A commemorative lecture for Abel Prize - John Milnor

○ The Abel Prize is an international prize to celebrate a bicentennial birth of mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802 ~ 1829) whom Norway is proud of that the prize is presented by the King of Norway every year. This prize is considered as the most authoritative and honorable prize together with Fields Medal in mathematics. There have been total 13 winners since the first winner was selected in 2003.

Compared to Fields Medal which is often regarded as Nobel Prize in mathematics, Abel Prize is awarded regarding achievements in a lifetime every year unlike Fields Medal given every 4 years regarding achievements before 40. In some respects, Abel Prize is for elder mathematicians while Fields Medal is for young mathematicians. Also, some people are tied up after the award among Fields Medalists otherwise the entire achievement of Abel Prize-winner tends to be equal to or even exceed the Fields Medalist's one. Therefore, I'd say it seems more appropriate for Abel Prize to be called Nobel Prize in mathematics rather Fields Medal in that the mathematical contribution and authority, the standard of evaluation and the scale of a cash prize.

○ John W. Milnor (born in 1931, American, a distinguished professor in Stony Brook University)

John Milnor is a highly influential mathematician in twentieth century. He won Abel Prize in 2011 due to the pioneering discovery and astonishing accomplishments in the fields of Topology, Geometry and Differential Topology. He also won Fields Medal in 1962 and Wolf Prize in 1989. John Milnor is also famous as innovative achievements in K-theory, dynamical system and his diverse books for graduate and undergraduate students which have been considered as the best examples in textbooks.

As one of his representative accomplishments, he showed that 7-dimensional sphere admits an exotic differential structure in 1956. After that, he together with Michel Kervaire (1927 ~ 2007) also proved 7-dimensional sphere have all 15 distinct differential structures (if considering orientation, 28 types). Besides, he is also well known as the study of an isolated singularities of complex hyper surfaces, where he especially invented and developed topological invariants such as Milnor fibration and Milnor number for studying them.

The Abel Lecture
Professor John Milnor of Princeton University will give the Abel Lecture at Seoul ICM 2014 with the title "Topology through Four Centuries". The Abel Lecture will take place on Friday the 15th of August from 6:00 -7:00 p.m. in 3F Hall D, COEX Convention Center and will be opened to everybody.

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