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Stem cell scientist Dr Yoshiki Sasai is dead

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Singapore: Dr Yoshiki Sasai, former Director of Japan's RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB) and a stem cell scientist best known for his attempts to grow human organ like structures through stem cell engineering, has died in Japan reportedly by committing suicide.

In 2010, Dr Sasai received Osaka Science Prize for his work on in vitro recapitulation of brain development.

In 2012, Dr Sasai received global attention for developing precursor of a human eye in the lab, called as an optic cup, a 550 micrometres in diameter and contained multiple layers of retinal cells including photoreceptors. The 'lab eye' gave hopes for repairing damaged eyes in the clinic in future.

Dr Sasai died at the age of 52.