



Research is creating new knowledge

- Neil Armstrong



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IMR DIRECTOR'S

Welcome Message

Salam Sejahtera!

I am pleased to write this welcome message for the first issue of the IMR Newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight the activities of the Institute as it happens so that our friends and work colleagues from within the Institute and outside may be informed of the scientific happenings. This may better enable our partners-in-research to perhaps join in with their conversations and contributions.

As we settle into the New Year with our plans firmly in place, we look forward to the rest of the year to be full of insightful events and outputs to research that shall form practical solutions to the pressing problems of the day.

As a 116 year old institution, our core focal activity remains unchanged. As the research arm for the Ministry of Health, our priority areas seek to address current medical and health needs of the country.

My team and I shall strive to keep our readers up to date with the academic happenings at the Institute and we hope to engage especially the young researchers to get excited about the legacy that is ours.

Happy reading!

Dato' Dr Fadzilah Kamaludin

Director

Institute for Medical Research (IMR)

Kuala Lumpur

28 February 2017

IMR Morning Assembly

The first morning assembly for the year was held on Wednesday, 25 January 2017 from 9 am. The Master of Ceremony (MC) welcomed the gathering and led us through the morning prayers, MOH oath taking and singing of the national anthem.

This was followed by the IMR Director's motivational speech. In her rallying call, she urged the staff to reflect on their past activities while seeking new meaning in the direction they were taking towards the future. Dato' Dr Fadzilah emphasised that courtesy and good manners were essential components to getting things done. Dato' encouraged the young officers to embrace the current technology to address issues of medical importance – in the fore-run were the dengue epidemic and the use of *Aedes* mosquitoes infected with *Wolbachia*. If this scourge could be eliminated in 30 years using the available technology, this could add to the historical narrative of the eradication of past diseases. In elaborating the 30-30-30 concept described by Jack Ma, Dato' addressed the 30 year olds of the 'internet generation' to persevere steadfastly in their research as they would experience the impact of what was being done today 30 years hence. Dato' said, "It is you the young generation, that is going to change the world. You do a good job now, you will have a good journey ahead. You discover something beneficial now, you will reap the benefits."

Dato' Dr Fadzilah stressed that we are indeed fortunate to be working at this Institute. Dato' reiterated that at the Public Sector Commercialisation session and at the Steering Committee Meeting for Commercialisation, she was proud that IMR was listed as a research institute with potential to generate marketable innovative and creative products. In 2016, IMR was given local grants by the MOH, Agriculture and Primary Industries Ministry and Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment; as well as grants from foreign agencies such as Wellcome Trust and Newton Fund. The Institute generated 152 presentations and 112 publications. As the IMR thrives on networking with partners from the WHO, UN and internationally renowned universities, every researcher was encouraged to strengthen their involvement globally.

A recent accomplishment has been the opening ceremony of a *Wolbachia* Laboratory at the IMR which was a community event. This year will also have a focus on the seroprevalence of the *Zika* virus. Despite



looming economic hardtimes, the IMR needs to forge ahead in its transformative stance as we gear ourselves to face the challenge of moving to the NIH Complex in Setia Alam. A big challenge for the year will be the IMR's secretarial role for the MOHAMM 2017 conference.

The Director ended her speech by wishing every staff success in their deliberations.

IMR Morning Assembly



“What was done well last year could be emulated this year ... what was done which needed improvement could be enhanced to better not only ourselves but it would also benefit our family, our community and our workplace.”

“We need to buck up, do a paradigm shift and change our mindset. We can no longer work, think or do like we used to. We can no longer work in silos, no longer conduct research in our comfort zones. We need to make IMR relevant and show the impact.”



Project *Wolbachia*

1st Working Group with Professor Ary Hoffman, University of Melbourne, August 2016.

The *Wolbachia* study was initiated in June 2016. The research is fully funded by Wellcome Trust (UK) in collaboration with University of Glasgow, United Kingdom and University of Melbourne, Australia. The Principal Investigator of this project is Professor Steve Sinkins, University of Glasgow, Scotland.

 **KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA**
Yesterday at 8:55 pm · 🌐

Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes project may turn tide in battle against dengue <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malays...> Continue reading




Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes project may turn tide in battle against dengue

📍 The Malay Mail Online

themalaymailonline.com

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 9 — The Institute for Medical Research (IMR) believes the release of Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes could finally help the country win the battle against Aedes mosquitoes and dengue.



Its director Dato' Dr Fadzilah Kamaluddin said the programme was recommended by the World Health Organisation and it had proved successful in a few countries.

“There have been no more Aedes mosquitoes in Yorkeys Knob and Gordonvale, Australia after the first five weeks of the Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes being released,” she told *Malay Mail* yesterday.

The Health Ministry will be releasing the Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes in Section 7, Shah Alam and AU2 Keramat end of March.

Section 7, Shah Alam had among the highest number Aedes cases, 4,005 between 2012 and 2016, while AU2 Keramat had 198 cases.

Dr Fazillah said a collaborative study was done in June last year between the ministry, IMR, Lancaster University, Britain and University of Melbourne.

Press statement in the Malay Mail Online
by Juliana Menon



Pre-launch meeting in *Bilik Mesyuarat 2* before the opening of the *Wolbachia* Laboratory at the IMR.

Project Partners pose in front of the new *Wolbachia* building.

Briefing session by Dr Thomas Ant from Glasgow.



Crowd gathering in front of the *Wolbachia* Building at the IMR on 17 February 2017.





Project *Wolbachia*

Members of the community from identified dengue hotspots were invited to visit the *Wolbachia* laboratory at the IMR to enable them to obtain first-hand information and experience in *Wolbachia* mosquito rearing.

Activities involved:

- (i) In preparation for the field release, an entomological surveillance was conducted to determine the density of *Aedes* mosquito and types of mosquito species in the field release sites.
- (ii) In addition, several public engagements were carried out to educate and inform residents on this new approach to control dengue, *zika* and *chikungunya* while obtaining their general agreement.



Wolbachia Research Training



IMR Researchers and Collaborators at a training session.



Site visit to Section 7 in Shah Alam on 26 November 2016.



Training session with the consultant, Vanessa White from Melbourne University from 5-9 December 2016 on detection of *Wolbachia* in *Aedes aegypti* from the field for monitoring purposes.

Consultant and IMR Researchers at the laboratory at the Entomology Unit of the IMR.



Extraction using the Chelex method for large scale screening of up to 300 samples per day from the field.



MSU Students' visit the IMR

On Tuesday, 6 December 2016, 57 medical students and 3 faculty members from the International Medical School, Management Science University (MSU) requested for a study visit to the IMR. They arrived at 9 am and were greeted by several staff of the IMR at the Ungku Omar Auditorium.



Second Year MSU Medical Students' listening to presentations by the IMR Officers.

MSU Medical Faculty lecturers and IMR officers listening to the presentation.





Welcome session at the IMR Auditorium

The visitors were briefed on the history and journey of the IMR since its inception in 1900. This was followed by a presentation on the Animal House with a focus on the ethics in dealing with animals procured for biomedical research.

A presentation about the Environmental Health Research Centre (EHRC) followed. The morning session at the Auditorium ended with a musical montage of research activities and service rendered by the EHRC.

The students were truly amazed by the length of illustrious years of the Institute's history and diversity of research conducted by the IMR. They were reminded that this was their heritage.





A tour of the specimens and artifacts displayed at the Biomedical Museum located in the 1928 heritage building.

Site visit to the various facilities



Briefing at the Electron Microscopy Unit of the IMR.



Looking at the monographs located in the library section of the 1900 heritage building.

IMR: A glimpse through the ages

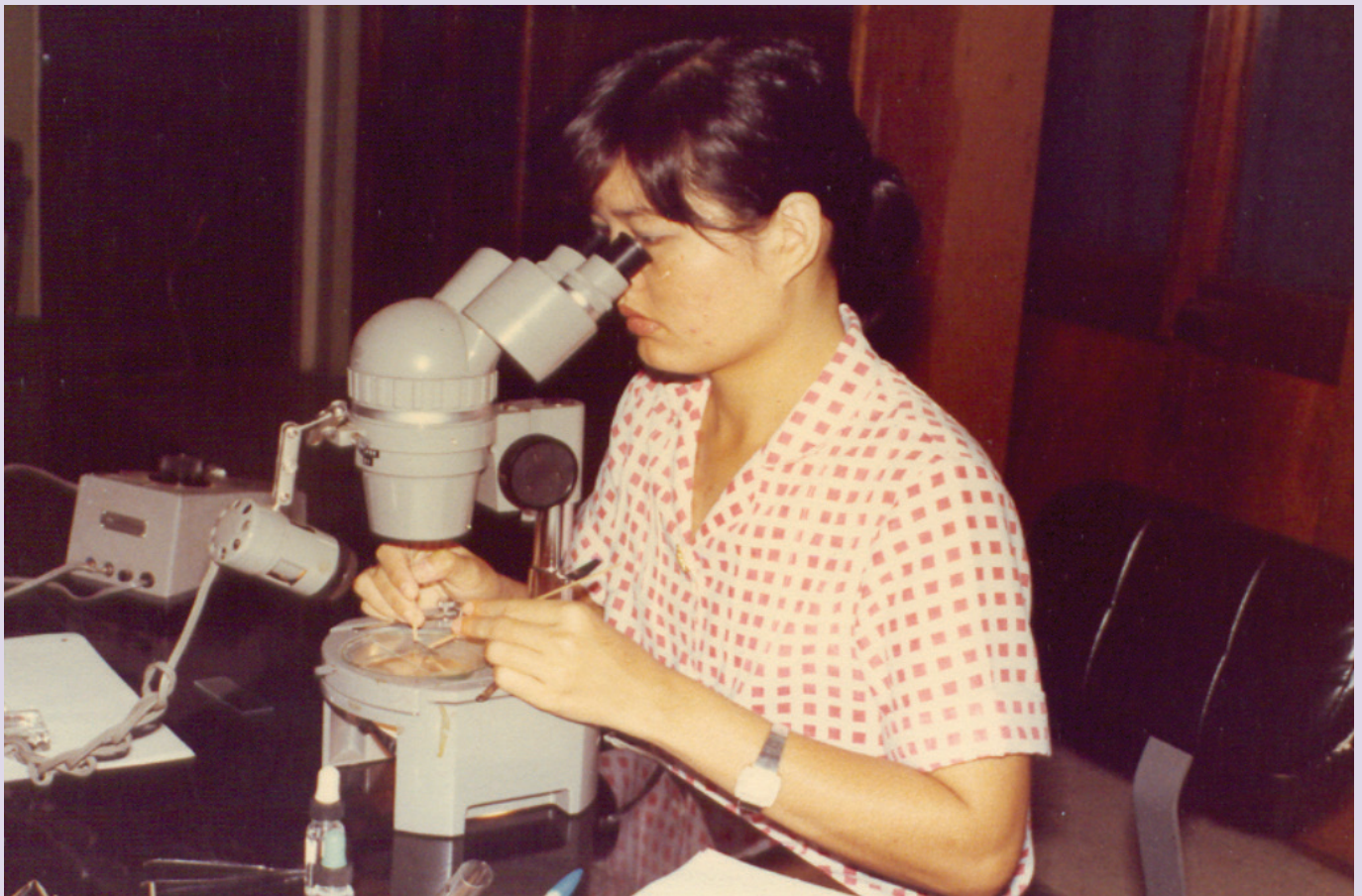


Field trips.

IMR: A glimpse through the ages



Lectures at a training session.



Laboratory work.