

Johan S. Masjhur, dr, SpPD-KEMD, SpKN-TM, 1942–2023

Johan Masjhur, dr, SpPD-KEMD, SpKN-TM, widely regarded as the father of nuclear medicine in Indonesia, died on May 13, 2023, in Bandung, Java. He was the first professor in medicine at Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD) in Bandung, the original home of nuclear science in Indonesia. He was appointed an emeritus professor at UNPAD in 2006.

Dr. Masjhur was born in Payakumbuh on the island of Sumatra in 1942. He graduated from medical school in 1967 from UNPAD, where he completed a residency in internal medicine in 1976. In 1977, he accepted a position in Indonesia's first nuclear medicine department, at the Dr. Hasan Sadikin Hospital (Bandung), and was funded to travel to The Netherlands to advance his studies in the field. He was appointed head of the Department of Nuclear Medicine at the Dr. Hasan Sadikin Hospital in 1980, a position he held for more than 25 y.



In the early years of nuclear medicine in Indonesia, nuclear medicine specialization was not recognized as an independent discipline. The Indonesian Society of Nuclear Medicine and Biology was established in Bandung in 1978 with a multidisciplinary membership, including physicians, technologists, and nonclinical scientists, with Dr. Masjhur as founding president. In 1989, the Indonesian Society of Nuclear Medicine was established as a physician-only organization, with Dr. Masjhur serving as the first president and for 2 additional terms. With his junior colleagues, he struggled for recognition of nuclear medicine for nearly a decade. In 1997, thanks to his persistence and efforts, the role of nuclear medicine specialist was recognized by the Indonesian Medical Association as a distinct specialty. A year later, formal education for nuclear medicine specialists was established at the UNPAD/Dr. Hasan Sadikin Hospital. This remains the only avenue available in Indonesia for nuclear medicine specialist training. All current practicing nuclear medicine specialists in Indonesia were Dr. Masjhur's students (Fig. 1).

Dr. Masjhur served as vice president of the Asia Oceania Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology and as chair of the organizing committee of the fifth Asia Oceania Congress of Nuclear Medicine and Biology, held in Jakarta in 1992. He received a lifetime achievement award from the World Radiopharmaceuticals Therapy Council in 2008.

Twenty-four nuclear medicine facilities operate today in Indonesia, including 4 medical cyclotrons, 7 PET/CT scanners, and around 22 SPECT/CT systems. No one has made a more significant contribution to nuclear medicine in Indonesia than our dear friend and colleague Johan Masjhur.

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FIGURE 1. Indonesian nuclear medicine trainees at residential workshop organized by Dr. Masjhur (center front, dark shirt) in Bandung, Java, 1988.