International Prank Involving Predatory Publishers Makes Headlines in Indonesia

The original article.

The prank article.

Somebody copied a scholarly article, slightly changed the title, replaced the co-authors’ names, and submitted it to the predatory journal *African Journal of Agricultural Research* (published by Nigeria-based *Academic Journals*), where it was accepted and published (of course) after the author fee was paid.

The July, 2012 prank article, “Mapping Indonesian Paddy Fields Using Multiple-Temporal Satellite Imagery,” was copied from an earlier article that appeared in the *Scholarly Journal of Agricultural Science* (v. 2, no. 6, p. 119-125).

This original article, alas, also published in a predatory journal, appeared in the journal’s June 2012 issue. Its title was “Mapping Indonesian Rice Areas Using
Multiple-Temporal Satellite Imagery.”

What’s made the story interesting is that the pranksters removed the name of the original second author from the article and replaced it with the names of two popular Indonesian entertainers, Agnes Monica and Inul Daratista, both household names in Indonesia.

Also, the prank article listed their affiliation as “Institute of Dangdut,” a fictitious organization. Dangdut is a genre of Indonesian popular music. Also, the institute’s address is listed on the title page as “Jalan Tersesat No. 100.” This roughly translates as “Road to Astray No. 100.”

The prank article has been tacitly removed from the publisher’s website. (This is how predatory publishers retract articles; they just make them disappear).

The story has been picked up by the Indonesian press, with a story appearing in the national newspaper Kompas, and also in the popular magazine Tempo [Note: The Chrome browser will translate these articles using Google Translate]. Some follow-up stories have also been published in the Indonesian press.

There is a possibility that this prank was carried out by a journalist writing a story about predatory publishers. It is not known who paid the $600 author processing charge that enabled the bogus article to be published. Also, it is not known who Nono Lee, the lead author on both the original and copied articles, really is or whether he really exists.

The citations.
Others have played similar tricks on predatory publishers. An OMICS journal once added a bogus persona to its editorial board after it unwittingly accepted a bogus application. Consultant Phil Davis once got a nonsense article accepted in a journal published by Bentham Open.

Predatory publishers deceive researchers by pretending to be legitimate journals. It’s fascinating to see that they too can be the victims of deceit.

Hat tip: Jeff

Note: The copied article is available here, see Scribd page 58 (journal page 4038).

The original article is available here