

US-JAPAN Nominate UPM Academician

Recently the US-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program (USJCM-SP) convened "The 6th International Conference On Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Pacific Rim" at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel in Manila, the Philippines.

This meeting was the sixth in the series of scientific meetings sponsored by the United States-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program to explore and discuss the scientific approaches needed to address the problem of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

This was obviously a complex and difficult task. The organizing committee for this meeting has chosen to focus discussion on two topics-bacterial diarrheal diseases and viral zoonotic diseases.

To achieve these focus of discussion, selected

and invited participants in this meeting were ask to participate in one of the two working groups to facilitate this discussion and prepare their report which summarizes their discussions and recommendations for further action.

The key questions for discussion were (1) What collaborative research efforts involving scientist in the region are needed to address the problem of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and (2) What steps, if any, are needed to ensure that the research infrastructure in the region can address the need for basic, epidemiological and clinic research; research training; information resources (i.e. Internet Access); research and communication network; disease surveillance and specialized reagents.

Associate Professor Dr. Son Radu from the

Department of Biotechnology, Faculty of Food Science and Biotechnology, University Putra Malaysia was invited as a participant in the discussion group I on the "Enteric Infections in the Pacific Rim: Prospect for Prevention and Control".

This discussion group was co-chaired by Professor John J. Mekalanos (Chairman of Havard Medical School, USA) and Dr. Haruo Watanabe (Director, National Institute of Infectious Diseases, Tokyo, Japan).

Several plenary lectures were presented such as: Molecular determinants of bacterial pathogenesis (Prof. John J. Mekalanos); Influence of human behavior on emerging infectious diseases: a reference of Japanese Encephalitis (Professor Akira Oya, Emeritiuus member, National Institute of Infectious Diseases,

Tokyo, Japan); *Helicobacter pylori*; Epidemiology and pathogenesis of malignant disease (Professor Martin Blaser, Chairman, Department of Medicine, New York University School of Medicine, USA); and The Enigma of emerging viral zoonoses in the Pacific Rim (Professor John Mackenzie, University of Queensland, Australia).

Professor Mitsuaki Nishibuchi from Kyoto University, Japan presented a paper entitled "Regional research Collaborations on the Emerging Bacterial Enteric Pathogens in Asia", a collections of data contributed by invited participants from Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Vietnam and Japan.

The invited participants were appointed as experts and focal points in their personal capacity for



The Vibrio cholerae working group. From left Associate Professor (AP) Dr Varaporn Vuddhakul (Thailand), AP Dr Son Radu (UPM), Professor Dr Mitsuaki Nishibuchi (Japan), Prof Dr John J.Mekalanos (Chairman, Harvard Medical School) and Prof Dr I.Karunasagar (India).

continued effort in the surveillance of emerging and re-emerging bacterial enteric pathogens such as Salmonella spp, Vibrio spp and Escherichia coli 0157:H7 and non-0157.

The pool of the selected experts were also requested to monitor for the Shigella spp which has been noted to be a re-emerging pathogen based on country reports during the discussion. The types of information of interest include the monitoring for antibiotic resistance pat-

terns, virulence characteristics and molecular epidemiology of this pathogens.

Associate Professor Dr. Son Radu and his collaborators from the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan (Professor Mitsuaki Nishibuchi) and Prince of Songkla University, Thailand (Associate Professor Dr. Varaporn Vuddhakul) has been awarded a research grant by the US-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program.