

Four receive Merdeka Awards 2009

PETALING JAYA: Four Malaysians have been conferred the prestigious Merdeka Award 2009 for their outstanding contributions to the greater good and advancement of the nation and its people.

They will receive the awards from the patron of the Merdeka Awards, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak, at the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas today.

Each award category carries a prize of RM500,000, trophy and certificate.

Politician and champion of women's rights Tun Fatimah Hashim and diplomat, lawyer and director of the KL regional centre for arbitration Datuk P.G. Lim were named joint recipients in the education and community category.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) chemistry professor Dr Halimaton Hamdan was named winner of the award for health, science and technology for the development and application of Maerogel (Malaysian aerogel) as a commercial and viable multi-purpose material.

Maerogel is a by-product of discarded rice husks and is used to produce silica aerogel at a low cost. The high-tech material has wide



Halimaton, Fatimah, Lim and Zaini.

ranging uses, with significant potential as a coating for house walls which would reduce the need for heating and air conditioning.

Datuk Dr Zaini Ujang, meanwhile, won the award in the outstanding scholastic achievement category for his contributions in various environmental initiatives concerning water supply, sewage, river rehabilitation and industrial ecology.

There were no recipients in the environmental and outstanding contribution to the people of Malaysia category this year.

In his speech at the announcement of award recipients on Aug 19, chairman of the

Merdeka Awards 2009 and Petronas CEO Tan Sri Mohd Hassan Marican said every aspect of the candidates' contributions and achievements, as well as the impact of their work on Malaysia and Malaysians, were carefully examined, so as to arrive at the most deserving recipients.

He said the awards are to commemorate Merdeka, the struggle of the nation's forefathers as well as the spirit of Merdeka.

"It explores the liberation of the mind and the psyche, factors which foster the realisation of human potential and the pursuit of excellence," he said.

IIUM wins six awards in Taiwan invention show

KUALA LUMPUR: The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) won three gold, a silver, two bronze medals and another special award at the 5th International Invention Show and Technomart in Taiwan recently. A IIUM spokesman said Deputy Rector (research and innovation) Prof Dr Ahmad Faris Ismail won two gold medals and a special award. The other winners are Engineering Faculty's Assoc Prof Dr Zahangir Alam who won a gold and a bronze medal and Assoc Prof Dr Iis Sopyan who won a silver and a bronze. - Bernama

Homecoming for USM alumni

PETALING JAYA: The Alumni Liaison Office and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) Alumni Association will be organising Balikampus, a 'homecoming' event for USM alumni. The event will be held at the Minden campus, Penang, from Oct 23 till 25. Highlights of the event include a golf tournament and dinner. The Balikampus programme began in 2003 and is held once every two years. This year's event is the fourth Balikampus and is held in conjunction with USM's 40th anniversary. For details, call 04-6534792 or visit <http://alo.usm.my>.

Jakim to introduce 'Permata Ilmu' for Muslim students

YAN: The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (Jakim), in collaboration with the Islamic Science University of Malaysia (Usim), will introduce the "Permata Ilmu" programme for Muslim students from next year. Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Jamil Khir Baharom said the programme would be offered to smart students aged between eight and 18 years. "The smart students will be identified by the schools or parents and they will be required to sit for tests which cover religious knowledge as well as science and technology," he told reporters after attending a convocation of Kemas kindergartens in Guar Chempedak division, here yesterday. - Bernama

Cousins strike RM10.8m jackpot

by **Eva Yeong**
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PETALING JAYA: Inspired by previous mega winnings, two cousins from Sarawak used the ages of their family members to jointly win RM10.8 million Mega Toto 6/52 jackpot.

The two, in their 30s and 40s respectively, won the jackpot with the numbers 9, 11, 24, 37, 47 and 52. They spent about RM30 in Toto games per draw, said the winners, who are also brothers-in-law.

"I was astonished to see the lucky numbers we waged on published in the newspaper. I immediately called my cousin to verify," said the older cousin.

They won an additional RM19,800 from six sets of the second prize as they played System 7 where players are allowed to have seven numbers to create seven combinations of numbers.

The cousins, who are partners in the farming business, plan to invest part of their winnings into their business and improve their families'

living conditions while keeping the remaining as savings.

A spokesperson from Sports Toto Malaysia said only one ticket bearing the winning numbers was drawn as the first prize of Mega Toto 6/52 on Oct 11 for a total winning sum of RM10.8 million.

Meanwhile, Power Toto 6/55 with a minimum guaranteed upfront jackpot of RM3 million will be open for playing from Oct 29. The lotto game, with no cap on the maximum payout, will have its first draw on Oct 31.



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