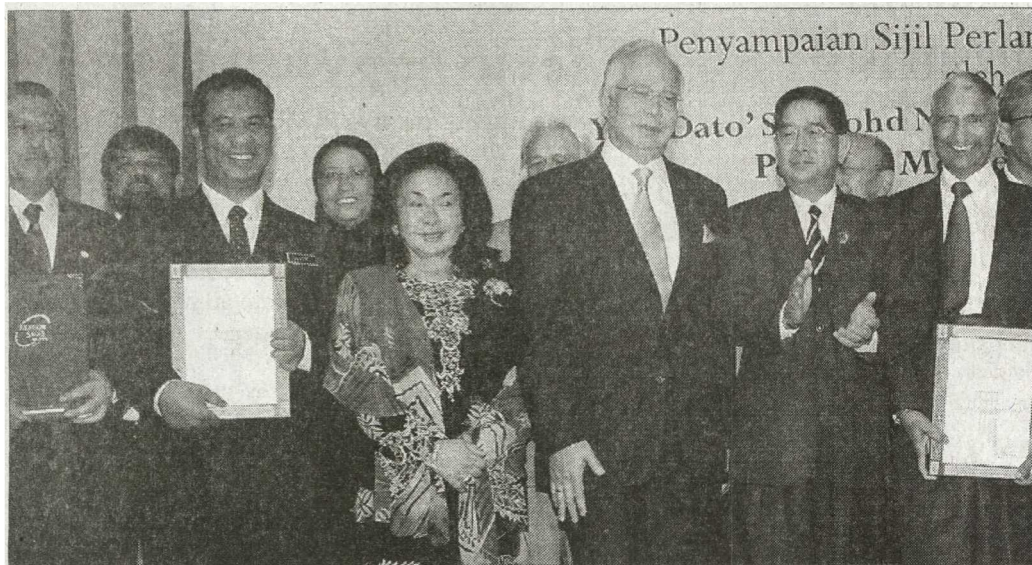


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## Rice breeder, FRIM get Mahathir Science Award



**Najib and Ongkili with the winners of the Mahathir Science Award 2008/2009 recipients in Kuala Lumpur.**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Professor Dr Gurdev Singh Khush who is known as the world's premier rice breeder and the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) were tonight presented with the Mahathir Science Award for 2008 and 2009 respectively.

The Indian-born Dr Gurdev was bestowed The Mahathir Science Award 2008 for his outstanding contributions to tropical agriculture.

The award was conferred in recognition of his perseverance, leadership, commitment and revolutionary work in systematically directing and developing several new rice varieties that have overwhelmingly contributed towards reducing global hunger.

His contribution in increasing the production of rice has helped to feed an additional one billion of world's population as well as

improve the standard of living of Asian farmers.

FRIM was honoured with the recognition for its contributions in the field of tropical natural resources especially its role in the development of the rubberwood furniture industry in Malaysia and globally.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak presented the awards to the two recipients. Also present was his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Najib said he hoped to see the award grow steadily in stature and influence and be recognised in the hall of fame of international science, technology and innovation awards.

"I hope that this award will encourage the recipients to continue their work for the benefit of the environment, the region and mankind as a whole," he said.

The Mahathir Science Award, by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM), is bestowed on any scientist, institution or organisation worldwide in recognition of contributions and innovations towards solving problems in the tropics through science and technology.

The event also saw the conferment of certificates to ASM Honorary Fellow, Senior Fellows and new Fellows, among them former Chief Secretary to the Government Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, as ASM Honorary Fellow 2009, following his contribution to the establishment of the academy and to development of science and technology in the country.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Maximus Ongkili and Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) President Tan Sri Dr Yusof Basiron also attended the ceremony. – Bernama