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Stephen Hawking to Visit HKUST

World-renowned scientist and cosmologist Stephen Hawking will deliver a public lecture on "The Origin of the Universe" at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) on 15 June 2006 during his forthcoming visit to Hong Kong.

This will be the first visit to Hong Kong for Prof Hawking, who is currently Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the University of Cambridge.

Prof Hawking will discuss theories on the origin of the universe. He will explain how time can have a beginning and the progress made by cosmologists in an area which has traditionally belonged to theologians and philosophers.

The lecture, aiming at the general public, will be the centerpiece of the HKUST 15th Anniversary Distinguished Lecture Series, organized with other special events to mark the University's 15 years of excellence in developing itself into a leading international research university.



"It is a great honor for Hong Kong that we are able to invite Prof Hawking to deliver the Distinguished Lecture this year, and we are pleased that the occasion will be open to the public as well as to academics and university and secondary students. The lecture will also be broadcast over the internet so that Prof Hawking's innovative ideas on the universe can reach a wider audience," says Prof Shiu Yuen Cheng, HKUST Dean of Science.

The Distinguished Lecture will take place at a time when the University is engaging scholars of the utmost caliber to achieve the highest international level of scientific discovery and scholarship. Under the University's Strategic Plan: 2005-2020, a new Institute for Advanced Study will be established at HKUST to serve as a magnet for the brightest minds and young talents.

Recent distinguished visitors to the University include Prof Alexei Abrikosov, Winner of the 2003 Nobel Prize in Physics and Prof Samuel C C Ting, Winner of the 1976 Nobel Prize in Physics. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, 29 March 2006, Prof Yuan-Tseh Lee, President of Academia Sinica and 1986 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, will speak on "Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century".

Prof Hawking, considered to be one of the greatest scientific geniuses alive, was born in 1942 in Oxford, England. Despite being physically challenged by Lou Gehrig's disease, he has continued to intrigue the scientific world by his insightful thinking on time, space, black holes and the origin and future of the universe. In 1988, he wrote the worldwide bestseller *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, explaining to the general audience the evolution of his thinking about the universe in simple language.

He is the recipient of many awards, medals and prizes, including the Albert Einstein Award, the most prestigious in theoretical physics, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society, UK and Member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

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