

A physicist and achiever. [CORRECTED]

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WHEN Mansoor Abdul Jalil was working towards a doctorate in physics at Cambridge University, an entire year went by without his reaping any result from his research.

But that frustration did not deter him from continuing his research on nanomagnetism, the properties of very tiny magnets.

Now, his discoveries may one day increase the storage capacity of hard disk drives a thousandfold.

Dr Mansoor, 32, is now a physics lecturer with the **National University of Singapore**. He and three other people have been named the latest recipients of the Singapore Youth Award, the highest recognition here for achievers under 35.

They will receive the awards from Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Istana on Sunday.

Dr Mansoor, the first Malay-Muslim to receive the award for science and technology, said he felt very honoured. The second child of a police officer and a housewife, he was the first in his family to go to university. He received first-class honours at Cambridge.

A childhood fascination with astronomy inspired him to study physics. Now, he helps to inspire other students to love science.

The shy and bespectacled bachelor has been mentoring secondary school students since 2001, in a programme to foster innovation.

'I enjoy interacting with younger students because they're so enthusiastic. And I get satisfaction from coaxing the quiet ones to voice their opinions,' he said.

A volunteer with the communal self-help group Mendaki, he won the inaugural McDonald's-Berita Harian Achiever of the Year award in 1999 for being academically outstanding.

His NUS colleague, lecturer Chan Heng Huat, 35, also won a science and technology award for his work in **mathematics**.

This year, these awards will also recognise:

Entrepreneurship - Mr Douglas Foo, 34, whose seven-year-old company Apex-Pal International owns Sakae Sushi, Crepes & Cream and Black Tea Box restaurant chains.

Sports and adventure - Asia's top bowler Remy Ong, 24, who won three gold medals at last year's Asian Games. **CORRECTION** - In our report 'A physicist and achiever' on June 26, we stated that Dr Mansoor Abdul Jalil was a physics lecturer with the **National University of Singapore** (NUS). This is incorrect. He is an assistant professor at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at NUS' faculty of engineering. We are sorry for the error. (STIMES, 04/07/2003)

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