

## **2013 PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AWARD**

### **Idris bin Rashid Khan Surattee**

The LAS Professional Service Award is designed to recognize LAS members who demonstrate outstanding leadership and commitment to the library profession.

In the course of a 30 year career, Idris has had a significant influence and left an indelible mark on Singapore librarianship in the public and private sector.

Idris began his career at the British Council Library before spending over 25 years at Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) where he has risen to the rank of Head Librarian and Vice President of the Information Resource Centre, a position he has held for over a decade. He has spearheaded the effort to build the SPH Information Resource Centre into a cutting edge, world class news library and repository for many of Singapore's most important historical documents and in the process demonstrated how libraries can offer value and thrive in a constantly changing and highly competitive corporate environment.

Idris' management and leadership skills are highly acclaimed within SPH. He has been a fount of knowledge, respected role model and nurturing mentor who has constantly encouraged his staff to build confidence in their own abilities and to gain new skills so as to improve themselves to better serve their community. He has also followed his own advice to pursue lifelong learning by returning to University to earn his MSc (Information Studies) in 1997 and then go on to become a part-time Lecturer in the Division of Information Studies at Nanyang Technological University.

In addition to building and managing Singapore's largest special library, Idris has also become one of the most respected and influential thought leaders in librarianship in Singapore. He has demonstrated a unique ability to highlight important, unconventional, occasionally provocative and often controversial issues, while moderating differences and ensuring balance among those with opposing views. He has actively participated in guiding the discussion regarding where Singapore libraries should be headed while bringing meaning to librarianship in the larger context of society and how libraries and librarians can contribute to Singapore's national goals and development.

Idris' success in enhancing the quality of conversation about the appropriate direction of Singapore libraries is, in part, rooted in his active participation in the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) and other prominent organizations. In LAS,

Idris served as a Council Member, Editor of the LAS Journal, Chairperson of the Publications Committee, Member, Joint LAS/PPM Organizing Committee, Member PDS Board, and LAS Vice President. He has also been appointed to other high level boards including the National Library Board, where he played a key role in securing the rights to digitise, for public access, a collection of 1.8 million newspaper articles from the Straits Times spanning nearly two hundred years of Singapore's social history as well as championing the National Library's role in heritage preservation and promotion. His wisdom and insights have been tapped through his participation on the Boards of the National Archives and Street and Building Names as well as serving as a Director of the Malay Heritage Foundation.

It is our privilege and honour to present this year's Professional Service Award to Idris bin Rashid Khan Surattee, who has not only built and managed one of Singapore's most important and successful libraries, but made a profound, impact on libraries, librarians and the community at large in Singapore. In keeping with his goal of promoting the education of librarians, Idris has requested that the monetary value associated with the Professional Service Award be donated to the LAS Scholarship fund.