



Press Release

To: Assignment Editor/Editor of Local News and Education Sections

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Professor Leo Poon: Wildlife Trade Boosts Risks of Human Infections from Animals

**“One Health” Concept should be Promoted to Balance Health of People,
Animals and Environment**

In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted much misery on people in Hong Kong and all over the world alike. Professor Leo Poon Lit-man, Professor and Division Head of Public Health Laboratory Sciences of LSK Faculty of Medicine at The University of Hong Kong, recounts the course of the pandemic in the latest episode of SCOM Talk Show produced by The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK).

Professor Poon remarked that economic development and convenient transportation have greatly increased the chances of human-wildlife interactions. This, coupled with the trade of various animals, have brought many unknown viruses into human society. In the long run, he believes that it is necessary to promote the concept of “One Health”, an approach to maintain a healthy balance among human beings, animals, and their shared environment, so as to reduce the threats posed by various species as well as to effectively control the spread of infectious diseases.

Professor Poon has spent more than 20 years researching the spread of diseases over the course of history and combatting different mutating influenza viruses, from the avian influenza outbreak in 1997 to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019.

“COVID-19 is likely to become an endemic disease in Hong Kong,” said Professor Poon in the latest episode of SCOM Talk Show in an interview with Professor Scarlet Tso and Professor Ronald Chiu, Dean and Associate Dean respectively of the School of Communication of HSUHK. “The concept of ‘One Health’ is critical to addressing zoonotic public health threats. Instead of just considering human health, we have to also strike an integrated balance between the well-being of animals and the environment.”

In the episode, Professor Poon also shared his experience in fighting zoonotic diseases, his predictions and views about the pandemic’s impact to the world, and his perception of the human-nature relationship. Please stay tuned to HSUHK’s social media channels for the latest updates on the programme.

Link: <https://youtu.be/uF8xBIW0SvY>



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Photo:



Photo 1: Professor Leo Poon (centre) shares his experiences on combatting different mutating influenza viruses as well as his predictions and views about the COVID-19 pandemic during the SCOM Talk Show.

Photo Download: <https://bit.ly/3RSO8hT>

About HSUHK

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) is a non-profit private liberal-arts-oriented university with five Schools (Business, Communication, Decision Sciences, Humanities and Social Science, and Translation and Foreign Languages) and around 6,000 full-time students. Adopting the unique “Liberal + Professional” education model, HSUHK is a residential institution which puts quality teaching and students’ all-round development as its highest priorities.

Aspiring to be a leading private university in the region, HSUHK features a primary focus on undergraduate education, top-quality faculty members, award-winning green campus facilities, innovative degree programmes, unique residential college system combining living and learning, interactive small class teaching, very close student-teacher relationship, RGC-funded impactful research, and excellent student development/support services. Listed among the top 200 worldwide for ‘Quality Education’ and ‘Decent Work and Economic Growth’ in Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2021, the University aims to nurture young talents with critical thinking, innovative minds, caring attitudes, moral values and social responsibility.

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