

Sri Lankan students won two Grand awards at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Junior Inventor of the Year Competition (JIY) is organized by the **Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL)** for the Sri Lankan youth between the ages 12 - 19 years in order to enhance the creativity and skills of the younger generation since 1980. Initially JIY preliminary competitions held at the provincial level, and proceed to the final JIY competition held at the IESL Headquarters in Colombo. The winners get an opportunity to display their inventions at the National Engineering Exhibition Techno that will be held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in October every year.

The opportunity to participate in the international competition arose when they won the top places at the 'Sri Lanka Science & Engineering Fair (SLSEF)'. The SLSEF is a joint effort where the Ministry of Education (MoE), National Science Foundation (NSF), Intel and the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka (IESL) had joined hands since year 2007 to promote creativity and innovation among the country's younger generation. The winners of the Sri Lanka Science and Engineering Fair (SLSEF) are sent to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.



Judges & participants of the Sri Lanka Science & Engineering Fair - 2018

The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF), a program of Society for Science & the Public, is the world's largest international pre-college science competition. Through a global network of local, regional and national science fairs, millions of students are encouraged to explore their passion for developing innovations that improve the way we work and live. Each May, a group of these students is selected as finalists and offered the opportunity to compete for approximately US\$4 million in awards and scholarships.

More than 1,800 young scientists and inventors was convened in Pittsburgh for the final competition during 13 - 18 May 2018. These finalists were selected from 425 affiliate fairs in 81 countries.

State Minister of Education, Hon. V. Radhakrishnan, Eng. Jayavilal Meegoda, Immediate Past President, Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL) & Mr Sunil Hettiarachchi, Secretary, Ministry of Education met with the winners of the Sri Lanka Science and Engineering Fair (SLSEF) 2018 before they are traveling to the United States at Ministry of Education.

Speaking at the meeting, State Minister Hon. V. Radhakrishnan stated, "Since its inception, SLSEF has produced some brilliant school-aged inventors who have excelled with their

ingenuity and creativity. Since 2007, SLSEF winners have won the international awards which were significant achievements for participants as well as the country. IESL, NSF & Intel support over the last few years in assisting SLSEF winners to showcase their innovations in the global arena has been commendable. I thank them and wish team the very best of luck."

"This event is a great occasion for Lankan students to meet with and exchange ideas with their peers from around the world. I have no doubt that this exposure will help them grow and serve their country in numerous ways through science and innovation in the coming years. I wish the finalists the very best of luck for the upcoming ISEF competition," said Mr Sunil Hettiarachchi, Secretary, Ministry of Education.



Hon. State Minister of Education, Mr Sunil Hettiarachchi, Secretary of MoE, Eng Jayavilal Meegoda - IPP (IESL), Eng Dayan Herath (Chairman - YMS) & Eng Dinesh Dissanayake (Secretary - JIY) with winners

Also winners met the Eng. (Prof.) Niranjanie Ratnayake, President IESL. Participants were welcomed by the President of IESL. Addressing the participants to this year's SLSEF, the President pointed out the significant contributions JIY & SRPC programme are making to the students and the country providing motivation to be creative and innovative. Also Eng. Jayavilal Meegoda said that the SLSEF is being held for the tenth time and that the country has to be proud of the way its school children have performed in the face of international competition. He pointed out the exhaustive preliminary selection process undertaken by the IESL & NSF in selecting 20 finalists from the nearly 1500 school children projects demonstrated to panel of judges at Colombo and all the provinces.



Eng (Prof) Niranjanie Ratnayake - President (IESL), Eng Jayavilal Meegoda - IPP (IESL) & Eng Dinesh Dissanayake (Secretary - JIY) with winners

As the winners of the Junior Inventor of the Year (JIY) Competition, Gajindu Kavinda Bandara & K Gimhan Wijayawardana of St Anthony's College, Kandy & Supun Sasipriya Silva of De Mazenod College, Kandana participated Intel International Science and Engineering Fair representing Sri Lanka.

According to Eng. Jayavilal Meegoda, IPP of IESL who was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, G Kavinda Bandara & K Gimhan Wijayawardana from St Anthony's College, Kandy have won a grand award in the category of Embedded Systems at the Grand Award Ceremony for their unique project titled 'Smart Walking Stick for Blind (Golden i)'. Also as the winner of the Science Research Projects (SRPC) Competition, Rupal Induwara from Ananda National School, Chilaw has won a grand award in the category of Microbiology for his research titled 'Isolation of a Potential Microbial Agent for Controlling Dengue Vector Mosquitoes in Sri Lanka'.

Eng Jayavilal Meegoda said, "IESL has been organizing the Junior Inventor of the Year (JIY) competition for the last three decades, mentoring many students to win at an international level. IESL is very happy to be a part in this cultural change that drives the next generation of Sri Lankan students to be innovative. This was the 11th consecutive year that Lankan students showcase their experiments and work at ISEF. I am proud to say that JIY students are capable of competing and winning at any world stage, What G Kavinda Bandara & K Gimhan Wijayawardana have done is a testimony of the leadership and capability of the country providing motivation to be creative and innovative through the JIY Competition. "This is the 14th occasion JIY winners have won recognition at an international level"

The Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka & the National Science Foundation warmly welcomed the winners of Intel ISEF when they arrived at the Air Port, Colombo, Sri Lanka.



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