Background
• Nasopharyngeal carcinoma commonly occurs in the South East Asian region
• Our patient presented with complaints of bilateral neck swellings and nasal obstruction of two months duration
• Nasoendoscopy revealed a mass in the nasopharynx and a biopsy was taken
• Histopathologic examination confirmed the diagnosis

Materials and Methods
• Biopsy material consisting a fragment of tissue measuring 13mm in aggregate diameter was submitted in 1 block.
• Microscopic sections were made and stained with hematoxylin and eosin
• Immunohistochemistry stainings were performed to exclude other malignancies

Results
• Tumor cells were arranged in papillary architecture, in sheets and nests
• The nuclei were moderately pleomorphic with vesicular appearance
• No keratinization was observed
• There was absence of gland formation ruling out papillary adenocarcinoma of nasopharynx(NPAC)
• The absence of nuclear features of papillary thyroid carcinoma(PTC) and negative thyroid transcription factor -1 (TTF-1) immunohistochemistry ruled out a primary PTC
• The malignant cells were diffusely positive for p63 and CK5/6
• Epithelial membrane antigen immunochemistry was diffusely positive as well
• Diffuse positivity towards p53 suggested the high-grade nature of tumor as compared to NPAC (low grade tumor)

Discussion
• 2 classical morphologies seen in non keratinizing NPC are either Regaud pattern or Schmincke pattern
• Rare morphologies of NPC can occur in up to 10 % of cases in endemic areas, such as in South East Asia
• Papillary variant is one such rare variant found in non keratinizing NPC

Conclusion
• We wish to highlight a hitherto undescribed variant of non keratinizing nasopharyngeal carcinoma morphology in Malaysia
• It is crucial to be aware of such variation and not confuse it with other malignancies with similar histopathologic morphologies
• Ancillary studies like immunohistochemistry are indispensable to diagnose such cases
• With an accurate histopathologic diagnosis, the correct treatment regime can be expedited without confusion

References: