

WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2015 KING FAISAL INTERNATIONAL PRIZE

Riyadh, 3 February 2015G - 14 Rabi' II 1436H, HRH Prince Khalid Al-Faisal, Executive President of King Faisal Foundation, tonight announced the winners of the King Faisal International Prize.

The King Faisal International Prize for Science (Chemistry) for this year 2015 (1436H) has been awarded to Professor Michael Grätzel, (Switzerland), Professor, Director of the Laboratory of Photonics and Interfaces (Institute of Physical Chemistry), Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. And Professor Omar Mwanne Yaghi, (USA), Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Professor Michael Grätzel is recognized for his foundational and practical discoveries in the development of photo-electrochemical systems for solar energy conversion. His world-famous Grätzel solar cells are simple and relatively inexpensive to manufacture, and they possess unique practical properties including flexibility and transparency. Professor Grätzel's work has had and will continue to have a major impact on the practical realization of solar-energy conversion.

Professor Omar Yaghi has made seminal contributions in the field of metal organic frameworks (MOFs). In the last two decades, he developed MOFs through innovative approaches to construct novel materials and explored their applications in various fields, including encapsulation of bio-molecules, and capturing of gases such as carbon dioxide and hydrogen.

The King Faisal International Prize for Medicine (Intestinal Microflora and Human Health) for this year 2015 (1436H) has been awarded to Professor Jeffrey Ivan Gordon, USA, Dr. Robert Glaser Distinguished University Professor, and Director of the Centre of Genome Sciences and Systems Biology at Washington University, St Louis, USA.

Professor Gordon has been recognized for his seminal work on defining the microbiomes genomic and metabolic role in human health. Professor Gordon's pioneering work and interdisciplinary studies of the human microbiome has provided fascinating insights into the metabolic processes and the genetic basis of mutually beneficial relationships between the host and microorganisms in the human gut. His innovative research has provided major breakthroughs into the influence of intestinal microbiota on postnatal development, physiology and illness susceptibility in

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humans and has thus enhanced our understanding of the pathogenesis of complex diseases such as obesity. His research has opened opportunities for novel gut microbiome directed treatments to improve human health.

The King Faisal International Prize for Arabic Language and Literature (Ventures Towards Arabisation of Scientific and Medical Matters) for this year 2015 (1436H) has been withheld due to incomplete fulfillment of the prize requirements.

The King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies (Cultural Heritage of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah) for this year 2015G (1436H) has been awarded to Dr. Abdulaziz Bin Abdulrahman Kaki, **Saudi Arabia**, Consultant, Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah Development Commission

For his distinguished research on cultural heritage of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. This is best demonstrated by his multi-volume Arabic text on architectural and historic landmarks of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, particularly volume 7 dealing with the foundations and characteristics of the ancient architectural fabric of the city. In this research, the author combines cultural dimensions with field work and supports his study with various illustrations including old and modern images, maps and other illustrations, making it a major reference in the field.

The King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam for this year 2015 (1436H) has been awarded to Dr. Zakir A. Naik, (India), President of the Islamic Foundation in India, In recognition of his outstanding services to Islam, including the following:

1. Being one of the most renowned non-Arabic speaking promulgators of Islam, Dr. Zakir Naik has presented hundreds of public lectures and debates which explain the Islamic creed, defend its teachings and propagate its principles on the basis of the Holy Quran and authentic *Sunna* (sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad).
2. He has also paid considerable attention to comparative religious studies, and became a renowned authority on this subject throughout the Islamic nation. His vast religious knowledge is not limited to one faith but to several other religions including Christianity, Hindu, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism. He has even established a specialized organization for comparative religious studies and organized several training courses for scholars of this field worldwide.
3. He has founded a television channel, *Assalam* (Peace Channel), which remains the only television channel in the world specialized in comparative religion. Its programs are broadcast in English, Urdu and Bangali languages and viewers of the English channel are estimated to exceed 100 millions.

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4. He has also established a series of schools, initially in India and subsequently in a number of Arabic and Islamic countries. These schools train non-Arab students from an early age on Arabic language and Quranic studies, in addition to regular classes of other curricula in English.

Notes to Editors:

- The topics for the 2016 King Faisal International Prize are: **Science**— *Biology*, **Medicine**— *Clinical Application of Next Generation Genetics*, **Arabic Language and Literature**— *Analysis of The Arabic Poetic Text*, **Islamic Studies**— *Muslim Geography*. The deadline for all nominations is **1 May 2015G. (12.7.1436H.)**.
- This is the 37TH annual King Faisal International Prize announcement.

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