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THE
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EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE VITAL FOR HONG KONG, SAYS VICE-CHANCELLOR

Educational excellence is needed to keep Hong Kong competitive on the world stage, the Vice-Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Charles Kao Kuen, said at the 45th Congregation of the University today.

To this end, the Chinese University -- which enters its 30th anniversary next year -- has strived to develop strong linkages with the finest universities around the world and improve the quality of research in various academic disciplines.

He also urged graduates and students to "continue the good tradition of helping to shape (the) University and build a better Hong Kong", as the University "marches confidently into adulthood".

On the Chinese University's extensive academic linkages, Prof. Kao said a Centre for Hong Kong-American Educational Exchanges had recently been set up, in addition to a 10-year collaborative research programme on "South China Studies" with Yale University, and various joint research projects with prestigious universities in China, including the Peking University, Tsinghua University and Jiaotong University.

Such exchanges, said Prof. Kao, enabled the University to "calibrate" its standard against the best around the world.

On the development of research, Prof. Kao said both the science and medical faculties are undertaking biotechnology research, which would enable Hong Kong to develop a biotechnology infrastructure that supports new businesses. The Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology maintains close liaison with the industrial sector for commercialization of new products. Researches in information technology, computers and electronics will also help launch the local information-based industries and develop new services.

Speaking on new projects ahead, Prof. Kao said the campus-wide computer network would become operational next year. Others include: a new cancer research institute at the Prince of Wales Hospital, the teaching hospital for the University; and an Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

At today's congregation, the university's first batches of education and engineering graduates received their degrees.

A total of 1,618 graduates were awarded first degrees -- including 297 Bachelors of Arts, 327 Bachelors of Business Administration, 39 Bachelors of Education, 91 Bachelors of Engineering, four Bachelors of Medical Sciences, 128 Bachelors of Medicine and Bachelors of Surgery, 336 Bachelors of Science and 396 Bachelors of Social Science.

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Attachment: Copy of the speech by Prof. Kao