

CONFERENCE REPORT

55th Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau (Germany) 26 June to 1 July, 2005

At a reception by the Press Secretary Ms. Regine Lahme for the journalists attending this year's Lindau Meeting I noticed that **Indian Science Cruiser** is a very familiar name with the organisers of the meeting and I was perhaps one of the most old-standing member of the group of reporters who are invited to cover the meeting. I have been doing this regularly since 1990 and sending my reports to the Indian Science Cruiser.

As the pattern of the meeting has not changed much over the years I do not wish to bore the readers by repeating what I wrote earlier but just submit a new group photograph of the laureates and point out some novel features of the latest meeting.

The Lindau meetings are primarily of interest to promising young students of science for inspiration and for possibilities of advancement in their careers. Others, like the author of this report, remain at the periphery and can satisfy their intellectual curiosity by listening to first rate minds. To mark the Einstein Year, an interdisciplinary meeting covering all three disciplines, Physics, Chemistry and Medicine, was held this year. As a result both the number of laureates and the number of students were higher than usual: A total of 44 Nobel Laureates and over 700 students from 54 countries came. More and more countries were interested in sending their young scientists to Lindau but there was a stiff competition to get selected I was told. About 9000 students the world over expressed their interest in coming to Lindau out of which only about 700 could do so. Because of the heavy lecture programme and the large number of participants, the contact between the students and their idols was not as easy as on earlier occasions it seemed to me. The students were, however, repeatedly urged to take the initiative and ask questions to the laureates. It was further pointed out that there was an alumni data base on the internet through which young scientists who come to Lindau could keep contact with each other in the future. About 24 advanced Indian students were finally

selected from the names forwarded by the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology. There were 17 other Indian students who came to Lindau from US and European research institutes so that the total was 41. For comparison, the number of students from the following countries were: China 33, Germany 201, USA 77, Russian Federation 24, Pakistan 6.

This year's meeting was marked by the absence of the charming President of the Governing Body (Kuratorium), Countess Sonja Bernadotte whose husband died last year. Sonja was ably represented by her son and daughter: Count Björn and Countess Bettina.

Information about this year's meeting, including the text of some of the lectures, is available from the website www.lindau-nobel.de. Nevertheless we give below part of the daily programme.

Monday, 27 June

Aaron Ciechanover (2004), Haifa, Israel: **Why Proteins have to die so we Shall Live?**

Round Table Discussion: **Evolution of Matter, Universe and Life** - Speakers: Werner Arber (1978), Christian de Duve (1974), Manfred Eigen (1967), John B. Fenn (2002), Masatoshi Koshiba (2002), Rudolf Marcus (1992), Martin Veltman (1999).

Robert Richardson (1996), Ithaca, USA: **Examples of some Multi-Disciplinary Research.**

Kurt Wüthrich (2002), Zurich, Switzerland: **From Genome to Proteome - Impact on Biological and Biomedical Research.**

Tuesday, 28 June

David Gross (2004), Santa Barbara, USA: **The Future of Physics.**

Round Table Discussion: **Biology in the Post-genomic Era**.

Speakers: Günter Blobel (1999), Sir Aaron Klug (1982), Christiane Nusslein-Vollhard (1995), Hamilton O. Smith (1978), Kurt Wüthrich (2002).

Ricardo Giacconi (2002), Washington, USA: Basic



Upper Row Standing left to right: Eigen, Wüthrich, Duve, Lee, Rowland, Richardson, Wilczek, Kohn, Josephson, Smith, Giaver, Mackinnon, Arber, Ernst.

Middle Row Standing from left to right: Osheroff, Klitzing, Veltman, Klug, Mullis, Bloembergen, MacDiarmid, Lipscomb, Nüsslein-Vollhard, Wieschaus, Crutzen, Karle, Nirenberg, Ciechanover, Fenn

Sitting from left to right: Ramsey, Koshiba, Townes, Graf Björn, Graf Bettina, Graf Christian, Curl, Marcus, Heeger, Giacconi.

Legend for the Group Photograph 2005 (Photo: Annette Jordan)

and Applied Research. Sir Peter Mansfield (2003), Nottingham, UK: **Real Time MRI Echo — planar Imaging.**

Manfred Eigen (1967), Göttingen, Germany: **What is Life-Now?**

Wednesday 29 June

Frank Wilczek (2004), Cambridge, USA: **The Universe is a Strange Place.**

Round Table Discussion: **Energy Shortfall and Global Warming .**

Speakers: Nicholas Bloembergen (1981), Paul Crutzen (1995), David Gross (2004), Sir Harold Kroto (1996), Sherwood F Rowland (1995), Walter Kohn (1998).

Günter Blobel (1999), New York, USA: **Transport into the Nucleus.**

Sir Harold Kroto(1996): Brighton, UK: **2010 a Nanospace Odyssey.**

Thursday 30 June

Peter Agre(2003) Baltimore, USA: Aquaporin Water Channels: **From Atomic Structure to Clinical Medicine.**

Paul Lauterbur (2003) Urbana, USA: **From Molecules to Mice to Man and back again.**

Marshall Nirenberg (1968), Bethesda, USA: **The Initial Strategy for Constructing Part of the Nervous System of Drosophila.**

Roderick MacKinnon (2003), New York, USA: **Ion Channels: Life's Electronic Hardware.**

Walter Kohn (1998), Santa Barbara, USA: **Near-sightedness of Electronic Structure.**

Klaus von Klitzing (1985), Stuttgart, Germany: **Einstein's Nobel Prize and Modern Nanoelectronics.**

In addition to the above list, there were 24 lectures by the Nobel laureates, accompanied by discussion held in parallel sessions during the week.

On the last day, at the end of the boat trip to Mainau, it was announced that the 56th Meeting of Nobel Prize winners will be held from June 25 to June 30, 2006. The topic will be chemistry.

Vienna

3 July 2005.

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