

Mohammed, promoter of tolerance, is Cultural Personality of the Year

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ABU DHABI — On May 11, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, will be honoured as Cultural Personality of the Year by Shaikh Zayed Book Award (SZBA).

The honouring ceremony will take place during the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair. The award carries Dh1 million in prize money, a certificate of merit and a gold medal.

The President, His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, congratulated Shaikh Mohammed on his selection as the Cultural Personality of the Year.

Earlier this month, SZBA announced the winners of all its nine categories, except one: the Cultural Personality of the Year. On Wednesday morning, they revealed that this year, the winner of this special category is Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid.

“It is impossible to name all the traits and achievements for which Shaikh Mohammed was named the

› TURN TO PAGE 3

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› FROM PAGE 1

winner for the award,” said Dr Ali bin Tamim, the award’s secretary-general.

“The decision came as a tribute to Shaikh Mohammed being one of the most prominent agents of change in all walks of cultural development, with achievements ever expanding far and wide all over the world, fostering Arab culture, whether in creative work, intellectual endeavour or promotion of tolerance and peaceful coexistence,” he added.

Some of the numerous reasons

for naming Shaikh Mohammed as the winner of the award is the establishment of the Mohammed bin Rashed Al Maktoum Foundation that aims to bridge the knowledge gap between the Arab and the Western worlds; launching the Government summit, a platform for enhancing innovation in the government departments; sponsoring creative individuals and innovators; and establishing the International Humanitarian City for Humane Services as the world’s largest hub for humanitarian aid.

Launched in memory of the late Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al

Nahyan, honouring his role in promoting national unity and country’s development, SZBA started in 2007 with the final purpose of promoting knowledge and creativity through literature of every kind.

Previous winners of this category include King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia (2014); Chinese orientalist Xhong Jikun (2011); Dr Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah (2010); and Denis Johnson-Davies, one of the world’s most eminent translators of Arabic into English (2007).

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