



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

TO NEWS EDITOR  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 1996

### **Japan honours CUHK Vice-Chancellor with prestigious scientific award**

The Vice-Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Prof. Charles Kao Kuen, will receive a prestigious international scientific award in Tokyo tomorrow (April 26) in recognition of his pioneering research on optical fibre communication.

The award, the Japan Prize in the category of "Information, Computer and Communication Systems", will be presented in a ceremony attended by the Emperor of Japan tomorrow afternoon.

An electrical engineer, Prof Kao, 62, has spearheaded research and application of optical fibre in communications over the past three decades. He was cited for his "foresight" and "leading and pioneering role" in the development of optical communication technology, which is expected to bring forth extensive social innovation into the 21st century.

Created by the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan (JSTF) in 1983, the Japan Prize commends scientists and technologists throughout the world for major scientific and technological achievements that advance peace and the prosperity of mankind.

Prof Kao was the principal author of the widely-acclaimed 1966 scientific paper, which defined the precise information transmission characteristics, design parameters and material properties for glass fibres to work as the transmission media for communication systems and networks. At that time the telephone network was made up of copper wires.

His ground-breaking findings spurred research and subsequent commercialisation of optical fibre communication systems. These fibres are now the major component of the rapidly-growing global information superhighway, which has an almost infinite capacity for a wide range of information services.

Delivering the Japan Prize Commemorative Lecture entitled "The Dawning of the Information Age" in Tokyo this afternoon, Prof Kao warned that natural resources might not be enough to sustain continual population growth in our post-industrial society.

- 2 -

"We must increase productivity without increasing use of energy which may damage the environment. Telecommunications help us to harness information more effectively and is energy efficient, and thus hold the key to increasing productivity without expending more energy," he said.

Also receiving the Japan Prize (in the category of neuroscience) tomorrow will be a Japanese doctor of medicine, Dr Masao Ito, 67, for studies of cerebellum. He is the first Japanese national to win the prize by himself.

Conferring the Japan Prizes on the two will be President Masami Ito, President of JSTF. Each man will receive a certificate of merit, a commemorative medal and a cash award of 50 million yen (US\$500,000). A total of 238 nominees for the 1996 Japan Prizes were recommended by top scientists from around the world – 86 for Information, Computer and Communication Systems, 152 for Neuroscience.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Note to Editors:**

A head shot of Prof Kao will be sent via GIS press boxes.

Press enquiries: Mrs Shirley Kwok  
Information & PR Office, CUHK  
Tel: 2609-8897  
Fax: 2603-5115