

Tajuk : UNIMAS malaria research centre joins Asia Pacific network

## Unimas malaria research centre joins Asia Pacific network

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**KOTA SAMARAHAN:** The Malaria Research Centre (MRC) of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) has been accepted as a partner institution of the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (Apmen).

It is one of two centres that recently joined the network. The other is Mahidol Vivax Research Center of Mahidol University, Thailand.

MRC-Unimas was established in 2006 in recognition of the contribution to malaria research by Professor Balbir Singh, Professor Janet Cox-Singh, and co-researchers at the Malaria Research Laboratory of the Unimas Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The MRC-Unimas is known for its work on *Plasmodium knowlesi*, a malaria parasite, that was recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2008 as the fifth species of Plasmodia parasite to infect humans in the wild.

MRC-Unimas found that many malaria infections in Sarawak had been incorrectly diagnosed and a major cause of malaria was *Plasmodium knowlesi* that is transmitted via the bite of an anopheline mosquito from long-tailed and pig-tailed macaques.

*Plasmodium knowlesi* has also been reported in other parts of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Philippines and may be endemic in more countries in South-East Asia.

MRC-Unimas and the Mahidol Vivax Research Center had supported Apmen through their active participation at last year's annual meeting in Kota Kinabalu.

The fourth annual Apmen Annual Meeting will be held in Seoul next month.

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