



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

Opening Ceremony of  
The Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology at the Chinese University

The Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology Ltd (HKIB), set up in 1988 to help develop a globally-connected biotechnical industry in Hong Kong, held its opening ceremony yesterday (February 25) in the Institute's new premises on the Chinese University campus in Shatin. The opening ceremony was officiated by the Chief Secretary, the Hon Sir David Ford.

HKIB was set up with a generous donation from the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, as a non-profit, independent R & D facility open to all tertiary education institutions in Hong Kong. The Institute occupies a site of 31,000 sq metres facing the Tolo Harbour. The new complex consists of an Administration & Research Building and a Residential Building for senior staff and overseas scientists.

Research at HKIB has so far focused on discovering new drugs based on oriental health concepts and materials, and pollution control by bio-processes, but it plans to expand into areas such as commercialisation of pharmaceutical and diagnostic products, nutrition and food industries.

In his welcoming speech, Professor Charles K Kao, Chairman of the Board of Directors of HKIB and the Vice-Chancellor of the Chinese University, mentioned that in the three years since HKIB was set up, it has already built up many linkages with business corporations and tertiary institutions in Hong Kong and overseas to attract joint ventures and technology transfer. Agreements signed with research institutes in mainland China and Taiwan also make HKIB an ideal link to the Asian biotechnical bases. The Institute welcomes more joint activities with local tertiary education sector and overseas industrialists for the development of biotechnical products targeted at the world market.

After the ceremony, guests were invited to tour the facilities and see demonstrations on two major projects. The joint venture with the multi-national Syntex Pharmaceuticals focuses on screening natural and synthetic compounds for their potentials as new drugs. Participated by scientists from The Chinese Academy of Sciences, it is the first pharmaceutical research joint effort by Hong Kong, China and USA, as well as the first time that Hong Kong has participated in a large-scale systematic pharmaceutical drug discovery programme.

Another project, which is funded by the Croucher Foundation, aims at developing new drugs for certain brain and cardiovascular diseases by transferring human genes into mouse fibroblast cells. The project is headed by Professor Dominic Lam, Honorary Director of HKIB jointly with several scientists from China.

Also attending the ceremony were Mr David Gairns, representing the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club; Sir Quo-wei Lee, Chairman of the Council of the Chinese University; Professor the Hon Wang Gungwu, Member of the Board of Directors of HKIB; and Professor Dominic Man-kit Lam, Honorary Director of HKIB.

February 25, 1992

Attachment: (1) Text of Speech by Professor Charles K Kao  
(2) Text of Speech by the Hon Sir David Ford  
(2) Photos of Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology