

Announcement

The Secretariat General of King Faisal International Prize

Deliberations of the Selection Committees of

King Faisal International Prize for 1997

(11-14 January 1997)

The Selection Committees of King Faisal International Prize, in its five branches for the Service to Islam; Islamic Studies; Arabic Literature; Medicine; and Science, convened a series of meetings on 11-14 January 1997 to reach the following decisions:

First:	<p>The Selection Committee of the Service to Islam awarded Hon. Dr. Mahathir Mohammed (Malaysia), former Prime Minister of Malaysia for 16 years.</p> <p>The prize was awarded in recognition of Dr. Mohammed's efforts including the following among others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. He has been a role-model of an Islamic leader combining stringent commitment to genuine principles of Islam, in terms of both intellect and in practice, and application of the modern means of progress in a manner that guided his nation to take the lead in technological and economic development.2. His pursuit of a discreet policy that demonstrated the tolerance of Islam and the greatness of its comprehensive vision. This policy strengthened bond of fraternity among Muslim and non-Muslim Malaysians to become a nation with an aptitude for cooperation.3. He founded significant Islamic institutions such as the International Islamic University of Malaysia, the Islamic Bank, Center for Understanding of Islam, and the Islamic Organization for Economic Development.4. He extended efforts, within the framework of Islamic organizations, to reconcile Muslims and assist Muslim minorities, particularly in Southeast Asia, to obtain their legitimate rights of equity and decent living.
Second:	<p>The Selection Committee of the Prize for Islam Studies had unanimously awarded this year's prize on the theme of "The Studies of the Status of Women In Islam" to Dr. Abdul Karim Zedan Beij (Iraq). The award was conferred on Dr. Beij in recognition of his scholarly research in his 11-volume book, "The Details of Provisions about Women and the Muslim Household". This is an encyclopedic undertaking in which the author highlighted women's position in terms of provisions of jurisprudence. The book is comprehensive in contents, deep in analysis, and elucidating prudence of legislation and linking them to contemporary issues. The book is grounded in the accredited sources of jurisprudence and citing credential references.</p>

Third:	<p>The Selection Committee of the Arabic Language and Literature decided to withhold the prize for this year on the topic of literary studies on the modern novel as the nominated entries were below the targeted standard despite the efforts exerted in them.</p>
Fourth:	<p>The Selection Committee of King Faisal International Prize for Medicine for 1997 decided to award:</p> <p>Dr. Colin L. Masters (Australia), Professor at the University of Melbourne; and Dr. Konrad Beyreuther (Germany), Senior Professor at Heidelberg University</p> <p>As co-winners with: Dr. James F. Gusella (Canada), Professor at Harvard.</p> <p>Dr. Masters and Dr. Beyreuther collaboratively discovered the causes of Alzheimer's disease, which results in death of many infected individuals.</p> <p>Dr. Gusella, on the other hand, conducted remarkable research on the Huntington disease, using reverse genetics for mapping the gene locus of the disease to identify and explain the detailed structure of the gene.</p> <p>Overall, discoveries of the three scientists had assisted the efforts geared to diagnose the two diseases and to finding drugs for their remedy.</p>
Fifth:	<p>The Selection Committee of King Faisal International Prize for Science for 1997 awarded the following two co-winners on the theme of biology:</p> <p>Dr. Carl E. Wieman (USA); and Dr. Eric A. Cornell (USA), professors at University of Colorado.</p> <p>The prize was conferred on them in recognition of their stunning success in producing the first true Bose-Einstein Condensate, a new form of matter that occurs at just a few hundred billionths of the absolute zero.</p> <p>They achieved this discovery by capturing the matter in a tight space and at a temperature degree which is the lowest ever to be known for man (bordering a fraction of a billionth centigrade) thus it condensates into a consistent whole.</p> <p>This discovery was considered a marvelous scientific breakthrough that was well received by worldwide scientific circles as it deepened knowledge of matter in a state hitherto unknown. Similar to the laser, which was later proved to have numerous benefits, this new discovery could have many advantages in future.</p>
	<p>The Selection Committee decided that themes for 1998's prizes would be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As regards the prize for Islamic Studies, the theme would be, "Studies on Libraries or the Evolution of Islamic Book Craft"; 2. As regards the prize for Arabic Literature and Arabic Language, the theme would be, "Autobiography of Contemporary Arab Writers"; 3. As regards the prize for medicine, the theme would be, "Control of Communicable Diseases"; and 4. With respect to the prize for science, the theme would be, "Mathematics".

