PARASITESWITHOUTBORDERS to profile, please send an email with full name, contact information, and reason why you’re nominating a particular Women in Parasitology to parasiteswithoutborders@gmail.com
For the second time in two years, the World Health Organization has taken the extraordinary step of declaring a global emergency. This time the cause is monkeypox, which has spread in just a few weeks to dozens of countries and infected tens of thousands of people.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO’s director general, on Saturday overruled a panel of advisers, who could not come to a consensus, and declared a “public health emergency of international concern,” a designation the WHO currently uses to describe only two other diseases, Covid-19 and polio.

“We have an outbreak that has spread around the world rapidly through new modes of transmission, about which we understand too little, and which meets the criteria” for a public health emergency, Dr. Tedros told reporters. It was apparently the first time that the director general had sidestepped his advisers to declare an emergency.

The WHO’s declaration signals a public health risk requiring a coordinated international response. The designation can lead member countries to invest significant resources in controlling an outbreak, draw more funding to the response, and encourage nations to share vaccines, treatments and other key resources for containing the outbreak.

It is the seventh public health emergency since 2007; the Covid pandemic, of course, was the most recent. Some global health experts have criticized the WHO’s criteria for declaring such emergencies as opaque and inconsistent.

At a meeting in June, the WHO’s advisers concluded that while monkeypox was a growing threat, it was not yet an international emergency. The panel could not reach a decision on Thursday, Dr. Tedros said.

“This process demonstrates once again that this vital tool needs to be sharpened to make it more effective,” he added, referring to the WHO’s deliberations.

Monkeypox has been a concern for years in some African countries, but in recent weeks the virus has spread worldwide. Some 75 countries have reported at least 16,000 cases so far, roughly five times the number when the WHO’s advisers met in June.

Nearly all the infections outside Africa have occurred among men who have sex with men. The outbreak has galvanized many in the L.G.B.T. community, who have charged that monkeypox has not received the attention it deserves, as happened in the early days of the H.I.V. epidemic.

The WHO’s declaration is “better late than never,” said Dr. Boghuma Titanji, an infectious diseases physician at Emory University in Atlanta. But with the delay, “one can argue that the response globally has continued to suffer from a lack of coordination with individual countries working at very different paces to address the problem.”

“There is almost capitulation that we cannot stop the monkeypox virus from establishing itself in a more permanent way,” she added.

Dr. James Lawler, co-director of the University of Nebraska’s Global Center for Health Security, estimated that it might take a year or more to control the outbreak. By then, the virus is likely to have infected hundreds of thousands of people and may have permanently entrenched itself in some countries.

What does the WHO declaration mean?

WHO member countries are called on to strengthen quarantine and other public health measures. But the recommendations are not binding.

At the meeting, the WHO emergency committee failed to reach a consensus on whether the monkeypox outbreak represents a public health emergency of international concern. Tedros made the final decision by his authority as director-general.

It is with great sadness to announce the passing of Prof. Oscar Perng, one of our esteemed speakers at the last MSPTM annual conference.

Prof. Oscar Perng
05.10.1959 - 06.05.2022
To all members,
do contribute articles and information pertaining to your activities
or any announcement that relevant to our society and community.
Your comments and suggestions are appreciated.

How to reach us?

Malaysian Society of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine (MSPTM)
21-5-2, Block E, Diamond Square
Jalan 3/50, Off Jalan Gombak
53000 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Editor:
Dr. Azdayanti Muslim (azdayanti@uitm.edu.my)

Assistant Editors:
Dr Lee Ii Li
Dr. Farah Haziqah Meor Termizi
Dr. Stanley Tan Tiong Kai
Dr Nor Azlina Abdul Aziz

Email us at:
newslettermsptm@gmail.com

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