

Israel celebrates after chemistry Nobel win

5 October 2011

Israel's [Nobel chemistry laureate Dan Shechtman](#) on Wednesday said his prize for the discovery of quasicrystals should be a cause for celebration for scientists across the world.

"This celebration is not only for the Technion and the State of Israel, but also for [science](#) in the entire world," he told reporters at a [press conference](#) in the northern port city of Haifa.

"There are currently thousands of scientists who are researching the topic I opened, and I'm sure that everyone sees in the prize their achievement as well, and they deserve to, because if it were not for these thousands of scientists, this science would not be where it is today."

Shechtman scooped the 2011 Nobel chemistry prize for his discovery of quasicrystals some 30 years ago.

"This is really a great day, for me personally -- though I think I'm taking it easiest, if I compare it to the excitement around me -- and truly a great day for science."

Following the announcement, Israeli officials from across the political spectrum were lining up to congratulate the Technion professor, who is the 10th Israeli to win a [Nobel prize](#) and the fourth to take the award for chemistry.

"I want to congratulate you in the name of the citizens of Israel for your win, which reflects the intellect of our people," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in remarks communicated by his office.

"Every citizen in Israel is happy today, and every Jew in the world is proud," he said.

President Shimon Peres, himself a [Nobel laureate](#), said Shechtman's win had given "a great gift" to the people of Israel.

"I don't exactly know what your field of expertise is,

but I saw that it involves diamonds. Today, you are the jewel in the crown," he said.

"You serve as an example to the younger generation: you show how a thinking, diligent and brave person can uncover mysteries. In the name of the State of Israel, I salute you and tell you how proud we are of you."

Education Minister Gideon Saar said Shechtman's achievements were "a source of national pride for the higher education system," with similar sentiments expressed by Science Minister Daniel Hershkowitz.

"Shechtman's winning the Nobel is not only an amazing personal achievement for him, but more proof that the State of Israel is a scientific and technological power," he said.

"As someone who knows him and his talents, his winning a Nobel does not surprise me."

Defence Minister Ehud Barak said Shechtman's achievement was evidence of "the rare human resource in Israel and the keystone to our national strength," his office said.

And Technion President Professor Peretz Lavie said the award marked another great achievement for Israel's science community.

"This is a day of celebration for the Technion and for Israeli science," he told public radio.

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