

L'Oreal awards Thai dengue researcher

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Singapore: Dr Sansanee Noisakran, a BIOTEC researcher based at Medical Biotechnology Research Unit, is the latest recipient of the L'Oreal 'For Women in Science 2012' award in the field of life sciences. This year is the 10th Anniversary of 'For Women in Science' award.

Dr Noisakran was given the award for investigating the mechanisms of dengue virus infection and host cellular responses against the infection. A human cell line system will be used as a model for in vitro virus infection in order to identify human cellular proteins that interact with the NS1 protein of dengue virus and to determine their contributions and functions in the production of infectious virus, viral escape from host immune response and host cellular response against virus infection.

The knowledge gained from her work has the potential to be developed as a predictive tool of disease severity and provide insight into the development of new anti-viral drugs and vaccines for the dengue disease.

Two other awards in the fields of material sciences and chemistry were given to assistant professor Dr Punnama Siriphannon of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang and assistant professor Dr Atitaya Siripinyanond of Mahidol University, respectively.

Dr Noisakran becomes the 8th BIOTEC researcher selected for this prestigious award. Her predecessors include Dr Ubolsree Leartsakulpanich, Ms Wansika Kiatpathomchai, Dr Lily Eurwilaichitr, Dr Kallaya Dangtip, Dr Kobkul Laoteng, Dr Nitsara Karoonuthaisiri and Dr Saengchan Senapin. All these people were honored in 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2011 respectively. In addition, Dr Chawanee Thongpanchang of BIOTEC was among the 15 scientists from all over the world to have been selected for the UNESCO-L'OREAL International Fellowships for Women in Science.