

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING OF THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, ACADEMY OF MEDICINE OF MALAYSIA FROM 28-30 MAY 2010 AT MALACCA, MALAYSIA

Attended by:	Dr Swaminathan Ikshuvanam (on behalf of the President, College of Surgeons, Singapore)
Reported by:	Dr Swaminathan Ikshuvanam
<u>Trip Report</u>	
I attended the above meeting from 28th to 30th May 2010 at Holiday Inn Hotel, Malacca. It was a privilege to represent the College President. The theme of the meeting was “Innovations in Surgery”. It included the joint participation of the Vascular Society of Malaysia and Malaysian Urological Association. There were two pre-Congress Workshops, one on Medical Research and the other on Haemodialysis Vascular Access. The Official Opening Ceremony started promptly at 8.00am on the 28th May 2010. Presidents from sister colleges in ASEAN, the US, UK and Australasia were on stage, in their respective robes, and were introduced. Once it was declared open, the 37th A M Ismail Oration was delivered by Prof Dato’ P Kandasami, a well known figure in Malaysian surgery, first in Orthopaedics, then in upper GI Surgery. He was also Director of Health at one point. He spoke on “Surgical Therapy of Peptic Ulcer Disease – An Inspiring Journey”, tracing the changes that occurred over more than a century in time in the field of peptic ulcer surgery. He brought back memories of milk drips, emergency gastrectomy, then vagotomy and drainage, and how these have now been all but eliminated, with the arrival of Proton Pump Inhibitors. An Inspiring lecture, well-received by all, including his trainees, who respect him. Next, the first plenary lecture, by Dr. Lum Siew kheong, President of the College of Surgeons, Malaysia, was equally thought-provoking. It addressed many of the issues affecting General Surgery world-wide, especially why less doctors are inclined to become general surgeons. With the aid of lots of statistics, he showed how there was a severe shortage of General Surgeons in the country and gave reasons for this. He then went on to elaborate how we can re-brand General Surgery to make it a more attractive specialty. These included providing information, incentives, innovative ideas, enhancing the image of general surgeons and generating emotional connectivity with patients. Altogether, a very sound, balanced lecture, with many pointers for us. I also attended the symposium on breast surgery, which had the participation of two of our specialists from NUH. Topics covered were Accelerated Partial Breast Irradiation (APBI), Techniques in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery and Sentinel Lymph Node biopsy. In the afternoon, we broke away for the International Presidents’ Meeting, a forum for exchange of ideas across the region and beyond. The main item on the agenda was the recently-signed AMRAMP which stands for ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Medical Practitioners. According to this agreement, a doctor from an ASEAN country may apply for credentialing and practising rights in a fellow or host ASEAN country. The challenges of accrediting doctors from a fellow ASEAN country, including how to verify their training and expertise, were discussed. The subsequent day’s sessions included Symposia on Innovations in Urology and in Surgical Education and Training. There were plenaries and the judging for the Ethicon Prize. This is the equivalent of our Young Surgeon’s Award and was keenly contested, with some quality high-powered research. I also made time to attend social events and dinners and the Melaka city tour, which covered all the important historical parts. I hope that the close ties forged during meetings like this will be strengthened further through reciprocal meetings and exchanges of ideas.	
<u>Usefulness of Event to Self & College of Surgeons</u>	
Collaboration ties and fellowship were re-fostered with our overseas fraternal Colleges / Academies at this meeting.	