

ASEAN ORTHOPAEDIC ASSOCIATION Senior Travelling Fellowship 2013

The following Senior Fellows started their Fellowship in Singapore:

1. Dr. Sarwan Singh, Malaysia: sarwan,dr@gmail.com
2. Dr. Andre Chandra Parluhut, Indonesia : andrecps@yahoo.com
3. Dr. Robinson T. Uy, Philippines : robinsonuymd@yahoo.com
4. Dr. Khong Kok Sun, Singapore (first half) ; koksunkhongmd@yahoo.com.sg
5. Dr. Kanwaljit Soin, Singapore (second half); ksoin@emenders.com
6. Dr. Lai Pham Hoang, Vietnam: phamlai121@yahoo.com.vn
7. Dr. Kiat Witoonchart, Thailand: orthodoc@hotmail.com

Singapore: 13.07.2013 to 16.07.2013

13th July 2013

The above fellows flew in from their home countries and assembled at the Ritz Carlton Hotel to observe the rehearsal of the Singapore Independence Day from Dr. Khong Kok Sun's room, filled with snacks from our various countries and wine. The rehearsal ended with a majestic fireworks display. This was followed by a wonderful dinner at the Ritz Carlton Hotel with AOA Outreach Chairman, Dr Peter Lee and his wife. This enabled the fellows to interact with each other resulting in a closer understanding of each other.

14th July 2013

The following day was a sightseeing day. Being a Sunday, the main hospital units were on emergency standby. So the STFs took the opportunity to see the sights of Singapore. It was a short morning walk across to Marina Bay Sands Hotel's Sky57 for high-level breakfast. In a light drizzle, we visited the Arts Science Museum with it's the Mummy secret of the tomb exhibition. After that we walked across to the Gardens by the Bay with its two climate-controlled Flower Domes. In fact it was such a long trip that the STF's missed lunch, returning to the Hotel around 4.00 pm. A quick shower and change of clothes was followed by a visit to the Santos Island's newly opened Marine Park was in order followed by a short ride to meet SOA President at the posh W Hotel. The name of the restaurant was SKIRT and the senior travelling fellows were told that they had to be in a skirt to be allowed into the restaurant for a meal at night. Of course none of us had a skirt on. Finally we were allowed into the restaurant with what we were wearing. To receive us was none other than the Dr Paul Chang, President of the Singapore Orthopaedic Association and his lovely wife. We had a wonderful meal besides an entertaining dialogue with the President.

15th July 2013

On Monday, Dr Paul Chang invited us to his O.T. in Singapore General Hospital to observe a double-bundle ACL reconstruction. Robinson, STF from Philippines, scrubbed up with him. This was followed by a meal of Chicken or Lamb bryani at the Doctors rest room and then a visit to the Tan Tock Seng Hospital. We were met by Dr. Lai Choon Hin who initially took us to the Tan Tock Seng Hospital museum. Here the curator of the museum conducted us around the museum and brought us up to date on the hospitals history. This was followed by a round of the orthopaedic wards. A rewarding day on the whole. To those who want to computerise the medical records, Hospital Tan Tock Seng has a good documentation system implemented.

Back to the hotel for a rest before we were transported to the Sammy's Curry house for a refreshing and chilli hot South Indian meal. Our fellow from Thailand had a difficult time at night, running to the toilet . He was not able to stand the chilli in the fish head curry. He recovered over time.

Alor Setar, Kedah, Malaysia: 16.7.2013 to 19.7.2013

16th July 2013

We boarded the morning flight to Alor Setar with a transit at Kuala Lumpur arriving at Alor Setar at 1.30 p.m. We checked in to the Holiday Villa Hotel. This was followed by Lunch at the hotel. At night we had a meal with two other members of the Malaysian Orthopaedic Association, Dr. Low Keng Hong and Dr. Jasminder Singh. The dinner was at the Revolving Tower.

17th July 2013

We took an hour's drive to visit the Sultanah Bahiyah Hospital at Alor Setar. We were received by Dato Dr. Suresh Chopra, Head of Department. A visit to the orthopaedic clinic and the wards was in order. This was then followed with a presentation by Dr. Khong on Sacral fractures and their operative management. And a short talk by Dr. Andre from Indonesia on T.B. of the Spine and its management. Dato Dr. Suresh Chopra then discussed some interesting orthopaedic cases which were presented by his medical officers. It was an interesting session for the Post Graduate students. We all had lunch in the Department.

At night there was dinner at the Szechuan Restaurant at the hotel. Dato Dr. Suresh Chopra and his specialist officers joined us for Buka Puasa. Gifts from MOA were presented to each of the visiting fellows by Dato Dr. Suresh Chopra. The night ended with a durian fest at the stalls near the hotel. This began our consensual tradition of having durians at every stop on the tour.

18th July 2013

The second day in Kedah started with visit to the Sultan Abdul Hamid Hospital, Sungai Petani. The visit started at 10.30 am. With a visit to the orthopaedic wards : Male and Female. The Head of Department Dr. S. L. Vijay Kumar was ever ready to show us around. A visit to the Medical Director's office was followed by a clinical case discussion at the auditorium. Cases were presented by the medical officers of Sungai Petani orthopaedic department. An interesting case discussion took place. The medical officers were glad that all STF's gave an input on the clinical cases presented. Lunch was at the Chennai Curry House. None of us got sick since the food was mild and tasty. The fellows then toured the AIMST (Asian Institute of Medical Science and Technology). Returning to Alor Setar we were presented with a gunny sack of Durians which the fellows were ever willing to taste and I would say ate like they were never going to get durians in their lives after that. Our fellow from Singapore was the happiest. No Durians in Singapore he says. All durian trees have been uprooted to make way for buildings. What a sad tale. The night ended with dinner at the stalls. The STF's wanted to get away from restaurant food and were ever willing to taste the stall food offered at Alor Setar.

Hanoi, Vietnam: 19.7.2013 to 22.7.2013

19th July 2013

On the morning of 19th of July we all boarded the flight to Kuala Lumpur and onwards to Hanoi in Vietnam. We arrived at the Hanoi International Airport at 9.25 pm., by the time we got out of the airport and reached the classic Hilton Opera hotel was approximately 11.00 p.m. fortunately the British Open Golf tournament was on. Sleep was slow to come but it was a restful night.

20th July 2013

We were picked up in the morning from the hotel in a 12-seater Ford transit van and taken to the Viet Duc Hospital where we were received by the President of the Vietnam Orthopaedic Association A/Prof Nguyen Van Thach and his team of orthopaedic surgeons. After the introductions and welcoming speech by Dr. Nguyen I had to introduce the Senior travelling fellows. Dr. Khong from Singapore again spoke on fixation of Sacral Fractures. This was followed by a talk on Brachial Plexus injuries by Dr. Kiat Witoonchart from Thailand. He discussed the presentation of the injuries involving brachial plexus in a detail manner. The results of the treatment were also demonstrated by video. An interesting session indeed. We then toured the General Orthopaedic wards as well as a visit to the orthopaedic operation theatres. Despite being a Saturday, the wards were full and operations were being conducted in every orthopaedic theatre. There being 30 theatres in all. A large work load indeed. Lunch was at the Garden Restaurant. A number of members of the orthopaedic fraternity joined us for lunch. Speeches were made. The VOA was thanked for having us. The afternoon was supposed to be free and easy. However the tradition of having durians at every stop was continued when we were hosted to a durian treat by one of the orthopaedic surgeons Dr. Ngoc at his home. A surprise indeed. A tour of the ceramic factories showed how advanced the Vietnamese Ceramic Industry was. Purchases were made by the STF's. Dinner of traditional pho (flat rice noodles) was by the road side which is a typical way of eating in Hanoi, followed by a walk through the shopping area of the Old Quarter.

21st July 2013

We started early for a long road trip to World Heritage site of Halong Bay arranged by the President of the VOA. It was a 4 hour drive from the hotel. Reaching the port a 5 hour boat ride was performed in the Halong Bay area. Lunch was served on the boat. A trip to the caves of one of the hills was undertaken by the younger fellows. A complete exhaustion was noted on their return to the boat. The return trip was also interesting. The drive back took another 4 hours.

Manila, The Philippines: 22.7.2013 to 23.7.2013

22nd July 2013

A drive to the airport to fly to Manila via Bangkok started at 7.00 am. We were able to spend some money and make purchases at Suvarnabhumi Bangkok airport before the flight to Manila, arriving near mid-night. We shared duplex apartment rooms at the Radisson Inn adjoining Robinson Mall, unfortunately not owned by our Filipino fellow of the same name.

23rd July 2013

An early start to beat the renowned traffic at 6.00 am with breakfast in the van transporting us to The Philippine Orthopaedic Centre in Quezon City. We went straight to the auditorium. Here we were met by The Medical Director Dr. Luisito Maano. We were well received. This was followed by a presentation on " Comparison of Culture and Sensitivity results of 2001 and 2009 at Kedah Medical Centre by Dr. Sarwan Singh and another talk on Presentation and methods of treatment of T.B. spine Dr. Andre. A good discussion on both clinical topics ensured that all were happy in receiving and hearing from us. We were then taken on a tour of the Orthopaedic Centre. We then adjourned to the Armed Forces Medical Centre where we were met by The Assistant Head Lt. Leogardo D. Leonen MC. His training Officers MAS Domingo A Chua Jr MC and Capt. Nathaniel P Mendet MC accompanied us on a tour of the wards as well as the medical centre. We then adjourned to their auditorium where clinical case discussion took place. A Brachial Plexus injury was presented and the view and opinion of Dr. Kiat Witoonchart was sought. A good case discussion ensued. Another case of Elbow arthroplasty was presented by Dr. Janmichaelben G. Miranda. An interesting case discussion ensued on elbow arthroplasty. Lunch was taken in between. We then met up with Brig General Normando Santa Ana, the Surgeon-General of the Armed Forces who introduced the rest of his orthopaedic department and welcomed us to the hospital. We were then presented with a present on our visit to the hospital. A great and wonderful gesture I would say.

We finished at 3.00 pm. And returned back to the hotel exhausted but happy that we met up with so many orthopaedic surgeons. It also reminded me of my days as a medical officer and Registrar in the Surgical and Orthopaedic departments of General Hospitals.

At night was the official dinner with the president of the ASEAN Orthopaedic Association Dr. Ellewellyn G. Pasion AMD, FACS and the President of the Philippine Orthopaedic Association Dr. Adrian Quidlat. A group photograph was taken. Dinner was served. An aphrodisiac called Balut which is considered a local delicacy was given as starters. Each Senior Travelling Fellow was presented with a Certificate of Fellowship by the President of AOA. He also informed us that all travelling fellows will be invited to converge at the AOA meeting at Cebu Philippines in November of 2014. The President of POA also presented mementos to all the STF's. The night ended well with another round of durians and we were glad to return back to the hotel exhausted.

24th July 2013

Today the STF's were allowed to get up at a more appropriate time. We left for the University of Santo Tomas (UST) University Medical Centre where we toured the Orthopaedic Department. It had recently celebrated its 400th (Quadricentennial) anniversary! We were introduced to the Department Chief Dr. Alberto Molano involved in the training of residents in Arthroscopy of the Shoulder and Knee as well as other training facilities at the Orthopaedic Learning Centre providing quarterly training courses in conjunction with Smith & Nephew.

We had farewell seafood lunch where we parted company with our fellow from Singapore Dr. Khong. He was replaced by Dr. Kanwaljit Sooin for the Indonesia, Thailand and Myanmar legs of the tour. We made a shopping trip to the gigantic Mall Of Asia (MOA) for some purchase of gifts before returning to the hotel at 6.00 pm. Dinner was at Jollibee restaurant.

25th July 2013

Today was a visit to the PHILIPPINES General Hospital. Leaving the hotel at 8.00 am. We arrived at the hospital at 9.45 am. A long drive because of the famous traffic jam. We were met at the hospital by Dr. Edward Wang who took us first to the administrative centre to introduce STF's to the administrative staff. We were then taken to the Conference room where we were introduced to the residents of the Orthopaedic Department. Interesting and Complicated cases were then presented. An Interesting case discussion then took place between the Consultants of PGH and the STF's. This was followed by a talk on Culture and sensitivity results of 2001 and 2009 at the Kedah Medical Centre which was presented by Dr. Sarwan Singh and the talk on Brachial Plexus Injuries by Dr. Kiat from Thailand. We had tea in between the clinical case discussion and lecture presentation. We finished at 12.00 noon for a long drive back to the hotel reaching at 1.30 pm. A quick lunch was followed by a short nap. We checked out at 5.00 pm. Courtesy of a late check out. Reached the airport and have checked in to the flight to Jakarta at 9.00 pm. Reaching Jakarta at 12.00 midnight. I am not sure when we will check into the Hotel. We have been told to be ready to go to a hospital in Jakarta at 8.00 am. To beat the traffic jam we have to leave early at 6.00 am. I am not sure if I will be able to get up in the morning.

Jakarta, Indonesia: 25.7.2013 to 28.7.2013

26th July 2013

It was past 12.00 midnight before we arrived at the Hotel JS Luwansa ; Jakarta. We checked in and reached the room only at 1.30 am. A late night in deed. We had a short night but got up at 6.30 am. We had a quick breakfast.

The visit was to the Kristian University of Indonesia . Here we were received by Dr. Kurniawan Purwantono and Dr. Karina and a group of orthopaedic surgeons as well as Junior doctors. The following talks were delivered

1. Brachial Plexus Injuries : Dr. Kiat
2. Ageing Gracefully in ASEAN : Dr. Kanwaljit Soin.
3. Primary Intra-medullary Nailing in Compound Fractures of the tibia : Dr. Sarwan Singh

A good discussion took place on the topics discussed.

It was 12.00 noon by now. We then went for Lunch at the Restaurant situated at the Mini Indonesai Museum Desa Restaurant. We were the guest of the orthopaedic surgeons of the Kristian University Hospital. This was followed by a bus tour of the museum. It was a wonderful experience of touring this unique facility built by the wife of the former President of Indonesia General Suharto. It showcases the different provinces of Indonesia. The life style of its people. The costumes of the different races in Indonesia are well displayed. Over all this 2 hour tour was very enlightening and is recommended to anyone who is visiting Jakarta.

The trip back to the hotel was an experience. Leaving the facility of the mini museum at 5.00 p.m. we arrived back at the hotel at 7.00 pm. This was dinner time , the traffic jam of Jakarta had certainly taken the toll on our time. A quick change and it was back for dinner. Here we were met by the Secretary General of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association Dr. Lia and the President of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association Dr. Rizal Pohan and /Dr. Karuniawan P. Adiwardoya. The meal was good. We were presented with Sovenious from the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association. After the meal we adjourned to the hotel.

27th July 2013

The morning started reasonably early at 7.30 am. Today was Saturday and the association had made preparations for us for a visit to ancient city of Bandug. There is an ancient volcano Tang Kuban Perahau which is an active volcano. The trip was an experience. We were told to expect traffic jams on the roads. However the journey to Bandug was not a problem. It being a Saturday there was not much traffic on the roads. However reaching Bandung the jam started. We were all surprised to see a police car with a siren blaring on the side of the road. It accompanied us to the top of the volcano and a 3 hour trip became a 45 minute breeze. Time was saved. For the first time a police escort took travelling fellows to a tourist destination. The volcano is still active and we saw smoke bellowing from the centre. There was sulphur smell and there was a lake of sulphur in the middle of the volcano. The smell of sulphur was all around us. Dr. Kanwaljit Soin and Dr. Robinson were strong and brave enough to climb the side of the volcano to see the fresh water spring. The rest of us took photographs and did some souvenirs shopping. The escort brought us back to Bandung after we had

lunch at one of the restaurants. We visited a factory outlet where the fellows did more shopping. The drive back to Jakarta was long reaching at 7.30 pm. We stopped at the Batik outlet and purchased some shirts. Dinner was at the restaurant nearby. The chief guest was Dr. Liyar. Dr. Andrious presented some gifts to the fellows. All returned to the hotel after a wonderful day spent at Bandung and the talk was about the police escort.

Bangkok, Thailand: 28.7.2013 to 30.7.2013

28th July 2013

Had an early breakfast. Left for the airport to board a flight on Thai Airways to Bangkok. The flight left at 12.35 pm. And is expected to reach Bangkok in 3 hours 30 minutes.

We reached Bangkok at 3.45 pm. Getting out of Immigration was easy because there was a separate counter for ASEAN travellers. We boarded two vans to the Hotel Ramadah on the river. Took a short rest. Dressed for dinner hosted by the Orthopaedic Association of Thailand. We met Dr. Thanrongrat Keokarn Past President, Dr. Thavat Prasarithra President of the Thai Orthopaedic Association and Dr. Pongsak Wattana. Old stories of STF's were told and a good atmosphere prevailed throughout the dinner. This was followed by a visit to the Asiatique Market on the river which is next to the hotel returning at 11.00 p.m. Sleep was good.

29th July 2013

The next day we were picked up from the hotel. We visited the Orthopaedic Department of Phramongkutklao Army Hospital. Sr. Col. Dr. Dussadee Tattanond MD. The Director of the Department of Orthopaedics met us at the conference room. His residents then present cases admitted to the department and their treatment was discussed. This was followed by a visit to the general wards and the operation theatres. We then toured the Phya Thai Palace. King Rama VI the ruler of this palace had donated the land for the hospital to be built. We went for lunch after that and then back to the hotel for a short rest. This was followed by a traditional Thai massage where all fellows were treated to the wonders of a Thai massage. Dinner was at one of the restaurants. We came back to have an early night.

30th July 2013

We were picked up at 7.30 am for a visit to Ayutthaya: the ancient capital of Thailand. It was an experience of the Thai Royal Family Palace and the Pagoda nearby. Lunch was at the riverside restaurant. We returned at about 5.00 pm. Had a Durian feast at the river side. Dinner was at a popular Thai restaurant. Here we met the famous hand surgeon Dr. Somsak Leephavengvongs MD. He was happy to receive us. Dinner was typical Thai. We returned to the Hotel at 9.00 pm.

Yangon, Myanmar: 31.7.2013 to 3.8.2013

31st July 2013

We left for the airport at around 9.00 am. Took a flight from Bangkok to Yangon arriving at 1.55 p.m. We were received by the members of the Myanmar Orthopaedic Society and taken to the famous Shwedagon Pagoda situated in the centre of the city. A Pagoda with its beautiful decorations and the statue of Buddha all around you. It was a wonderful experience. We then checked in to the Panda Hotel. A comfortable hotel. In the evening we were guest of Prof. Thit Lwin Professor & Head Department of Orthopaedic University of Medicine (1), Yangon and Yangon General Hospital.

1st August 2013

We visited the Yangon General Hospital. We were received by Prof. Zaw Wai Soe. He conducted us to the Conference room. We were joined by Prof. Thit Lwin. The residence presented clinical cases and an interesting discussion on the methods of management occurred. We then went on a tour of the Yangon General Hospital. Subsequently we were conducted to the University of Medicine (1) Yangon where we were received by Khin Swe Aye the Head (Admin/Finance) University of Medicine (1) Yangon. She then delivered a short and comprehensive talk of the medical courses conducted at University of Yangon. We then toured the university compound. It was raining and we were glad that we were undercover of the university. This being the raining season. Went for lunch and then were toured the Hand unit where we were conducted to the Male and Female wards of Yangon Orthopaedic General Hospital. We were then taken to the conference room and a Lecture on Brachial Plexus injuries by Dr. Kiat and T.B. of the spine and its management was delivered by Dr. Andre. We then left

for the hotel. In the evening we were joined for dinner by the members of the Myanmar Orthopaedic Society at the Golden Duck Restaurant. Fried Duck delicacies being its speciality

2nd August 2013

We were picked up from the hotel at 8.00 am for the North Okkalapa General Hospital of University of Medicine (2) Yangon. We were received by Prof. Myint Thuang. Here a brief history of the orthopaedic facilities of the hospital was delivered. We then discussed clinical case that had been operated at the hospital during the last year. Dr. Robinson then delivered a lecture on Acute dislocation of the knee joint with its methods of management. The secession ended with Lunch with the residents of the hospital. A short visit to the Victoria Private Hospital to show the facilities available in private care in Yangon. The facilities were luxurious as compared to the facilities at the General hospital. The latest investigation machines were available at this hospital. The Senior Fellows were surprised at the facilities available. Dr. Kanwaljit Sooin then departed for the airport to return home after bidding farewell to all Senior fellows. A quick tour of the city for shopping and then return to the hotel. The night dinner was hosted with chief guest as Prof Kyaw Myint Naing The president of the Myanmar Medical Association. It was held at the Karaweik Palace Hotel. Magnificent building with all the decoration which were lighted up to brighten the night sky. This is an old Palace of the Kings of Burma which has now being converted into the restaurant on the Lake. Its ambience is to be marvelled at. There was accompanying traditional music and dance by the Traditional Dancers of Burma. Dinner was by buffet. The day ended with farewell all round. We will be departing tomorrow. After three long weeks had passed so quickly.

3rd August 2013

Were transported to the Myanmar International airport in 2 cars, since we had large bags to load our luggage.

Dr. Sarwan's Comment

The trip has been a wonderful experience for me personally. Having reached an age where I can consider myself as a Senior Fellow I learnt a lot on the latest techniques that are being performed in orthopaedic and traumatology. Personally I could contribute my clinical experience to the junior orthopaedic surgeons and interns. There is a substantial amount of work being performed in ASEAN countries which we should be able to share with our friends all over the world.

Seeing our orthopaedic colleges working hard in Vietnam and Myanmar under general conditions which I would say are very taxing to them for the resources available. These hard working surgeons I believe will be the back bone of the modern facilities in time to come. The orthopaedic and traumatology work that is being performed has to be admired.

There has been talk that the Brunei Orthopaedic Association will be joining in the fellowship travels. This just means another city to visit, eight in all for 2014 onwards. Some of us felt that this may be too long to leave a busy practise. A decision to split the travelling into two sections have been proposed and recommended. My only worry is that if the fellowship is split into two, some may start choosing their cities that may only interest them. I believe the way to solve this problem of splitting is to select two senior fellows who will make the trip of four countries each year and the other four the following year. The senior fellows can then be selected every two years instead of yearly.

On being selected for the Travelling Fellowship I enquired if my wife could follow me for the trip. I was willing to pay for her air ticket. I was told that this was no problem and that she was encouraged to accompany me. Accommodation was no problem since all fellows were given single rooms. As a tourist she would have enjoyed the hospitality of the Orthopaedic fraternities of every country. When the fellows were in Alor Setar she made sure that they were comfortable and well taken care of by the local friends. It really surprised me when I was told that she could not accompany me on the fellowship. Secondly being of senior age now it is always good to have your partner near you after a hard day's work at the hospitals visited. My suggestion is that if a senior fellow wishes to take his or her spouse along he or she should be allowed. Only for the tourist part of the fellowship. I believe this will not be a problem since most spouses may be working or taking care of their children and only a few may be able to make the trip. I was lucky since my kids are all grown up and settled in their jobs. It is just a suggestion. Secondly having a couple of ladies makes the group grand. The decision is left to the AOA executive committee.

Besides the hospital visits and the clinical presentation and case discussion, I enjoyed the tourist part of the fellowship. It enabled us to bond together and learn from each other of orthopaedic conditions while on tour. The marvels of religious and city buildings were a wonderful experience for which I am greatly indebted to the Malaysian Orthopaedic Association. A big thank you from me.

Reaching Yangon we met up with our Fellow Dr. Christopher from Myanmar. I believe there was lack of communication between the Orthopaedic fraternity and the AOA executive committee. They were not sure of what to expect from the Travelling Fellows and what were their role in this fellowship. This being their first year. A good dialogue would be a good idea on the expectations of travelling Fellowships with the Myanmar Orthopaedic Society.

On behalf of Senior Travelling Fellows I being their official reporter wish to thank the ASEAN Orthopaedic Association for providing us this opportunity to learn, teach and enjoy the tourist part of the fellowship. I am sure all will agree that we had a wonderful experience and would like to recommend to other Senior Orthopaedic colleges to apply and make use of this fellowship in the coming years. We believe there are many surgeons out there how would experience and enjoy this trip.

Dr. Sarwan Singh
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon,
Kedah Medical Centre,
Pumpong Alor Setar.
Kedah.
Senior Fellow from Malaysia