Sri Lanka inventors win Gold, Silver, Bronze and the prestigious WIPO and International Press awards

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Sri Lanka won the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Award, the International Press Prize, 3 Gold medals, 1 Silver medal and 2 Bronze medals for the 7 inventions the country presented at the 37th International Exhibition of Inventions, Techniques and Products of Geneva which was held at Geneva Palexpo (Hall 7) in Switzerland from 1st to 5th April 2009.

Two of the four most prestigious special awards of the inventors’ exhibition were won by two Sri Lankan inventors. Mr. Dammika Sujith from Chilaw was awarded the WIPO Award (the only cash price awarded at this competition) for his coir fibre extracting machine and Mr. Chandrasena from Mawathagama, Kurunegala, whose head and mouth operated computer mouse attracted a lot of media coverage, received the International Press Prize. Winning two of the four special awards by one country is rare at this exhibition and this is the first time Sri Lanka has been honoured with such recognition. This exhibition, which was held under the patronage of the Swiss Confederation, is considered to be the world’s largest market place for inventions. It hosts annually about 750 exhibitors from around 45 countries and displays about 1000 new exhibits. During this event, industrial and commercial companies, inventors, researchers, associations, private and state agencies and institutes present their inventions, the result of their research and their new products. Sri Lanka has been participating in this prestigious event held in Switzerland since 1994 with last year’s 3 Sri Lankan inventors also winning awards including the Genius Award, a special prize awarded by the Hungarian Inventors Association. This year, seven Sri Lankan inventors presented their inventions at the exhibition: · Coir fibre extracting machine by Mr. Dammika Sujith of Chilaw - Prize of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) - Merit Gold with special commendation by the Judges · Head and mouth operated computer mouse for the disabled by Mr. M.A. Prince Chandrasena of Mawathagama, Kurunegala - International Press Prize - Merit Gold with special commendation by the Judges · Low cost drying system for food and agro products by Mr. Kapila Weeratunga Arachchi of Heerassagla, Kandy - Merit Gold with special commendation by the Judges · Automatic air-pumping mechanism for motorbikes and cars by Mr. D.G.W. Jayawansa of Vavuniya - Silver Medal · Mobile cash transfer system by Mr. Harold Wijethunga of Colombo - Bronze Medal · Automated hopper making machine by Mr. E.M. Ranatunga of Matara - Bronze Medal · Disaster early warning system by Mr. Kariyawasam Thirana Gamage Janaka of Kahawa Prior to the exhibition, the Sri Lanka Inventors Commission had called for applications through an open advertisement in the print media and selected these 7 inventions/innovations from among Presidential and National award winning inventions and patented inventions. The selected inventors attended the exhibition with the Commissioner of the Sri Lanka Inventors’ Commission, Prof. K. Kapila K. C. Perera. In honour of the Sri Lankan delegation of inventors, the Sri Lankan Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), H.E. Mr. Kulatunga Perera, and Mrs. Doreen Perera hosted a dinner at their residence yesterday. Among the invitees were H. E. Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka, Sri Lanka’s Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the United Nations-Geneva, and Mrs. Sanja Jayatilleka, Mr. Wajira Ranasighe, President of the Sri Lanka Association in Geneva (SLAG). H. E. Dr. Jayatilleka presented the awards and the medals to the inventors on this occasion and congratulated them on their noteworthy achievement. The Commissioner, Prof. K. Kapila K. C. Perera and the group of inventors thanked H. E. Mr. Kulatunga Perera, Sri Lanka’s Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), as well as the Sri Lanka Association of Geneva (SLAG) for the assistance and encouragement they were given during their stay in Geneva thus enabling them to attend this prestigious event and achieve recognition for Sri Lanka. They also thanked the Sri Lanka Mission and Ms. Zornitza Boteva and Dr. Subhashinie Punchihetti of the Mission for translations and interpretation into French during the Exhibition. H. E. Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka, Sri Lanka’s Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the United Nations-Geneva handing over the International Press Prize trophy and Gold medal to Mr. Prince Chandrasena, (Computer Mouse for Disabled). Prof. Kapila Perera, Commissioner of the Inventors- Commission also in the backgroundH. E. Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka handing over the Prize of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Gold medal to Mr. Sujith Dammkia (Coir fibre and dust extracting machine)Mr. Kapila Weerathunga Arrachchi (Low cost dryer for agro and food processing)receiving his Gold medal from Ambassador Jayatilleka. Prof. Kapila Perera, Commissioner,Sri Lanka Inventors’ Commission (left) and H.E. Mr. Kulatunga Perera (right), Ambassador to WTO looking onMr. Jayawansa Gunawardena (Automatic Air Pump) receiving his Silver medalBronze medal awarded to Mr. E. Ranatunga (Automatic Hopper Making machine)Mr. Harold Wijetunga (Mobyle Cash Transfer Technology) receiving his Bronze medal from Ambassador JayatillekaAmbassadors Jayatilleka and Perera, Mrs. Sanja Jayatilleka and Commissioner Prof. Kapila Perera with the Sri Lankan inventors