

‘Minor Planet’ to be named after IESL’s JIY-2010 Winner by Rohan Mathes

Ceres Connection, a programme of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Lincoln Laboratory, is to name a ‘Minor Planet’ in honour of young Ganidu Nanayakkara, the winner of the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) Grand Award in Computer Engineering, in San Jose USA, last year. He was also the winner of the ‘Junior Inventor of the Year-2010’ (JIY-2010) competition, of the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka (IESL) and the Sri Lanka Science and Engineering Fair (SLSEF) 2010 competition.

This was disclosed by the Chairman of the IESL’s JIY Steering Committee, Eng. Jayavilal Meegoda, when he addressed the opening ceremony of the Sri Lanka Science and Engineering Fair-2011, at the IESL’s Wimalasurendra Auditorium recently.

The Ceres Connection , in partnership with the Society for Science and the Public (SSP), promotes science education by its identification to honour the most outstanding students from SSP’s competitions. It helps to name ‘Minor Planets’ discovered by the Lincoln Near Earth Asteroid Research (LINEAR) programme. This is a honour bestowed to any individual only once in a lifetime.

The Intel ISEF is the world’s largest annual international pre-college science competition which provides a forum for over 1500 high school students from over 50 countries, to showcase their independent research. It is the premier science competition in the globe, exclusively for students in grades 9 to 12.

Eng. Meegoda further said that based on the theme “Lead the World with Science and Engineering”, the IESL, National Science Foundation (NSF), Intel Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Education (MoE) has already inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), for the betterment of the school-going fraternity of the land.

The Science Review Committee Chairman and Postgraduate Institute of Medicine Director Prof. Rizvi Sheriff, the Chief Guest, was of the view that competitions of this nature, paved the way for Motherlanka to evolve into a ‘Knowledge Hub’ and eventually become the ‘Miracle of Asia’. “ Sri Lanka is already on the map. This time too, we will select a project which will have a profound impact on the whole world and human kind”, he said.

NSF Director Dr. Sarath Abeywardane pointed out that the country needed a new and innovative generation of school children to meet the challenges of a rapidly growing economy and a competition of this caliber was paramount.

IESL President Professor Ananda Jayawardena, Intel Sri Lanka Country Manager Indika de Soyza and Eng. Prasad Siriwardane also addressed the ceremony, prior to the evaluation of the projects.