

The Institute of Materials Malaysia (IMM) Rheology Committee held its first Rheology Symposium in conjunction with the 8th International Materials Technology Conference and Exhibition (IMTCE 2012) on 9th-12th July at Sunway Resort Hotel and Spa, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Formed in 2011, the Committee is intended to act as a focal point for rheologists in Malaysia, promoting the subject to both the technical community and public, and providing a range of activities designed to promote and educate in the field of rheology.

The Symposium was the committee's first event organized to engage the technical community and bring together rheologists from across the region. In conjunction with the event, a Masterclass facilitated by Professor Mats Stading of Chalmers University of Technology was held at the beginning of the Conference. Made possible by the generous support of TA Instruments and Research Instruments (Malaysia) this well attended event consisted of both academia and industry participants from Malaysia and other South East Asian countries. Covering the basics of rheology, it introduced the audience to the wide range of techniques available to probe material response and covered some of the numerous challenges faced by those within the field. In the afternoon three short examples of the application of rheology were given by other speakers, David Hassell from Institut Teknologi Brunei, Azuraian Jaafar from Universiti Teknologi Petronas and Aaron Goh from Curtin University Sarawak, to highlight how the skills and information taught during the Masterclass could be applied in practice.

During the Symposium numerous papers were presented which covered a diverse range of applications; from bread dough to crude oil to synthetic polymers. Partly sponsored by TA Instruments and Research Instruments (Malaysia), David Hassell from Institut Teknologi Brunei presented a keynote lecture on "Experimental observation of polystyrene flow into a contraction-expansion geometry: Formation of "inlet stress islands". Overall, the attendance at the event was encouraging and included participants from neighbouring countries such as Brunei, Thailand and Singapore.

A positive start to events organized by the IMM Rheology Committee, it is envisaged that the Symposium will become an annual meeting amongst rheologists in South East Asia, whilst the Masterclasses will subsequently be developed into IMM-recognized technical educational programmes in rheology.

Figure caption : Participants at the Rheology Masterclass