

Three outstanding M'sians named 2011 Merdeka Award recipients
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KUALA LUMPUR (Aug 22, 2011): Three outstanding Malaysians were announced as the recipients of the 2011 Merdeka Award for their outstanding and lasting contributions to the nation and people in their respective fields.

Datuk Kenneth Yeang will receive the award in the Environment category, for outstanding contribution to the development of design methods for the ecological design and planning of the built environment.

One of the two joint recipients in the Outstanding Scholastic Achievement category are Prof Datuk Dr Goh Khean Lee for his outstanding contribution in elevating the study and practice of gastroenterology and hepatology in Malaysia to global standards.

The other recipient is Prof Dr Mak Joon Wah for outstanding fundamental and applied research in parasitology and parasitic diseases, public health and pathology.

The announcement was made by the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Merdeka Award, Datuk Shamsul Azhar Abbas, at the Kuala Lumpur City Centre, here, today.

He said the recipients had demonstrated the true spirit of Merdeka – the liberation of mind and spirit and the pursuit of excellence.

"We also believe that it is imperative that each year, the recipients of the Merdeka Award set a benchmark for the selection of future recipients so that all the laureates will serve as role models for Malaysians in general and the younger generation in particular," he said.

Shamsul Azhar, however, said that there were no recipients in the categories of Education and Community, Health, Science and Technology, and Outstanding Contribution to the People of Malaysia.

Yeang has pioneered the application of ecological principles to passive, low-energy, tall buildings, known as bioclimatic skyscrapers for more than three decades.

In 2008, he was named as one of the 50 people who "will save the planet" by the UK Guardian newspaper's weekend magazine.

Dr Goh is a clinical specialist in Internal Medicine at the University of Malaya and a prolific researcher and writer. To date, he has published 191 peer-reviewed full papers in international journals, seven book chapters and 200 abstracts.

This year, he was elected as vice-president of the World Gastroenterology Organisation, the first Malaysian to be given such an honour.

Prof Mak is recognised as a global expert in filariasis and malaria by the World Health Organisation (WHO), having been appointed as a consultant on at least 17 different occasions.

He has played an influential role in the development of tropical medicine in the country

through leadership positions in various professional bodies.

Each category offers a prize money of RM500,000, a trophy and a certificate. However, the joint recipients in the category of Outstanding Scholastic Achievement will share the award equally.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak is scheduled to present the awards on Oct 10 at the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas, here. – Bernama

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