

Ex-Norwegian PM Brundtland awarded Asian 'Nobel Prize'

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Former Norwegian premier Gro Harlem Brundtland was named Wednesday as the first recipient of the Tang Prize, touted as Asia's version of the Nobels, for her work as the "godmother" of sustainable development.

Brundtland was awarded the debut [prize](#), created by one of Taiwan's richest men with a \$100 million donation, with winners in three other categories to be announced this week.

The winner in each category will receive Tw\$50 million (\$1.7 million), with Tw\$40 million in cash and the remainder in a grant—a richer purse than the eight million Swedish kronor (\$1.2 million) that comes with a Nobel Prize.

Brundtland was awarded the biennial prize for "her innovation, leadership and implementation" of [sustainable development](#), of which she was known as the "godmother", said Yuan T. Lee, chair of the award selection committee.

A former director general of the World Health Organisation, she also headed the UN World Commission on Environment and Development. The commission's work paved the way to the first Earth Summit, which led to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases.

Winners in the three other categories—biopharmaceutical science, Sinology (the study of China) and "rule of law"—will also be unveiled

daily from Thursday to Saturday.

"The Tang Prize is not supposed to compete with the Nobel Prize but to make up for what it is short of," Lee, himself a winner of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1986, told reporters.

Nobels are awarded in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and peace.

Named after China's Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907), the Asian prize was founded by Samuel Yin in 2012 with a donation of Tw\$3 billion.

Yin, head of the sprawling Ruentex business empire which has invested heavily in China, said he had fulfilled one of his biggest dreams with his donation.

"I hope that the prize will encourage more research that is beneficial to the world and humankind...but I also hope the prize would help promote the Chinese culture to the world," he said.

Yin has said he will donate 95 percent of his wealth to charity during his lifetime. His net assets are estimated by Forbes magazine at \$4.5 billion.

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