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HKUST hosts first Asian Physics Olympiad in Hong Kong

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The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) is hosting the grand physics competition in Asia – the 17th annual Asian Physics Olympiad (APhO) – for the first time in Hong Kong in the largest scale ever. This is also one of the many activities celebrating HKUST's 25th Anniversary.

APhO is an annual international physics competition organized for high school students in Asia, modeling after the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO). It aims to advance physics education of young people and strengthen interaction and cooperation amongst Asian physics academics, as well as to train and inspire teenagers who are highly talented in physics. In APhO 2016, each participating Asian country or region sends a team of eight secondary school students to contest in the competition, and Hong Kong is allowed to send two teams of representatives to participate in the competition since it is the host city this year. Contestants will take one theoretical and one experimental examination in which innovative physics questions are set by academics at HKUST.

HKUST is dedicated to nurturing science and technology talents. Over the years, the University has been commissioned by the Hong Kong Academy of Gifted Education (HKAGE) for many times to provide a series of enhancement courses in physics to student contestants who represent Hong Kong to take part in APhO and IPhO – nurturing 73 Gold, Silver and Bronze medalists in the two prestigious physics competitions. This year, about 200 secondary school students from 26 Asian countries and regions will compete in the physics contest – the largest scale since APhO was founded in Indonesia in 2000. APhO 2016 was made possible by the generous donations given by the Innovation and Technology Commission as well as Tin Ka Ping Foundation, among others.

APhO was kick-started today in an opening ceremony officiated by Mrs Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun, GBS, JP, Patron of APhO 2016; Ms Annie Choi Suk-han, Commissioner for Innovation and Technology of the HKSAR Government; Dr Catherine Chan Ka-ki, Deputy Secretary for Education of the HKSAR Government; Prof Tony F Chan, HKUST President and Honorary Chair of APhO 2016; Prof Leong-Chuan Kwek, President of APhO; Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Executive Director of HKAGE; Prof Ruiqin Zhang, President of the Physical Society of Hong Kong; and Prof Lap-Chee Tsui, President of the Academy of Sciences of Hong Kong.

HKUST President Prof Tony F Chan said, "We are delighted to have the opportunity to welcome a big band of young and talented scientific minds to HKUST for the first ever APhO in Hong Kong. It is especially special that this grand event is one of the highlights of our University's 25th anniversary celebration programs, as promoting research and education in basic sciences is one of our main missions. I hope this special occasion can showcase Hong Kong as a scientific and technological hub of Asia and nurture stronger enthusiasm for physics amongst pre-university students in the region."

Prof Michael Wong, Professor of Physics at HKUST and Chair of the 17th APhO Organizing Committee, said, "I hope that by the end of this event, all students will go home gaining broader perspectives on latest developments in physics and making lasting international friendships. It is also my conviction that the APhO experience can have life-changing impacts on many of them."

Besides, Senior Visiting Fellow of the HKUST Jockey Club Institute for Advanced Study Prof Kam-biu Luk, who received the Breakthrough Prize in 2016 for his measurement of the properties of the mysterious neutrinos, will give two talks titled "Neutrino and Their Properties" and "Fundamental Nature of Matter".

For more information of APhO 2016, please refer to <http://apho2016.ust.hk/index.php>.



Officiating guests of the 17th Asian Physics Olympiad



HKUST President Prof Tony F Chan delivers speech at the 17th Asian Physics Olympiad Opening Ceremony



Hong Kong team



Hong Kong team



Kyrgyzstan team



Saudi Arabia team



Prof Michael Wong (right) and members of Hong Kong team

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