



Dr. Tetsu Nakamura's achievement The 24th Fukuoka Prize Grand Prize laureate

Dr. Tetsu Nakamura, the Grand Prize laureate of the 24th Fukuoka Prize in 2013, has sadly passed away on the 4th December 2019.

For a long time he had delivered international aid work through providing medical treatment, land reclamation in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

He was born in Fukuoka City and spent his time in Fukuoka city while he was in junior high school to university. He had a strong connection with the city.

In the occasion of receipt of his Grand Prize in 2013, he engaged with many people in Fukuoka in the events such as the Award ceremony, public lectures and school visits.

The special panel exhibition will be held to remember Dr. Tetsu Nakamura's achievement.

2013年（第24回）福岡アジア文化賞大賞 中村哲氏の功績



Grand Prize 2013

NAKAMURA Tetsu

Japan

Medical Doctor (Executive Director of PMS (Peace Japan Medical Services), Representative

of Peshawar-kai in Pakistan and Afghanistan)

Born September 15, 1946 (aged 66)

For 30 years, Dr. Tetsu Nakamura has been taking the lead in medical services, land reclamation and social welfare for the sick, the poor and the vulnerable in Pakistan and Afghanistan. His profound thoughts, speeches and written work, built upon first-hand experience, have been highly praised worldwide as an intellectual means to create true peace, by seeking for cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect.

BIOGRAPHY

1946	Born in Fukuoka, Japan
1973	Kyushu University School of Medicine
1973-75	Hizen National Mental Hospital
1975-80	Omuta Laborers' Hospital
1982	Medical Specialist in Neurology
1984	Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (DTM&H), Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, England
1984-94	Head, Leprosy Department, Peshawar Mission Hospital, Pakistan
1984-	Representative, Peshawar-kai in Pakistan and Afghanistan
1986-98	Advisor, Japan-Afghan Medical Services (JAMS), Pakistan and Afghanistan
1998-2002	Director, Peace Japan Medical Services (PMS)
2002-	Executive Director, PMS

AWARD CITATION

For 30 years, Dr. Tetsu Nakamura has devoted himself to the medical treatment, land reclamation and local welfare of poor and vulnerable people in Pakistan and Afghanistan. His thoughts, speeches and written work based on his first-hand experiences in those countries aim at enhancing cross-cultural understanding and respecting different cultures. His work has been highly praised internationally as providing an intellectual basis for building genuine peace.

Dr. Nakamura was born in Fukuoka City in 1946. After graduating from Kyushu University School of Medicine in 1973, he worked as a medical doctor in hospitals in Japan. In 1984, he moved to Peshawar Mission Hospital in the capital city of North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Ever since, starting with leprosy and intestinal infectious diseases which are common among the poor, he has widened his working sphere even to refugee camps and villages in the mountains (Medicine Beyond Borders). He was also involved in digging 1,600 wells in Afghanistan in order to tackle droughts which have happened with increasing frequency since the beginning of this century (A Doctor Digs Wells), and in building a 25.5 km canal to carry water from the Kunar River (A Doctor Builds an Irrigation Canal). Approximately 15,000 ha of farm land has been recovered or newly reclaimed. Irrigation construction work has produced employment opportunities which have encouraged refugees to come home, and rehabilitation of their farm land has enabled them to regain their peaceful farming life. The number of people benefitted is estimated at over half a million.

Dr. Nakamura has never limited his work to his commitment to providing medical services and taking initiatives in international cooperation as the Representative of Peshawar-kai in Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the Journal of Peshawar-kai, and in newspapers and magazines, he also publishes his thoughts which were developed from his deep insight into Islam and the contemporary world through his experiences, and he makes endless efforts to address people about the necessity of social reform by way of non-violent means (A Doctor's Perspective from the Border, Bombardment and 'Rehabilitation', Unarmed Volunteers). He has published more than ten books which are well-written and easily readable, and present a comparative cultural theory based on the situation in Afghanistan. These books persuade readers to view the world from a different angle and to put themselves on the same side as the local people when thinking about it.

A sustained intellectual endeavor to create a better society, on the basis of profound understanding of different cultures, achieved through comparing one's own culture to others and so reconsidering it, is a fundamental principle of international cooperation. In his work, Dr. Nakamura has made it his highest priority to respect local residents and their culture, which is indeed the original and true essence of cross-cultural understanding and international cooperation. For 30 years, Dr. Tetsu Nakamura has exemplified the very spirit of the Fukuoka Prize which was founded in order to contribute to the promotion of culture, mutual understanding



Visiting Pakistan as a doctor

Visiting Pakistan as a doctor— his time supporting through medical aid

Dr. Tetsu Nakamura was born in 1976 in Fukuoka City, and spent his childhood in the Wakamatsu ward, Kitakyushu City, and Koga City. After graduating from the medical department in Kyushu University, he worked as a physician in several Japanese hospitals. He was later appointed to work in the Mission Hospital in Peshawar, the state capital of Pakistan, located in the Northwest Frontier Province.

The turning point in his life came in 1978 when he was still working in a Japanese hospital. Dr. Nakamura served as a physician for a mountaineering team traversing the Hindu Kush mountain range between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He originally joined as he had an interest in the rare species of butterflies that inhabited the region, however, what he witnessed was the harsh reality that the local people faced there.

The locals came to see Dr. Nakamura after hearing the rumor of a visit by a physician. However, he felt powerless as he could not provide support to the people seeking his help. Six years later, he heard about a post for a dispatch physician in Pakistan in 1984. He had a wife and a small child then, but he made his decision to work as a doctor in Peshawar.

After being appointed as a dispatch physician, he treated Afghan refugees in both refugee camps and mountainous regions while providing treatment for the patients with Hansen's disease and enteric infections, which were prevalent in the poor. He started providing regular medical treatment for Afghan refugees from 1986 onwards.

In 1991, Dr. Nakamura established the first general practice in Dara-e-Noor, the eastern mountainous area in Afghanistan. The Peace Medical Service (PMS) Clinic was built as the base hospital in Peshawar. From then on, he provided medical treatment at three satellite clinics in doctorless villages in the eastern mountains.

Afghanistan was troubled with armed uprisings against the government, military interventions by foreign countries and civil war when Dr. Nakamura was appointed to work there. Of course, it was the normal citizens living there who suffered most from these hardships. The only choice they had was to evacuate to refugee camps and other mountainous areas as they lost their lands because of the conflict.

Dr. Nakamura had worked and provided medical treatment from the viewpoint of those civilians, however, his journey was interrupted by a series of hardships including the Pakistan government demanding the closure of his clinics, the loss of medical specialists due to the increasing need which was unrelated to medical expertise such as irrigation work, and so on.

Despite being forced to close his clinics due to the conflict, Dr. Nakamura continued to examine 73,000 people in his clinics. He then moved his focus from medical treatment to irrigation work. However, even now his clinics have been treating many patients and supporting local staff, including female workers with their emphasis on medical education.



Dr. Tetsu Nakamura on the left in the front row



The fight against drought

One irrigation channel worth more than 100 medical clinics

Dr. Nakamura continuously worked to provide medical aid in Afghanistan for many years. His idea that you could not save people's lives there only by medical support grew stronger gradually.

The great drought of 2000 in Afghanistan was the trigger of this idea.

Afghanistan has a strong image of conflict. However, originally more than 80% of the national population were farmers. It is a traditionally agricultural country. Due to the great drought, Afghanistan's rich crop lands were entirely turned into desert, causing famine on a massive scale. Many people have suffered from starvation, and tens of millions have fled these lands. It has been reported that several million people have died due to starvation.

People could not grow grain without water and did not have anything to eat. Therefore, they deserted land for a better place. Entire villages just vanished.

Many people were suffering from malnutrition, and died from dysentery due to the contaminated drinking water. The doctors could do nothing to save those young children dying because of what the great drought had caused.

They were overwhelmed with the thought that they could have saved many people from dying if they had only had clean water and food.

Even though they had medicine, they couldn't give it to everyone.

Needless to say, the medicine could not relieve their thirst. Dr. Nakamura thus started a new project focusing on digging a well near the PMS clinics after reaching to the idea that rather than medical treatment, the most important thing was to secure clean water and food.



Dr. Nakamura driving a power shovel

‘One irrigation channel worth more than 100 medical clinics’

They took on the challenge of digging a well for the first time in May 2005. It apparently took one month to hit the first water source. In the beginning, they dug around 1,600 wells for drinking water, as well as 13 wells that were 5 meters in diameter for irrigation. They then restored the Karez, the traditional underground water channels, in 38 different locations. They referred to the idea of the Iranian Qanat, a method of using spring water, for this project.

Secondly, they focused on the water coming from the mountains. In 2003, everyone in the project, including Dr. Nakamura, started to work on building the Marwarid irrigation channel in order to draw water from the abundant Kunar River for agricultural use. Despite not being construction experts, they watched and learned from others to construct a channel that was 25.5 kilometers long.

This irrigation channel, which was completed in seven years, restored a 3,000-hectare area of farmland. Around 150,000 people's lives were saved as a result. As the construction of the irrigation required approximately 500 people a day to work, it created around 70,000 jobs during those seven years. The construction of the irrigation channel contributed not only to securing a stable source of water, but also to the settlement of the local people and their public security.

Dr. Nakamura used the Yamada Weir from Asakura City in Fukuoka Prefecture as inspiration for the design of the irrigation channel, as they were facing difficulties in obtaining heavy machinery as well as building materials such as concrete. The Yamada Weir is an irrigation channel from the Chikugo River built in the Edo era in Japan, and it has been continuously providing water to the surrounding land.

The reason why he borrowed the design of the Yamada Weir was because it was not constructed as a temporary flood control measure. In Afghanistan you could not easily find heavy machinery, so they choose to apply the gabion and wickerwork methods, which were both traditional Japanese flood control techniques, rather than relying on modern construction methods using concrete and steel. By doing so, the local people could repair the system themselves and could even build other irrigation channels in other areas by copying the design.



The gabion method



July 2009



August 2009



April 2012

The land has been transformed into a place full of water and vegetation!



Jalibaba in 2003

The Jalibaba irrigation channel (2009)

The Green Ground Project

The village restoration project coming to close.

Agricultural projects are one area that the Peshawar Kai, Dr. Nakamura’s NGO group, focuses on after medical and irrigation projects.

The project to construct a 25.5 kilometer-long irrigation channel created employment; water has returned to the area and the ground sprouted vegetation with the completion of the irrigation project. The next major projects were helping the locals become self-sufficient and building a hometown where farmers could live peacefully.

In 2002, The Peace Medical Service launched the Green Ground Project as a long term village restoration plan in parallel with the irrigation project. Based on this project, they started practical aid work with the aim of restoring villages so people could be self-sufficient. The plan included constructing buildings that would form the core of the community, such as schools, mosques and homes, which were all essential to the local people.

Dr. Nakamura said; ‘We can only start living peacefully after having a homeland. When your family can eat well, then you can live in your hometown safely. That is what we call peace.’

Now children in the village study at school, and people harvest crops such as carrots, potatoes, Chinese radishes, turnips and spinach in their fields.

The water flows through the irrigation system that Dr. Nakamura took many years to build. The land is permeated with water, people returned to the mountain and their villages were restored. By the time a new village was completed at the terminating point of the irrigation channel, Afghanistan could be covered in vegetation.

The Llanpur Plain: an endless desolate desert (in 2003)

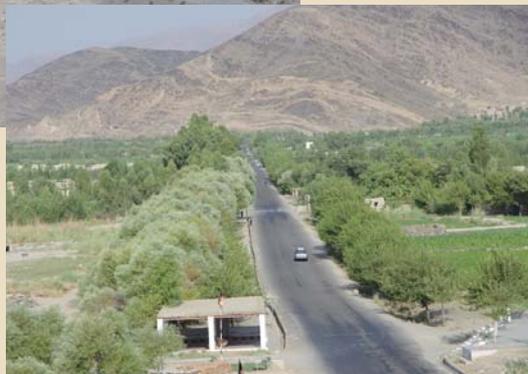


“The Llanpur Valley in the Kunar River Basin”

Willow, mulberry and olive trees spread across the valley.

The water flows on across the dried land, and the plants grow at the river sides. People returned to the fertile land, then the farming was restarted. Villages are being restored one by one.

A cauliflower farm



The Llanpur Plain after regrowth of plants and flowing water (in 2012)



Local farmers working in their fields

Public Lecture

Securing Water of Life in Afghanistan Thirty Years of International Medical Aid

■Date: Saturday, September 14, 13:00-15:00 ■Venue: Event Hall B2F, ACROS Fukuoka, 15th floor Lecture Hall, Municipal Office
■Participants: 700

Global warming is not somebody else's problem. Re-thinking the relationship between nature and humans

There is a common saying in Afghanistan that “We can live without money, but we cannot live without snow”. In this agricultural country, water from melted snow brought blessing to the people in the past centuries. Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic nation where tribal autonomy and sense of territory prevail. The geographic factors also obstruct central government control, and there is a huge divide between the rich and the poor. In 1984, Peshawar-kai started medical treatment for Hansen's disease patients in Pakistan. It was not easy to understand the feelings of patients who spoke a different language, different religion, and different lifestyles. We foreigners tend to make superior-inferior or right-wrong judgment for things with which we are not familiar. It is a mistake that we tend to fall into without realizing it is merely due to the cultural difference. To avoid falling into this mistake, we made sure that everyone in our organization accepts the local culture and customs, including religion, as they are.

After the withdrawal of the Soviet military that invaded in 1979 during the Afghan War, the Gulf War broke out in 1991, which pulled out all international organizations from Afghanistan. Fifteen years had passed since the launch of our activities, during which we established the

organization, built and maintained our own hospital, as well as a system capable of continuing the medical practice as long as we received resupplies from Japan. After the Taliban regime came back, the public security improved dramatically, making unarmed travel possible. However, the area was devastated by the drought of the century in the spring of 2000. Twelve million people were victimized, putting 5 million people on the verge of starvation, and 1 million people to the verge of death from starvation. We felt a great sense of helplessness because the medical technology can heal neither thirst nor hunger. So we started digging wells and continued until we secured 1,600 wells to ensure sources of drinking water.

Then, in 2001, one day after the 9-11 terrorist attack in New York, then US President George W. Bush declared an air strike on Afghanistan. We distributed 1,800 tons of flour and cooking oil for more than two hundred thousand evacuees in the capital city. These activities would not have been possible without the support of the courageous Afghans who were willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their fellow citizens. After the Taliban regime collapsed and the country was occupied by the US military, the poppy cultivation was resumed to an extensive scale, and in the next few years Afghanistan became a drugoriented nation producing 93% of the drugs in the world.

Major droughts, along with global warming, is an ongoing problem. This is not somebody else's problem. To ensure agricultural water, we prioritized the building of irrigation channels for the clinic, but they needed to be sustainable without the local people having to spend money. When I realized that the Afghan water intake technology is similar to the Japanese technology, we employed the slanting weir used for the Yamada Dam at Chikugo River that was completed about 220 years ago, and the gabion method of bamboo bags packed with rocks used as seawalls. These efforts led to a recovery of the agricultural field in the next few years. The only two wishes of the local farmers: being able to have three meals a day, and living peacefully with their family in their hometown. Despite the 35 years of war and starvation, there are no grim expressions. In some ways, we may look more depressed. “Money will bring us happiness”. “If we have weapons we can protect ourselves”. Sooner or later, such superstitions will fall apart. Now we need to ask ourselves again, “What is the relationship between humans and nature”?



School Visit

Date: Monday, September 2, 11:10-16:35

■Venue: Chikushi Jogakuen Junior High School & High School Lecture hall

Date: Wednesday, September 11, 10:00-11:40

■Venue: Seinan Gakuin High School Gymnasium

Date: Friday, September 13, 14:40-17:00

■Venue: Fukuoka Prefectural High School Gymnasium



Fukuoka Prefectural High School Gymnasium



Chikushi Jogakuen



Fukuoka Prefectural High School Gymnasium



Seinan Gakuin High School Gymnasium

Dr. Nakamura visited three schools to speak to more than 4,500 students. In the speech, he warned against the recent trend of standardization, and emphasized the importance of willingness to acknowledge diversity. While presenting the drought situation in Afghanistan, the Grand Prize winner pointed out that the water problem emerges from the people's involvement in nature, and that what is happening in Afghanistan could well happen in Japan. He also shared an episode of one occasion when the farmers rejoiced in the hope of life when all the irrigation channels were opened. Dr. Nakamura also put the following question to the students: "In spite of the constant suffering, the local people seldom have a sad face. Japanese people seem to look more depressed. Perhaps the more people have money, status, jobs, and entertainment, the more they get depressed. The urban space gives people an illusion of power to do anything at will. Isn't now the time to think about the relationship between Mother Nature and human beings, and to ask ourselves, what is the fundamental way of living?"

In response to the question asked by one of the students in Chikushi Jogakuen High School, "What is necessary for achieving something you want to accomplish?" he answered, "What is important is not guts or belief. Rather, it is important to have a heart able to forgive, to accept, and to love".

In Seinan Gakuin High School, where Dr. Nakamura was asked a question, "What difficulties did you have in communicating with the local people", he answered firmly, "We had misunderstandings all the time because of differences in language, customs, and religion. But I always believed that we will be able to find something to share with each other, as long as we worked together".

In Fukuoka Prefectural High School, where Dr. Nakamura himself is a member of the 17th class of graduating students, some students asked for some advice about their career options.

When asked, "What is important for someone who wants to become a medical doctor?" Dr. Nakamura's answer was, "A medical doctor should not be merely a technician. You also need to learn about things that may seem unrelated to medical practice".

Dr. Nakamura's lecture was a great opportunity for the youth, who will be the leaders of the next generation, to expand their world view.

Acceptance Speech



Grand Prize NAKAMURA Tetsu

Human beings are a part of Mother Nature. We must find ways to live in harmony, between nature and humans, and among peoples

I am thankful and delighted to receive this honor and to become one of the recipients of the Fukuoka Prize. Afghanistan, for the last 35 years, has suffered from conflicts and interventions from foreign countries, alongside large-scale droughts and floods that have led to a gradual loss of habitable environments. The impact of climate change and global warming is overwhelming. The once agricultural nation is now suffering from starvation, and their sufficiency rate has decreased by half. Since international aid agencies did not prioritize the water shortage, we as a medical organization, had no choice but to secure drinking water sources ourselves, building water facilities and water intake works. We are now about to develop an exemplar model of rehabilitation by securing 16,500 hectares of inhabitable land for 650,000 farmers.

War will never be the solution. Military interventions have only worsened situations. This is not a problem unique to Afghanistan. The aggression dominating the international community allows little room for diversity, and the Asian world is suffering from poverty. Not only are the people deprived of food, but also of their unique traditions, their land, their dignity, and their harmony. “Moral and spiritual poverty” is prevalent in pursuit of economic development at any cost. Moreover, the false illusion that humans can have absolute control over nature will surely bring fatal devastation to the world. The Tower of Babel, in its indifference to nature, will soon collapse. Human beings are also a part of Mother Nature. We will not be able to survive unless we seek ways to live in harmony, both between nature and humans, and among peoples, in every element of our activities.

I was deeply encouraged by what the other laureates have said in the past – and realized I was not alone on this path. Although the voices may be small now, I pray that they will one day become a roaring tide.



What is the Fukuoka Prize?

～ Background of the Fukuoka Prize ～

Asia is home to a diversity of ethnic groups, languages, and cultures, which coexist with and depend on each other. These diverse cultures have served not only as guardians of the priceless legacy of our long history and tradition, but also as sources of inspiration.

However, in the current era of globalization, there is a danger that Asian cultures may lose their distinctive features due to the encroaching homogenization of culture. It is therefore vital to preserve, develop, and promote the harmonious coexistence of the diverse Asian cultures.

As Japan's cultural gateway, Fukuoka City has since antiquity played a significant role in promoting exchanges with other regions of Asia. This history, and a determination to promote and understand the distinctive cultures of Asia, and to further peace, inspired the inauguration of the Fukuoka Prize (formerly known as the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize) in 1990 through collaboration between academia, businesses, and the city authorities. Since then, there have been many prize recipients from almost every region of Asia.

Since cultural exchange looks to the future, it is not enough merely to preserve cultures with long histories and ancient traditions. New things emerge from the midst of change: it is necessary to observe them, respect them, learn from them, and build upon them. This is the aspiration of Fukuoka City and its citizens, as we strive to become a center for cultural exchange in Asia.

The Fukuoka Prize will continue to be a means of showing respect to those who have made outstanding contributions to academia, arts, and culture in Asia. We intend, together with the people of Fukuoka, to advertise to the world through our city, the diversity and the distinctiveness of Asian culture.

Objective

The Fukuoka Prize was established to honor outstanding achievements by individuals or groups/organizations in preserving and creating the unique and diverse cultures of Asia. The aim is to foster and increase awareness of the value of Asian cultures as well as to establish a framework within which Asians can learn from, and share with, each other.

Prize Categories

Grand Prize

To be presented to an individual or group who has made outstanding contributions to the preservation and creation of Asian culture, and has demonstrated the significance of Asian culture to the world through the internationality, universality, popularity, and/or creativity of their work.

Academic Prize

To be presented to an individual or group who has made outstanding achievements in the field of Asian studies, contributing to the world's understanding of Asia. It covers various social sciences, such as history, archaeology, cultural anthropology, economics, and political science.

Arts and Culture Prize

To be presented to an individual or group who has made outstanding contributions to the cultivation and/or advancement of the unique and diverse arts and culture of Asia. It covers fields such as fine arts, literature, music, drama, dance, film, architecture, and traditional and ethnic culture.

Management

Secretariat of the Fukuoka Prize Committee c/o Asian Partnership Section International Affairs Dept.,

Organizing Bodies

Fukuoka City, Fukuoka City International Foundation



Fukuoka Prize website
<http://fukuoka-prize.org/en/>

This document is based on the 24th Fukuoka Prize report and the article on the Fukuoka Prize website.