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FOUR university students have been selected to represent the country at the 12th Hitachi Young Leaders Initiative (HYLI) to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in July.

The students are Chong Sui Kiat (Universiti Putra Malaysia/UPM), Khairunnabihah Zainal Abidin (Universiti Malaysia Sarawak/Unimas), Ng Cheon Yuen (Universiti Sains Malaysia/USM) and Muhammad Nasrullah Annuar (Universiti Teknologi Petronas/UTP).

They will join their counterparts from Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan at the regional forum with the theme "The Road Ahead: Asean's Role in Asia and the Global Economy".

Established by Hitachi, Ltd in 1996, the initiative offers an opportunity for top students in Asia, who are also active social contributors, to discuss regional economic and social infrastructure issues with regional leaders from the private, public and academic sectors.

"The HYLI offers a unique opportunity for students to make contacts with prominent leaders and have their ideas heard by people who matter," said Hitachi Asia (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd managing director Seiji Yoshimura.

He also said they were gratified to receive strong support from individuals and organisations who share their belief in grooming Asian youths with leadership potential.

The students chosen to represent Malaysia were selected after passing a rigorous application and evaluation process that included an interview before a panel chaired by International Trade and Industry Ministry secretary-general Datuk Dr Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria.

The students were shortlisted from seven participating universities: Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, UPM, USM, Unimas, UTP and Taylor's University.

"I believe that leaders of tomorrow should be able to think critically, have a good grasp of local and regional issues as well as have the ability to articulate their ideas and thoughts on specific issues," said Dr Rebecca.

"The ministry is supportive of HYLII because it provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate their leadership abilities and potential.

"We hope that programmes like this will receive the support and acknowledgment that it deserves," she said.

Source: The Star Online