LETTER TO EDITOR

SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITI SAANS MALAYSIA – THE FIRST 25 YEARS IN POETRY

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The 3rd medical school it was destined to be
Located in faraway land, far from a big city
While the 2 senior schools are in the zone of neon lights
This particular one is in the state of ‘wau-bule’ kite

The name of the place is Kubang Kerian
Unheard of by most till this School came around
At the beginning it faced many obstacles
The Penang buildings not ready nor KK land available

The early years began in the campus at Minden
Where Minah Curry House was our favourite joint
Nasi kandar, mee mamak, we have left them behind
We go back to Minden every now and then

The pioneers were people with good foresight
Their ideas and visions charted this School right
The curriculum used was ‘too advanced’ at that stage
They went on with the job like people crazed

The first students were eager and enrolled as planned
They were placed in small rooms that fit like thin cans
The building was nothing but a shack of wooden hut
In that building the pioneers worked themselves very hard

The students came with high aspirations
They were blessed and honoured by the whole nation
They did not mind the shabby condition
As long as their teachers taught them Medicine

The early teachers were not that many
Syed Mohsein, Ong Kok Hai, Rahman Isa and Saidi
Jayakumar, Thavarasah, Yunus and Maheswaran
Tawda Win, Ting Aw, Elango, and Prathap Chand
Rogayah, George Ling, Hamidi and George Chaco
Shanta, Rattan, Zulkifli and Koenjoro
Ong Lean Swee, Toh Hock Tye, Chowdri and Gheeta
Asma, Rabindar, Khairul Anwar and Mandira

These names are not in any order
And there are many more I cannot remember
Richard Lobo, Sabariah, Peter Simmons and Kamaruzzaman
These are few more that came to my mind.

PK Das, Fernando, Jamal and Musalmah
Khin U May, Darah, Nurul Azman and Normah
Ismail, Wan Arifin, Zainol and Nazim Salleh
Many of these have left this place

If I have left out names, please forgive me
They were so long ago, no records to see
To those who have left us, we say ‘thank you’
To the few that remains, we say ‘cheers to you’.

There is this man, the father of us all,
He was fortunate to receive the Call
When he started the School from scratch
No one believed what he could achieve

He moved bricks, he surveyed the land
Picked one place and started the plan
He worked fast and gathered more staff
Every one worked but people weren’t enough

He ruled the School in the manner he thought best
Despite getting some other requests;
His strategy worked and the blocks were completed
Within the time frame that was required.

To Roslani Sir, the poem is for you
We are grateful for the things you do
We may disagree on a few matters
The bottom line is, PPSP is the focus.

There are people in the know, there are people that are prized
These are the people whom, we want to tap what they profess;
Their wisdom is sought, their ideas are cherished
To the think-tankers of the School, you have always given your best.
They were Roslani, Mustafa, Mafauzy and Zabidi
These 4 deans held the helm for a quarter of century
They charted and they planned and they reviewed the curriculum
For every one of them the School’s milestones get affirmed

They were not alone to chart the growth
The deputies were there in every move
Saidi, Kamaruzzaman, Rahman, Wahab and Asma
Mazidah, Wan Mohammad, Rashid, and Zalina.

Aziz, Rusli and Nor Hayati Othman
Are the deputies who are currently at helm
With phase coordinators and various chairmen
They ensure programs are smoothly run

Kamaruzzaman and Raml are the hospital directors
They run the hospital for the last 20 years
Ghani, Hashim, Wan Nik and later Ruslan
Mohd Rahman, Zaidun assist the hospital administration

Other lecturers are the think – tankers too
For without them, there is no one to turn to
Some of them old, some of them new
Giving out their best like everyone else too.

We value the words expressed by all
Regardless of when and who gives the call
Every comment is taken, every complaint is acted upon
That is how the wisdom is shown

Brick by brick; Block by block
Many came and many click
To Kubang Kerian people flock.

HUSM was once the tallest building in KB
Next to it is are blocks of PPSP
It is not complete without the medical library
And later enhanced by the school of dentistry

Keep walking and you will see more
Like PPSK, INFORMM and Dewan Utama
There is a golf course and many sports fields
Where staff and students sweat out or do drills.

The Health Campus is not what it used to be
There are now many more cars and much more busy
If you are not lucky, you get caught in traffic jam
Within the campus itself, as if there is a passing tram!

With many facts and theories we are faced
The best kind of learning is problem-based
It may be ‘confusing’ to most at first
The advantages exceed the headaches & ‘curse’.

This approach is easier and much more real
Each discipline being like the spokes of the wheel
Working outwards we learn all the necessary skills
Like anatomy, pharmacology and giving out pills.

This teaching method should always get the vote
Over learning exhaustive details by rote
For beyond the memorizing of so many a fact
The useful person is one who can act.

Standing tall in gleaming white coats
Holding flasks, pipettes or stethoscopes
Mixing blood, serum or just body secretions
Scientists discover and uncover inventions.

We conduct many clinical trials
Together with colleagues from all over the world
On diabetes, psychosis, high BP and pressure sores
MAKNA and, MOSTI are some of the sponsors

We have been doing PBL for years
And happy about it and so are the others
Many come over to learn our trait
We gladly show them how we do it.

Staying-up late to see experimental curves
On herbal, cancer and cardiovascular research
Telehealth, reconstructive and sciences on nerves
Not forgetting genomic, sports and health policies research.

We house many awards recipients
I-TEX, MOSTI and Toray Foundation
Geneva, Nuremburg are venues of competition
Medals and trophies bring cheers to some

Gather lots of people in one hall
Then call a VIP or royalty to officiate the call
He cuts ribbons, he grazes the wall
Amidst the cheers he stands tall.

We do a lot of these in PPSP
We sign MOUs and we sign treaties
Linkages are established with other universities
Students and staff benefit from these.

University of Kobe and University of Ghent
Are some of the many universities that we have signed
Be they in Cuba, in Canada or in Japan
We link with them for all kinds of collaboration.

USMUS, JICA, JCMT and JSPS
WHO, UNESCO, ECFMG and Commonwealth
These are some of the sponsors of the linkages
We are thankful to them for their selflessness.
We put on our socks and we go out to play
With friends and foes we sweat and sway
We scream, we yell and we hop around
We worry less 'bout people around

That is not a lot that is not enough
At night we sing at parties and such
Then we take the stage we express our voice
We definitely lack talents but no one cares!

We are passionate in things we do
We are serious people and yet fun too
We parade and we march for all to see
Like those men in Malaysian army

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Recreation is a form of treatment
To the aching bodies and unresting mind
It is good for body and is great for soul
Come and join us lets rock and roll!

Everything now is in digital forms
If you are not in it you do not conform
Students are taught the creative way
That's the way forward till the end of day

When you are 25 years old
You have achieved so many goals
You are a pioneer of this and a pioneer of that
However, we say them softly, we do not want to brag

We do not stop here, there is more we need to do
Give us time we will prove it to you
PPSP is a force, it's to be reckoned with
The other medical schools, they're green with envy.

Professors, APs and lecturers
Are the thinkers and the pillars
They have responsibility on their shoulders
To run workshops and conduct seminars

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Support staff provides all the arrangement
They carry the jobs, without much complaint
Weeks in weeks out, workshops are run
Students and staff, they all have fun

We once used overhead projectors
Using transparencies and colourful markers
Then we were taught to use the computers
Since that day, we improved our lectures

Finally, this is my last poem
I have penned these in one good moment
I hope you enjoy them as much as I do
I have no proper training, these are impromptu

This School will grow and grow forever
To be the top medical school all over.

For those in USM and those outside
Let us tell you what is on our side
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