

Forging Ties across the Causeway

Text and photo by Dr Wong Tien Hua

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) was formed in 1959 and seeks to represent all doctors, as well as medical students, in Malaysia. It is interesting to note that both the MMA's and SMA's crests bear the same motto of "Jasa Utama" or "Service before Self".

Being a large country, it is logistically challenging to bring all its members together at once. As such, the MMA holds an annual national convention together with its annual general meeting and annual dinner, providing a platform to bring together continuing medical education, networking and social events.

This year, the National MMA Convention and Scientific Congress was held from 28 to 30 June 2018 at Royale

Chulan Kuala Lumpur hotel in the heart of the city, within a stone's throw of the iconic Petronas Twin Towers at Suria KLCC.

The culmination of the three-day event was the gala dinner held on the evening of 30 June. The dinner was graced by the Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, and his wife Raja Permaisuri Tuanku Zara Salim.

The guest of honor was Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, a toxicologist by training, who was named the Health Minister in the new Cabinet of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in May 2018. In his speech, Dr Dzulkefly stated that he wanted to address the "toxic work culture" of healthcare practitioners, put an end to bullying and look into ways to reduce

the workload of his Ministry's staff, especially for the junior doctors. He also spoke of bolstering public-private partnerships in the healthcare system and of looking into the provision of universal health coverage.

Finally, the newly minted MMA president, Dr Mohamed Namazie Ibrahim, also delivered a speech in which he requested for quicker placements of housemen and a revision of the medical fee schedule.

We would like to thank the MMA for their hospitality and for the insights gained during the convention and congress. We wish the MMA all the best in their endeavours to improve the nation's healthcare landscape. ♦

Legend

1. Dr Wong with foreign guests at the MMA annual dinner in Kuala Lumpur

Dr Wong is the 1st Vice President of the 59th SMA Council. He is a family medicine physician practising in Sengkang. Dr Wong has an interest in primary care, patient communication and medical ethics.



Photo: Malaysian Medical Association