

CE hosts Nobel Prize Winner and local scholars (with photo)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, hosted a luncheon for the winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, Professor James Watson, at Government House in the afternoon today (October 15), during which she introduced him to Hong Kong's exceptional environment for Innovation & Technology (I&T) and the measures she proposed in the Policy Address aiming to support the I&T development in Hong Kong. The Vice-Chancellor and President of Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Rocky Tuan, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of University of Hong Kong, Professor Paul Tam Kwong-hang, the Vice-President of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Professor Nancy Ip, and the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, also attended the luncheon. Professor Watson is a renowned American molecular biologist and geneticist. He was awarded the 1962 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine together with other scientists for their joint research in DNA.

Mrs Lam welcomed Professor Watson's visit to Hong Kong. In briefing Professor Watson on the strategy of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government on I&T development, she said that the Government is determined to develop Hong Kong into a knowledge-based economy and promote I&T development in all aspects in order to improve people's livelihood. Noting that Hong Kong's I&T development is supported by sound technological foundations and outstanding capability in scientific research with the convergence of top universities, research institutes and high-quality professional scientific research talent from around the world, she said that most important of all is the unique advantage of "One Country, Two Systems" and the city's proximity to the huge Mainland market that give Hong Kong the huge potential to become an international I&T hub.

Mrs Lam said to the guests that last year's Policy Address outlined the strategy of pushing ahead with I&T development at full steam in eight major areas, and committed significant resources for this purpose. The strategy has received wide recognition from various sectors and good progress has been made. In particular, the HKSAR Government launched the Technology Talent Admission Scheme to attract and nurture top-notch talent and the Technology Talent Scheme to subsidise research institutions and enterprises to recruit talent to carry out research and development activities, and train their existing staff to apply advanced technology for adding value to their businesses this year. In addition, Institut Pasteur from France, as well as the Guangzhou Institute of Biomedicine and Health and the Institute of Automation in Beijing under the Chinese Academy of Sciences have earlier expressed interest in joining the I&T clusters to be established at the Hong Kong Science Park, with one focusing on healthcare technologies and the other on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies. The RWTH Aachen University of Germany has also indicated its interest in joining recently. They will conduct more midstream and downstream research and development

(R&D) projects in collaboration with local universities and scientific research institutions to strengthen Hong Kong's R&D capabilities.

Mrs Lam said that the recently announced 2018 Policy Address is built on the current good progress and proposed to further promote the I&T development by injecting \$20 billion into the Research Endowment Fund set up by the Research Grants Council, launching a new Research Matching Grant Scheme with a total commitment of \$3 billion and setting up fellowship schemes to strengthen the pool of talent in research and I&T in Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government will also step up its effort in promoting re-industrialisation by setting up a \$2 billion "Re-industrialisation Funding Scheme" to subsidise manufacturers, on a matching basis, to set up smart production lines in Hong Kong. Furthermore, an additional allocation of \$2 billion will be provided for the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to identify suitable land in industrial estates for building manufacturing facilities required by the dedicated advanced manufacturing sector.

