

CLASS REP

# Picture perfect for pharmacy student

ZULISTA MUSTAFA  
zulista@nst.com.my

**W**HO would have thought that a young chap from a small town in Taiping would one day make his family and the nation proud of his achievement.

Twenty-year-old Nermesh Singh Gurdib Singh was just scrolling Google search engines one day and found this very interesting photography competition. He said the prize — a handmade crystal ball with the full name carved on it — attracted his attention at first.

"Besides the usual cash prizes and certificates, I thought that's a wonderful thing to own. So, I decided to submit four pictures.

"And the two photos I sent were nominated in the awards listing among 49,429 photos from 161 countries.

"So imagine how I felt prior to the award day when I was nominated to top three under 20 years old category. I was ecstatic of course.

Nermesh won the Remarkable Award and received the third place in the Open Colour category at the Siena International Photography Awards 2017 in Italy recently.

"It was purely by luck as I won not only one but two awards under the same category," he said.

Nermesh is currently pursuing his Bachelor of Pharmacy at the International Medical University (IMU).

"I've always dreamt of pursuing my degree in Software Engineering, but what happened was fortuitous.

"The very first thought during high school was becoming a computer specialist, as I was curious to know how codes and programmes were made.

"But still I was uncertain, if I should pursue my studies in software engineering or not," he said.

So, after graduating from SMK King Edward VII, he took up the South Australian Matriculation programme and scored well.

"I was so engulfed into software at first, but that one turning point changed my decision.

"My immediate family members had a bad health history and that had actually urged me to discover how medicines react in the body and what happens if one is not cured.

"I also realised that my sciences are way better than my mathematical subjects. That's why I switched to Pharmacy," he said, adding that he loves to advise patients and might consider becoming a counselor as well.

His studies in IMU takes four years to

complete and he has another two years left before graduation.

Nermesh chose IMU because of its standards and the recognition its pharmacy courses gained worldwide.

"Also, the syllabus is internationally accredited which gives me an opportunity to challenge myself.

"Even though I have no working experience prior to this course but I've encountered many patients — most of them my family members," he said.

Life as a student is no different that the rest. "Basically, I wake up, study, workout, study, sleep and repeat.

"But I enjoy doing house chores as a way for me to keep fit and break sweat.

"Knowing that the degree is arduous, I've always prayed so that I could go through these phases to achieve good grades," he said.

Nermesh who has a non-identical twin brother currently pursuing his Diploma in Accounting, and a sister who is working as a Human Resource administrator in Penang, believes that no matter how busy he is, family always comes first.

"My family members are my idols. They're my pillars of strength as they've always encouraged me to indulge in what I love the most.

"My parents have given me the authority to achieve my dreams, as well as to gain new knowledge in science related matters."

Since he started studying at IMU in 2016, he has been actively participating in events and taking up positions in his university.

Nermesh is currently the Indian & Sri Lankan Cultural Society vice-president and the Orientation Committee 2017 chief of orientation officers.

"I've always got confused between the role of a manager and a leader. When you manage successfully, you lead. And when you lead successfully, you've managed.

"I also actively participated in events such as the World Pharmacist Day Games 2017, The Music Run 2017 and The Standard Chartered KL Marathon run among others.

"When you get involved in this kind of activities, you get to build connections and network with peers and professional boards which could benefit you in later years," he added.

He won the IMU Cup and took the first place in the Arts competition. He also won the third prize of the 6th Kaka Japanese Speech Contest organised by FUJI Japanese Committee Malaysia.

But his love and passion for photography has led him to win numerous awards in photography competition.



Nermesh Singh Gurdib Singh receiving his prize at the Teatro Dei Rozzi, Siena, Italy.



**NERMESH SINGH GURDIB SINGH**

AGE  
20

- AWARDS**  
Siena International Photography Awards 2017 in Italy  
• Open Colour category  
• Remarkable Award

**MOTTO**  
"Nothing is impossible."

"I've always had passion for photography since primary school and then I stopped indulging in it as soon as I graduated from high school knowing that I will be stuck with assignments, deadlines and exams.

"As I stepped into IMU, I decided to rejuvenate my skills in photography and submit photos for competitions.

"I guess IMU brings luck as I won several competitions throughout my year at the university. Among them were the Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agrotourism (MAHA) Photography Competition 2016, International My View on Sustainable Development Goals Student Photo Contest 2016, Selfie with Mom Photography Competition, and National World Photographic Cup 2017.

"Recently, I won third place under the photojournalism category in the International Photography Awards organised by Lucie Foundation.

"Not to forget, I've also won the first place in the National World Photographic Cup under the Reportage category and shall represent Malaysia in the International World Photographic Cup in Australia 2018," he added.

Nermesh said he is curious about the art of photography but he doesn't have much photography skills.

"I basically take photos and rarely edit them. I love taking natural ones as they define originality and that's what the judges are looking for.

"I'm glad to bring happiness and smiles especially to my parents as I manage to fulfil their hopes — to soar their names higher over the skies," he added.

As humble as he may sound, Nermesh said he would encourage and motivate students to not leave their passion or dreams.

"I mingled around with students who preferred to be introverts as they're occupied with hidden exceptional talents. That's where I inspire and encourage them to go all out in what they are passionate of and prove to the world that 'Nothing is Impossible.' The sentence itself says 'I'm Possible,'" he said confidently.

His advice to his fellow students and school leavers is to find their hidden talent and let that talent take them to another journey of freedom and happiness.

"Life is like a staircase whereby with talent in your hand, you're able to establish a step higher at a time.

"To that one step, comes all hurdles and obstacles in life where you must be brave and optimistic enough to face.

"I find happiness in photography and yes, photography takes me to another level of achievements," he added.



The winning picture taken in Syria during a humanity volunteerism trip in 2016.

Nermesh Singh Gurdib Singh (MY) **SIENA INTERNATIONAL PHOTO AWARDS**  
3<sup>rd</sup> CLASSIFIED - STUDENT



The Pangea crystal ball trophy.