



(Yonhap Interview) Asia's rise, internationalization key strategy for No. 1 univ.: scholar

By Oh Seok-min

SEOUL, Nov. 9 (Yonhap) -- The combination of Asia's economic development and efforts to go global was a key to the meteoric rise of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), its president said Wednesday.

The school has drawn much attention from the international education circle as it topped the 2011 Asian university rankings by London-based education company Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), edging out a number of other renowned schools.

"The growth of Asia, including China and South Korea, is an advantage for us. The development of the overall economy and industries are important for particularly science and technology schools," Tony F Chan, the president of the HKUST, said in an interview with Yonhap News Agency.

"One of the reasons we are successful is that we started as a research university from day one. And to do that, we recruit global, and we try to find the best people from the world," he said.

More than 80 percent of the school's faculty members are from outside Hong Kong, and 20 percent of the students are from all over the world, including China, South Korea and Western countries, he added.

Chan said he is "envious" of top South Korean science and technology colleges because they can take advantage of the country's internationally renowned technology companies like Samsung, LG and Hyundai.

"Together with your culture that values education, the schools in South Korea can take advantage of the big names in shipbuilding, semiconductors, and even film and culture industries," he said, citing South Korea's major science-focused universities Pohang University of Science and Technology (POSTECH) and Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST).

"We don't want to be too big. We want to be good and small, maintaining our positioning to combine science, technology, business and social sciences. We want to increase our quality -- faculty, students and our programs," he said. "We are eager to give our students entrepreneurship to lead the next Apple, and next Google."

graceoh@yna.co.kr

(END)