

Mekong HPB Alliance Project Report

Summary

Report Date:	November 13, 2024
Project leader	Dr Kalayarasan supported by Dr Jagannath and Dr Thomas van Gulik
Project Title	“ Mekong HPB Alliance Project ”. A collaboration program with Cambodia (phase 2) and Vietnam (phase 1)
Place and dates, if applicable	November 4-6, 2024 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia November 7-8, 2024 – Ho Chi Minh City

Details of Personnel

Individuals involved in the project and their roles.

Dr KK Madhavan, President-Elect, IHPBA Dr Shailesh Shrikhande, President, AHPBA Dr Kalayarasan Raja, Additional Professor, Department of Surgical Gastroenterology, JIPMER, Puducherry, India Dr Shridhar Iyer, Surgical Director and Senior Consultant HPB Surgery and Adult Liver Transplant Programme, the National University Hospital (NUH), Singapore Dr T.M van Gulik Full Professor, CCA – Cancer Treatment and Quality of Life (AMC), Full Professor, Surgery (AMC) Dr Olivier Busch, Full Professor, Amsterdam Gastroenterology Endocrinology Metabolism Full Professor, CCA - Cancer Treatment and quality of life, Full Professor, Surgery (AMC) Dr Catherine Teh, President of the ASEAN Laparoscopic Hepatobiliary Council Chair of the Philippine Board of Hepatobiliary Surgery, Chief of the Hepatobiliary Surgery section at the Makati Medical Center Dr Tara Kent, Associate Professor of Surgery, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Dr Methee Suthersan, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok Dr Tin Tin Mar, Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery Department, Yangon Specialty Hospital, Yangon, Myanmar Dr Kouweth Vongpherngpheng, General surgery department, Champasak Hospital , Champasak province ,Lao-PDR

Details of Local Coordinators

<u>Local Coordinators - Cambodia</u> Dr Vithiea DARA, Consultant, Department of Surgery “A” at Calmette Hospital, Phnom Penh, Cambodia Dr Vutha Meas, Surgeon at Calmette Hospital in Phnom Penh, Cambodia <u>Local Coordinators - Vietnam</u>
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Dr Tran Dinh Minh Tu, Head of Liver Transplant unit, Cho Ray Hospital
Dr Le Van Thanh President, Vietnam Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery (VSHBPS)

Local coordinators from Cambodia travelled to Vietnam and vice versa

Key IHPBA Chapters:

Cambodia Chapter - Cambodian Hepato Pancreato Biliary Association (CHPBA)

Vietnam Chapter - Vietnam Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery (VSHBPS)

Details of Planning Phase

May include fact-finding, identification and selection of suppliers, development of specifications or protocols, environmental/capacity assessment etc

Countries along the Mekong River (Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam) faces a significant burden of HPB diseases, with marked disparities in access to surgical care. While Thailand boasts a robust healthcare infrastructure capable of managing complex HPB disorders, countries like Cambodia struggle with limited resources and surgical expertise in this field. In Vietnam, although major cities have developed HPB care, there remains a pressing need to expand these services to hospitals in provincial areas. During Cambodia's 2023 IHPBA outreach program, we observed minimal collaboration among surgeons across Mekong countries, despite their geographical closeness. The current collaboration initiative, alongside strengthening HPB surgical care in Cambodia and Vietnam, aims to establish a "Mekong HPB Alliance" to foster a durable network for HPB surgery across these nations. The program will involve faculty from Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam in addition to faculty members from non-Mekong region to encourage cross-border knowledge-sharing and mentorship.

Details of Delivery Phase

Project details:

As part of the current collaboration program, the faculty visited three centers in Cambodia and Vietnam: Calmette Hospital in Cambodia, and Cho Ray Hospital and University Medical Center in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

At the request of the Cambodian chapter, a two-day operative workshop was organized at Calmette Hospital. During the workshop, all surgical procedures were performed by the visiting faculty, with assistance from surgeons at Calmette Hospital.

Patients were admitted under the care of Calmette Hospital surgeons. The clinical details were shared with the operating faculty in advance, and they evaluated the patients a day before surgery. An informed consent was obtained, specifying that the procedures would be performed by the visiting faculty. Postoperatively, the operating faculty monitored the patients until November 6, after which ongoing care was provided by the surgeons and intensivists at

Calmette Hospital. All patients had an uneventful postoperative recovery and were discharged by November 14, 2024.

The set itinerary is summarised below:

Date	Itinerary
November 3, 2024 (Sunday)	Arrival in Phnom Penh, Cambodia
November 4 (Tuesday), Hospital visit & Operative workshop in Calmette Hospital	8.30 – 9.00 – Welcome meeting with H.E Prof. KONG Sonya, Director of Calmette Hospital 9.00-10.00 – Calmette Hospital visit, especially the new infrastructure developed for HPB surgery 10.00 – 17.00 – Operative workshop: open pancreatoduodenectomy for periampullary carcinoma (OR -1) Operating surgeon - Dr Shailesh Shrikhande. Moderators – all faculty 10.00 – 15.00 – Operative workshop : Post cholecystectomy Biliary stricture (type III) repair (OR-2) Operating surgeon – Dr Kalayarasan, Moderators – all faculty
November 5 (Wednesday), Operative workshop in Calmette Hospital	9.00 – 15.00 – Operative workshop : Completion radical cholecystectomy for T2 incidental Gallbladder cancer (OR -1) Operating surgeon - Dr Shridhar Iyer. Moderators – all faculty 9.00 – 16.00 - Operative workshop : Open anterior RAMPS for pancreas body tumor (OR -2) Operating surgeon - Dr Kalayarasan. Moderators – all faculty 18.00 – 22.00 - Operative workshop : open left hepatectomy with CBD exploration for intrahepatic and common bile duct stones (OR- 2) Operating surgeon - Dr Catherine Teh. Moderators – all faculty
November 6 (Thursday), Academic sessions in Calmette hospital followed by travel to Ho Chi Minh City	8.30 – 9.15 – Case capsule – Pancreatic cystic tumors Moderator : Dr Catherine Teh. Panelists – Tara Kent, Olivier Busch, Dara Vithiae, 9.15 – 10.00 - Case capsule – Hilar cholangiocarcinoma

	Moderator : Dr Kalayarasan. Panelists – KK Madhavan, Shridhar Iyer, Tran Dinh Minh Tu 10.00 - 10.45 – Case capsule – Acute pancreatitis Moderator : Dr Methee Suthersan. Panelists - Olivier Busch, Vutha Meas, Catherine Teh 10.45 – 11.00 – Tea break 11.00 – 11.45 – Case capsule – HCC Moderator – KK Madhavan. Panelists – Shridhar Iyer, Tran Dinh Minh Tu, Methee Suthersan 11.45 – 12.30 - Case capsule – Bile duct stone Moderator: Tara Kent, Panelists: Catherine Teh, Kouweth Vongphernpheng, Dara Vithiae, 12.30 - 13.15 – Case capsule – Bile duct injury Moderator- Olivier Busch, Panelists – KK Madhavan, Kalayarasan R, Tara Kent Lunch followed by travel to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, in the afternoon.	
November 7 (Thursday), Hospital visit and Academic sessions in Cho Ray Hospital	8.30 – 10.30 – Board of Directors meeting to discuss various aspects of Mekong HPB project 10.30-12.30- HPB surgery and liver transplantation ward and ICU visit with brief presentations and discussion 13:30 – 14:10- Demonstration of Hololens technology and its application in teleproctoring 14:10 – 14:30 - Lessons learnt from resection of perihilar cholangiocarcinoma – Dr Thomas van Gulik 14:10 – 14:30- Surgery for Acute pancreatitis - Dr Olivier Busch 14:30 – 14:50- Standardisation of Mesopancreas Excision during minimally invasive pancreatoduodenectomy - Dr Kalayarasan 14:50 – 15:10- Liver resection - technical aspects and intraoperative tools - Dr KK Madhavan 15:10 – 15:30 - Fluorescence-guided surgery in Hepatobiliary surgery - Dr Catherine Teh	

	15:30 – 16:00- Training Next generation surgeons - Surgical education – Dr Tara Kent 16:30 – 16:30- Discussion	
November 8 (Friday), Hospital visit- University medical centre	08:35 – 09:30 - Introduction to professional activities, scientific research, and training in hepatobiliary and pancreatic Surgery 09:30 – 10:00 - Visit the Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery Department 10:00 – 10:15 - Visit the Endovascular Intervention Unit (DSA) 10:15 – 11:00 - Visit the operating room and post-transplant recovery room 11:00 – 11:25 - Observe a laparoscopic left lobe liver graft harvesting from a living donor 11.30 – 13.30 - Discussion on the collaboration between IHPBA and UMC - HPB Mekong Valley Project	
November 9 (Saturday)	Departure from Ho Chi Minh city	

Use of Funding

The IHPBA Foundation provided a total funding of USD 9600 for the initiative.

USD 5530 was spent to cover hotel accommodation for seven nights in Cambodia and Vietnam.

USD 1125 was spent for lunch and dinner on days when meals were not arranged by the local organising committee. (Hosts arranged lunch and dinner on 4 days)

USD 1895 was spent on air and road fare for the regional and other faculty travelling within the Mekong region.

The remaining amount, USD 1050, was distributed equally among the external faculty (non-Mekong region) to offset their travel expenses partially.

Assessment of Impact

During the surgical planning session preceding the operative workshop, the faculty explained to the surgeons and trainees that the principles of preoperative preparation for complex HPB surgeries, emphasizing patient optimization and case selection.

During the operative workshop, two surgeons from Calmette Hospital actively participated in each surgical procedure, gaining hands-on exposure to the operative steps, anatomical nuances, complication management, and the appropriate use of advanced instrumentation. They identified gaps in their existing operative room practices, and practical suggestions were provided for improvement.

The academic session attended by 15 faculty members and surgical residents of Calmette Hospital focussed on case-based discussions that addressed a wide spectrum of HPB disorders. Recognising language barriers, Dr. Dara Vithiae facilitated by summarizing and translating key points into French, ensuring inclusivity. The three-day program in Cambodia received overwhelmingly positive feedback, marking it a significant milestone in regional surgical education.

In Vietnam, the board of directors meeting underscored the pivotal mentorship roles of Cho Ray Hospital and the University Medical Center in advancing surgical expertise across Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos under the Mekong HPB Alliance. Both institutions pledged robust administrative support to the initiative.

At Cho Ray Hospital, 40 trainees and surgeons attended the academic sessions. The program was well-received, with dynamic interactions between faculty and participants, further cementing the Mekong HPB Alliance's regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing objectives.

Plans for ongoing project development or capacity building and support

If applicable

Mekong HPB Exchange Program – The proposed Mekong HPB exchange program aims to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing by enabling faculty and trainees from Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar to visit selected hospitals in Thailand and Vietnam. Key institutions such as Cho Ray Hospital and University Medical Centre have already committed to participating in this initiative, with formal MOUs to be facilitated by the IHPBA. Efforts are underway to expand the program through the Thailand and Vietnam chapters of IHPBA, ensuring broader hospital participation and regional integration.

Focus on Systems Development – Recognizing the importance of holistic healthcare improvement, the visiting faculty emphasized the need to develop systems rather than limiting the focus to surgeon training. As part of the exchange program, participating surgeons will be accompanied by nursing officers and support staff to foster team-based learning and optimize hospital workflows. Conversely, visiting teams from Thailand and Vietnam will include a

nurse and a support staff to assist in systems enhancement, ensuring that best practices are shared and implemented effectively. IHPAB can financially support the exchange program.

Conducting Regional Meetings – IHPBA can facilitate the organization of an annual Mekong HPB Conference, providing a platform for faculty and trainees across the region to share their research, present clinical data, and exchange knowledge. These meetings will foster collaboration and highlight regional advancements in HPB care. Additionally, dedicated sessions for the Mekong HPB Alliance can be incorporated into larger regional conferences such as AHPBA or ASEAN, offering greater visibility and opportunities for networking, collaboration, and the dissemination of best practices among member nations.

Developing a comprehensive training curriculum – The faculty emphasized the need to restructure the surgical training curriculum to enhance both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The revised curriculum will prioritize hands-on skill development through innovative methods such as simulation-based learning, mentorship programs and use of technology like hololens for teleproctoring. The inclusion of competency-based assessments

Payments already made

Of the USD 9600 received from the IHPBA foundation USD 5530 was paid to cover hotel accommodation for seven nights in Cambodia (Phnom Penh Hotel) and Vietnam (Windsor plaza hotel). USD 1125 was paid for lunch and dinner on days when meals were not arranged by the local organising committee. USD 1895 was paid for air and road fares for the regional (7 faculty) and other faculty (8 faculty) travelling within the Mekong region. The remaining amount, USD 1050, was shared equally among the external faculty (non-Mekong region) to offset their travel expenses partially.

Reporting Schedule

NA

Application for Further Funding

If applicable

An application will be submitted to fund the future meetings planned in 2025. In the future meeting, we are planning to cover Cambodia (One or two faculty will stay in Cambodia for 2-4 weeks), Vietnam (Hanoi region) and Laos (Hospital in Vientiane)

News and Photos

Group photo of the faculty with the Director and administration of Calmette hospital



Faculty Meeting with the Director and administration of Calmette hospital



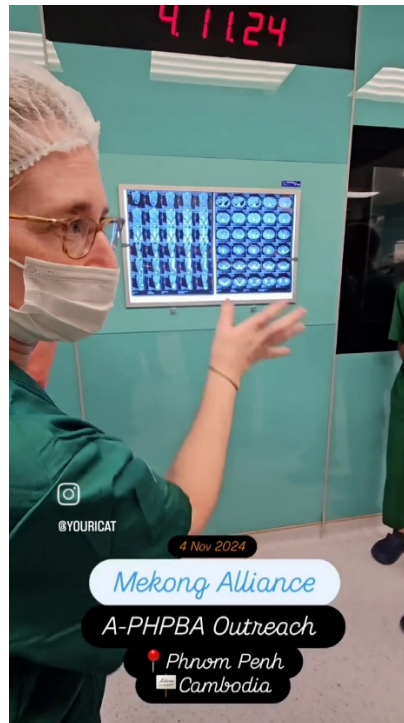
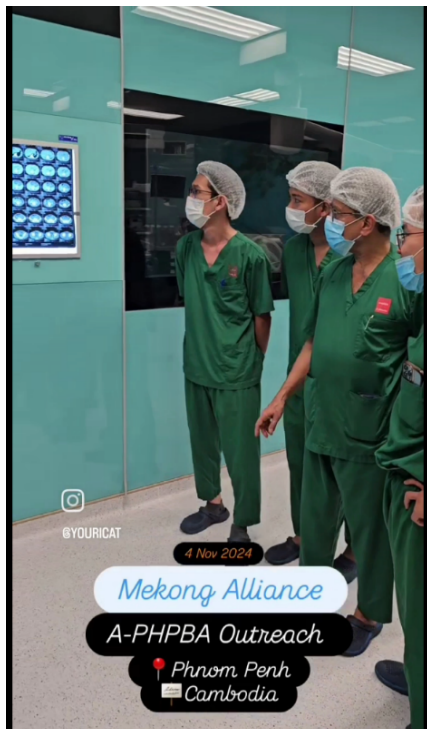
IHPBA President-elect and AHPBA president giving an overview of Mekong HPB Alliance during Board of Directors meeting



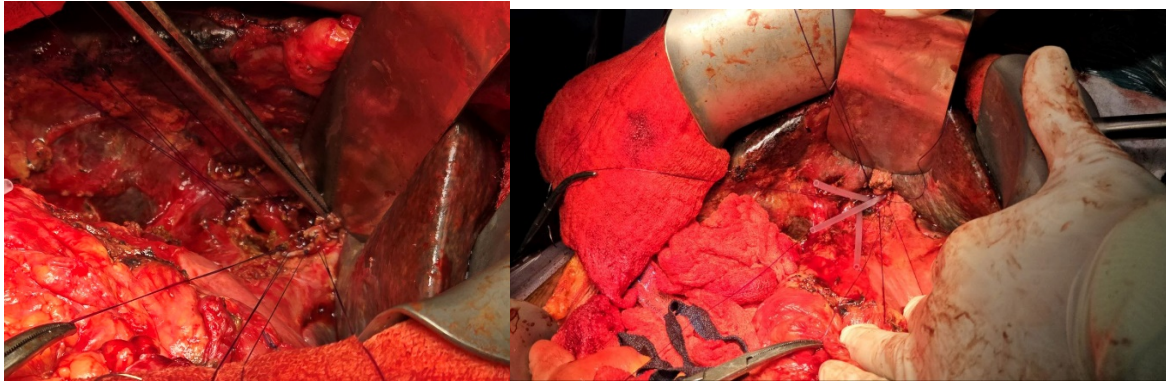
Open pancreatoduodenectomy demonstrated by Dr Shailesh Shrikhande



Operative session moderated by faculty and teaching young surgeons



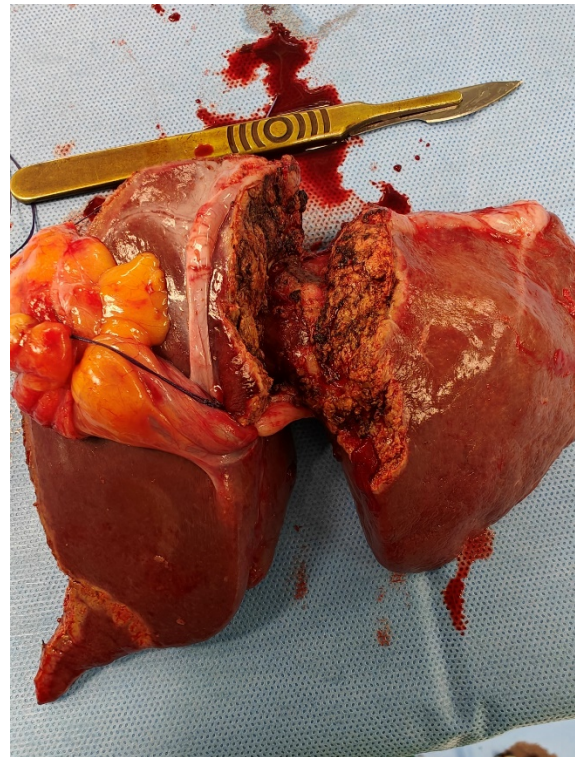
Hepaticojejunostomy for Biliary stricture type III demonstrated by Dr Kalayarasan



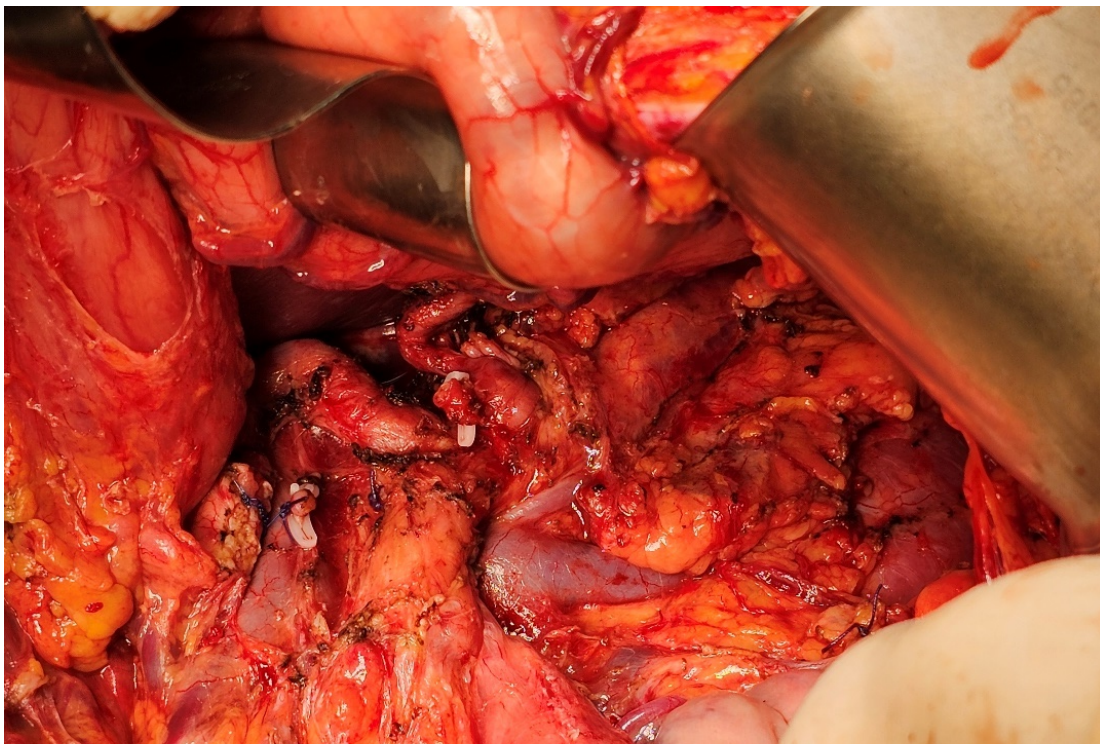
Completion radical cholecystectomy for T2 Gallbladder cancer demonstrated by Dr Shridhar Iyer



Left hepatectomy with CBD exploration for intrahepatic stones demonstrated by Dr Catherine Teh



Anterior RAMPS for pancreas body tumor demonstrated by Dr Kalayarasan



Academic session in Cambodia





Board of Directors meeting in Cho Ray Hospital, Vietnam



Prof Jagannath addressing everyone virtually



Cho Ray Hospital visit – Dr Tran Dinh Minh Tu giving an overview of the HPB and liver transplantation unit at Cho Ray Hospital



Visit to Operating room and ICU in Cho Ray Hospital



Demonstration of teleproctoring (from Singapore) using hololens



Academic session in Cho ray Hospital





Board of director meeting at UMC



Hospital visit UMC

