



Dr Shafiquzzaman (fourth from right) after receiving the prize.

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Senior UMS lecturer wins top international award

KOTA KINABALU: Dr Md Shafiquzzaman Siddiquee, a senior lecturer at the Biotechnology Research Institute in Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), has won the first prize under the Sustainable Agriculture Category of the prestigious International 2014 ProSPER.Net-Scopus Young Scientist Award.

Dr Shafiq won US\$1,000 cash and a fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which includes travel and living expenses for 18 months of study with any research group of his choice in Germany.

The event was held last July in Tokyo hosted by Hosei University.

Dr Shafiq was the first from a Malaysian university to have won this prestigious award.

The winners were chosen based on three criteria; number of citations, number and quality of publications and patents, and documented social impact.

He attributed his win to the quality research published in high impact journals as well as the social impact of his research, which was translated into biosensors for food systems and value addition of waste material by converting it into useful substrates.

Dr Shafiq also said the judging was highly challenging as he was competing with researchers who had carried out extensive research in sustainable agriculture.

He intended to pursue research in the area of electrochemical biosensors with special emphasis on the development and design of portable devices, under the fellowship won in this award.

Dr Shafiq added the reason for choosing this research was because it was socially relevant and the end-products can be commercialised and lead to public awareness and economic development.

He is currently working on fungal biodiversity, composting of oil palm fibres and rice straw; formalin, melamine, food and beverage colouring, metals detection from drinking and waste water as well as drug detection and waste eggshell membrane.

He added that his research facilitates the value addition of waste products.

Dr Shafiq, who originates from Pabna, a district in Bangladesh, is married to Emilia Rohaza Dato' Abdul Aziz, a local from Sandakan.

The International 2014 ProSPER.Net-Scopus Young Scientist Award is given annually to young scientists or researchers, based in the Asia-Pacific region, who have made significant contributions in the field of Sustainable Development.

The award is open to researchers who recently completed their PhD, within five years and are engaged in graduate education and research activities that emphasise on sustainable development.