

# 12 outstanding foreigners in exclusive 'club'

## Honorary Citizen Award recognises foreigners who have contributed to S'pore

By MELISSA KOK

TWELVE foreigners now belong to an exclusive "club" that gives them the right to live and work in Singapore for life.

The right also extends to their immediate dependant family members.

These are some of the privileges accorded to the recipients of a prestigious award which grants them honorary citizenship.

The scheme, which was started in 2003, is the highest recognition for prominent foreigners, residing in or outside Singapore, who have contributed or provided extensive and valuable services to the country, says a Ministry of Manpower (MOM) spokesman.

On Monday, American scientist Professor Edward W. Holmes, 70, was the latest to attain the recognition.

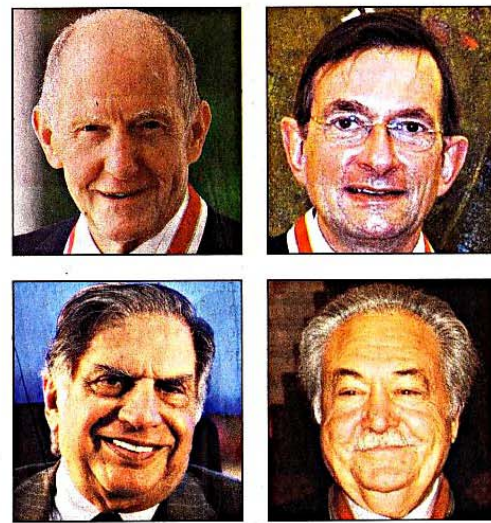
In 2006, he was approached by the Agency for Science, Technology and Research to head its Translational and Clinical Sciences Group. He is known for establishing the Singapore Translational Research Investigator and Clinician Scientist awards which have attracted top scientists such as US cancer specialist Phillip Koeffler to work in Singapore.

Prof Holmes is also the Lien Ying Chow Professor of Medicine at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore.

Other honorary citizens include Mr Jeroen van de Veer, retired chief executive of Royal Dutch Shell; Nobel Laureate Sydney Brenner; and Tata Sons chairman Ratan Tata.

Each year, government agencies across all sectors are invited to submit nominations to the Cabinet for the Honorary Citizen Award.

This is conferred by the President on the recommendation of the Cabinet, and no more than two awards are given annually, the MOM spokesman said. It is understood that the recipients will not, however, have certain citizenship rights such as voting in elections, and need not carry out duties such as enlisting in national service. They are allowed to buy landed property, but it is not known how many



(Clockwise from top left) Professor Edward W. Holmes, Mr Jeroen van de Veer, Mr Pasquale Pistorio and Mr Ratan Tata are among the 12 honorary citizens.

of the recipients - many of whom are not based in Singapore - have done so.

Honorary citizen Pasquale Pistorio, honorary chairman of ST Microelectronics, is based in Italy.

In an e-mail interview with The Straits Times, the 75-year-old said he travels to Singapore at least four times a year for business and family reasons.

The Italian, who was conferred honorary citizenship in 2003, set up the Pistorio Foundation in Geneva in 2005. It has a Singapore branch and supports underprivileged children worldwide.

He also revealed that his eldest son, Carmeio, is a Singapore permanent resident who has set up his own investment firm to launch high-tech companies in Singapore and Asia.

melk@sph.com.sg

## Honorary citizens

■ **2011:** Professor Edward W. Holmes, deputy chairman, Translational and Clinical Sciences Group of the Biomedical Research Council in A\*Star, and executive chairman, National Medical Research Council, Ministry of Health. He also helped set up awards which have attracted top scientists here.

■ **2010:** Mr Jeroen van de Veer, retired chief executive of Royal Dutch Shell, who was key in expanding Shell's operations here and backed its setting up of the Shell Eastern Petrochemicals Complex.

■ **2008:** Mr Ratan Tata, chairman of Tata Sons. As head of the Tata Group, he was key in expanding and diversifying its operations here, taking it from steel manufacturing to information technology.

Tan Sri Frank Tsao Wen-King, senior chairman of the IMC Group. He played a pivotal role in shaping the growth of the maritime industry here.

■ **2007:** Mr Lee R. Raymond (right), retired chairman and chief executive of ExxonMobil Corporation, who widened its operations here to chemicals manufacturing.



Dr Heinrich von Pierer, former chairman of the supervisory board, Siemens AG, who pushed for the company to invest in power, health care and infocomms here.

■ **2006:** Dr Tsutomu Kanai (right), chairman emeritus of Hitachi, who helped set up the electronics industry here.



Dr Robert A. Brown, president of Boston University, who played a key role in establishing the Singapore-MIT alliance, leading to world-class graduate research and educational programmes here.

■ **2004:** Sir Richard Brook Sykes (right), former rector of Imperial College London, who helped set up the Genome Institute of Singapore and the Biopolis business park.



Mr Lodewijk Christiaan Van Wachem, former president of Royal Dutch Shell and chairman of the supervisory board of Royal Philips Electronics, for his contributions to the petrochemical industry here.

■ **2003:** Dr Sydney Brenner (right), distinguished research professor of the Salk Institute in the United States, and 2002 Nobel Prize recipient. He chaired A\*Star's scientific advisory board, spearheading Singapore's push into biomedical research.



Mr Pasquale Pistorio, honorary chairman of STMicroelectronics, who set up the first wafer fabrication plant here in 1984, at the time the most advanced electronics factory here.