

Excellence awards for 58 entrepreneurs

Businessmen acknowledged for their outstanding achievements during challenging times

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THE achievements of 58 entrepreneurs were celebrated at the 16th Asia-Pacific International Entrepreneur Excellence Award and Asia-Pacific Book of The Top Recognition at a grand gala dinner in Putrajaya Marriott Hotel.

International Trade and Industry Minister II Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan, who was guest of honour, was given a red carpet welcome complete with a *kompang* troupe and flower-carrying ushers.

In his congratulatory message to the winners, Ong reminded entrepreneurs that the Malaysian Government had long recognised the potential of entrepreneurs and startups in the contribution of the country's economic growth, hence the support.

"The Government's continuous commitment is strongly reflected in the 2017 Budget, whereby a total of RM6.7bil has been allocated for SME development for implementation by various ministries and agencies," said Ong.

He added a total of 166 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) development programmes were being implemented by 16 ministries and more than 65 government agencies to help SMEs improve their capacity and capability, acquire financial assistance, enhance market access, intensify technology adoption and innovation, increase productivity and strengthen global competitiveness.

In his welcome speech, award organising chairman and Asia-Pacific Top Excellence Brand Committee (APC) president Datuk Prof Albert Tan said award nights like these not only inspired entrepreneurs to reach for the stars but also to push boundaries.



The 58 honoured entrepreneurs at the 16th Asia Pacific International Entrepreneur Excellence Award and Asia-Pacific Book of The TOP Recognition at a grand gala dinner in Putrajaya Marriott Hotel. — Photos: FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

"It is important for businesses to readjust to quick-changing environments or be eliminated from the market place.

"If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always got," said Tan.

"To avoid stagnation, entrepreneurs must seize opportunities not only in domestic markets but in other parts of the world so that they can build their brands in the international arena.

"This is where third-party recognition, like the one afforded by this international award plays an important role in order to strengthen top-of-the-mind recall of their brands and services among consumers," added Tan.

One of the winners from the

excellent leadership category, Datuk Thevasagayam Ahamparam Thevar said the event provided a good opportunity to meet new people from different industries.

"Such meetings open up new opportunities. How one chooses to use it will depend on what catches the eye and brain," said Thevasagayam, who is managing director of a pharmaceutical and healthcare product distribution company.

An LED water drum performance and a lectrosonic laser show entertained guests throughout the night.

Adding an element of thrill to the event was the appearance of a motorbike with LED lights being ridden around the grand ballroom before dinner was served.



(From left) Asia-Pacific Top Excellence Brand Committee adviser Ganesh Michiel, Cambodia Economy, Finance and Banking Commission member Keo Maly, Asia Pacific TOP Excellence Brand committee vice-chairman Datuk Khairul Shahril Hamzah (partly hidden), Prof Tan, Deputy Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Abu Bakar Mohamad Diah, Ong, Vietnam Foundation of Supporting Literary and Artistic Creations president Doan Thanh No, Asia Pacific Top Excellence Brand Committee secretary (Sichuan, China) Zhang WenLong and Singapore Enterprise Innovation principal consultant and Asia-Pacific Top Excellence Brand Committee secretary (Vietnam) Le Song Tung.

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