

# JAPAN PRIZE NEWS

THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
FOUNDATION OF JAPAN (JSTF)

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## Six Scientists from Japan, France, America and Australia Honored with 1988 Japan Prizes



*Dr. Georges Vendryes*



*Dr. Donald A. Henderson*



*Dr. Isao Arita*



*Dr. Frank Fenner*

The awards ceremony for the 1988 Japan Prize, the most prestigious and honored scientific prize in Japan presented annually by the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan to world scientists and researchers making notable contributions to the peace and prosperity of mankind, was held on April 7 at the National Theater in Tokyo.

The two fields of science and technology designated for the prize this year were "Energy Technology" and "Preventative Medicine." A total of 406 recommendations were received from around the world, with six winners eventually selected—including the first Japanese to ever receive the award.

Selected as the winner in the Energy Technology category was Dr. Georges Vendryes of France, in recognition of his establishment of practical fast breeder reactor technology.

Two separate themes were targeted in the Preventative Medicine category. Honored for the successful eradication of smallpox were Dr. Donald A. Henderson of America, Dr. Isao Arita of Japan and Dr. Frank Fenner of Australia.

Recognized for their outstanding achievements in the discovery of the AIDS-causing virus and development of relevant diagnostic methods were Dr. Luc Montagnier of France and Dr. Robert C. Gallo of America.



*Dr. Luc Montagnier*



*Dr. Robert C. Gallo*

# Crown Prince and Princess Attend Awards Ceremony

Leading the list of prominent guests at the awards ceremony were the Crown Prince and Princess, along with Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Koichi Yaguchi, national ambassadors to Japan and science attaches, noted scholars and researchers, representatives of political, government and financial circles, the press, and other sectors—some 800 persons in all.

The ceremony began with an inspiring rendition of Handel's "Water Music" by the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, followed by the entrance of this year's laureates and their wives. Foundation Chairman Kisaburo Yokota gave the opening address, and Dr. Takashi Mukaibo, chairman of the Selection Committee, explained the reasons for selecting this year's winners. Chairman Yokota then presented the winners with the Japan Prize certificates of merit, commemorative medals, and the supplementary cash award of 50 million yen for each category.

All present saluted this moment with a rousing round of applause, as the winners were bathed in the light of countless camera flashes from the press section. In the midst of the solemn atmosphere of this formal event, the beaming faces of the happy winners left a lasting impression indeed.

One of the topics of interest this year was Dr. Isao Arita, the first Japanese ever to be honored with the award. Dr. Arita, who has been bombarded with attention from the



## Crown Prince's Address

"Led by the fields of specialization of this year's six winners, science and technology continue to chart amazing progress. We must strive to ensure that the fruits of these achievements lead to ever greater happiness and prosperity for everyone in society.

"It is my fervent hope that this award make a solid contribution to the positive promotion of scientific and technological progress in the years ahead."



mass media, says he has already set his sights on his next professional goal: "I am extremely pleased to have received this prize in the field of preventative medicine. From here on, I want to devote as much of my time and effort as possible to the global project to eradicate polio."

## Press Conference

The six winners of this year's Japan Prize attended a joint press conference at the Japan Press Center. Dr. Montagnier and Dr. Gallo, the two major authorities in the field of AIDS research, fielded a particularly large number of questions.



## Courtesy Call on Governor of Tokyo

The six winners and their wives paid a courtesy visit to Tokyo Governor Suzuki. The words exchanged between the top man in the capital and these globally renowned scientists were candid and to the point.



## Gala Banquet Attended by Japanese and Foreign Celebrities

A gala awards banquet was held on the evening of April 7 at the Akasaka Prince Hotel in Tokyo. Attending were several hundred prominent guests from a wide range of fields and nations, giving the event a truly international flavor. On hand to congratulate the six winners were the Crown Prince and Princess, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Yaguchi, Director-General of the Science and Technology Agency Itoh, Education Minister Nakajima, and other dignitaries.

After the Crown Prince and Princess were seated at the center of the main table, the six winners and their wives took their seats on either side of the royal couple. Also invited to join the group at the main table were 70 notable figures from a wide range of endeavors.

Enhanced by a harp recital and a vocal solo, dinner took on a relaxed and congenial atmosphere, punctuated by the timely introduction of each of the six winners and their wives, as well as their achievements leading up to this latest recognition.

The Crown Prince then led the gathering in a congratulatory toast. Others presenting congratulatory messages were Tokyo Governor Suzuki, and His Honorable Ambassador Mr. Pierre Nelson Coffi, who represented the diplomatic corps in Japan and his country, the Ivory Coast.

Finally, Dr. Vendryes offered an address of gratitude on behalf of all prize recipients and expressed his feeling in his haiku, a 17-syllable Japanese poem, as: "Make this a flower festival which will invoke everlasting peace," earning a stirring round of applause from the gathering. The banquet lasted for over two hours, with all present departing with fond memories of the meaningful communication and exchanges which took place.

The week of April was designated as "Japan Prize Week." The winners' busy agenda during this period included an audience with the Emperor, commemorative lecture meetings given by the Prize recipients in Tokyo and Osaka, their participation in academic discussions, and other activities.



### Commemorative Lecture Meetings

The winners gave commemorative lectures in Tokyo at the Asahi Hall and in Osaka at the MID Theater. A combined total of some 1,000 leading scientists, engineers, researchers and the public crowded into both halls.

### Holiday in Kyoto

The prize recipients enjoyed a visit to Japan's ancient capital of Kyoto. Invited to a traditional tea ceremony, they relaxed and enjoyed this introduction to one of the most refined artistic rituals of classical Japanese culture.



## Prize Winners' Comments

"Receiving the Japan Prize is a great honor for me and for my country." "The strength of Japan resides in being a very advanced country in the field of science and technology while keeping a close link with its traditional cultural roots."

**Dr. Georges Vendryes (France)**

"Our selection as recipients pays high tribute as well to dedicated health workers from around the world who worked long hours under the most difficult conditions to accomplish the ultimate goal of eradicating smallpox."

**Dr. Donald Henderson (U.S.A.)**

"I am extremely pleased to receive the prize, particularly since there were so many obstacles to the success of the eradication project. I am confident that this recognition of our efforts will foster even greater Japanese participation in international research projects in the future."

**Dr. Isao Arita (Japan)**

"I was gratified to learn that smallpox eradication, the greatest achievement in preventative medicine in the world, had been recognized." "I am honored to have been linked with Dr. Henderson and Dr. Arita as a representative of the many health workers whose combined efforts made the achievement possible."

**Dr. Frank Fenner (Australia)**

"The honor of this prize goes beyond me to all my colleagues and associates, who participated in the adventure of the AIDS virus discovery and characterization. I am also particularly delighted to share this prize with my colleague, Dr. Gallo."

**Dr. Luc Montagnier (France)**

"I have had many special relationships with Japanese scientists because of the work on the research in identifying and developing tests for the AIDS pathogen. I feel very proud because Japanese scientists and people are known for their vigorous, careful evaluations and their excellence in science."

**Dr. Robert C. Gallo (U.S.A.)**

## The Japan Prize

The Japan Prize is an award presented to world scientists and researchers who have compiled creative and notable achievements in science and technology, contributed to the progress of these fields, and helped to promote peace and prosperity for mankind.

This prize was created in 1983 by the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan, which was established by a donation of Mr. Konosuke Matsushita and others. Mr. Matsushita is well known as the founder of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. and also serves as president of the Foundation.

Two separate fields are designated for the award each year, with a selection committee selecting the winners from candidates recommended on a global basis. In recognition of their achievements, the winners receive a Japan Prize certificate of merit, commemorative medal, and cash award of 50 million yen (for each category). The awards ceremony and congratulatory banquet are held in April, with guests including the Crown Prince and Princess as well as a host of prominent persons from all fields.

This year marked the fourth time that the Prize has been awarded. Those honored in the previous three years are as follows:

### 1985

Information and Communications

Dr. John R. Pierce (USA)

Biotechnology

Dr. Ephraim Kachalski-Katzir (Israel)

### 1986

Materials Science and Technology

Dr. David Turnbull (USA)

Medical Technology

Dr. Willem J. Kolff (USA)

### 1987

Improvements of Biological Functions

Dr. Henry M. Beachell (USA)

Dr. Gurdev S. Khush (India)

Electro-Optics

Dr. Theodore H. Maiman (USA)



Konosuke Matsushita

## Selection of 1989 Japan Prize Winners Begins

Selection of winners of the 1989 Japan Prize has already gotten underway, targeting the two designated fields of "Environmental Science and Technology" and "Medicinal Science."

Up to now, the prize has concentrated on specific independent fields of science and technology. Next year, however, the focus will be placed on integrated fields of endeavor distinguished by their close ties to daily life.

### "Environmental Science and Technology"

Although everyone yearns for an environment that will enhance the quality of life, the world is increasingly plagued by environmental deterioration linked to rapid industrialization and the rise in population. As a result, we are witnessing a growing awareness of the importance of environmental science and technology.

"Environmental science and technology" category refers to all areas of science and

technology which have the power to effect the human environment. This includes both research and development of practical application in forest preservation, desert greening, urban environments, environmental contaminants, pollution prevention, and other fields. Another crucial area is research on the impact of the release into the natural environment of carbon dioxide, fluorocarbons, radioactive substances and other by-products of human activity.

### "Medicinal Science"

The field of "medicinal science" has charted remarkable progress since the practical application of sulfa drugs and the discovery of antibiotics, and has made a major contribution to extending the average human lifespan. Now that the mechanisms that produce disease are being clarified at the molecular level, theoretical drug design becomes possible and work in this area has already begun.

Nevertheless, we continue to face a host of critical challenges including cancer, ageing, and a broad spectrum of incurable diseases. Thus medicinal science's mission of basic research to discover new medicines is more vital than ever to ensure the health and welfare of all mankind. The term "medicinal science" refers to research in organic and pharmaceutical chemistry leading to the creation of new medicines, including the discovery and synthesis of new biologically active compounds.