

## \$400m bid for hi-tech hospital

By LANA WONG

A GROUP of Hongkong-trained doctors who emigrated to Canada have returned to the territory with ambitious plans to build a \$400 million hi-tech, specialist hospital.

The doctors have raised half the capital themselves, with another 25 per cent coming from low interest loans and the rest from business tycoon Mr Cheng Yutung.

The Buildings and Lands Department is considering a request for land at Wong Chuk Hang and sources say Mr Cheng is ready to pump in more cash if it is needed.

"Everything is ready save the site for the hospital," a source close to the project backers said.

The project is the brain-child of two leading Chinese-Canadian doctors, test-tube baby expert Dr George Woo, and kidney specialist Dr Paul Y. W. Tam.

The non profit-making hospital would be equipped with the latest facilities, dealing with specialist areas such as cardiology, ophthalmology, obstetrics, gynaecology and endocrinology.

It would be staffed by some locals and about 100

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## Doctors in \$400m bid for hi-tech hospital

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North American experts, mostly former Hongkong residents who have emigrated. They would fly into the territory on a regular basis as visiting physicians.

It is hoped the hospital could provide a forum for the exchange of medical technology and expertise.

But the biggest risk to the project's success is difficulty in finding a suitable site for the hospital.

According to the source, a planned completion date for the hospital has already been delayed by several months.

Although the Government is understood to have given the project its initial support, the Wong Chuk

Hang site is said to be the third under consideration.

The original choice, along Braemar Hill Road, is believed to have been ruled out because of environmental objections.

The second choice, on Lung Cheung Road, was rejected last summer because it would have required the relocation of a recently-completed Temporary Housing Area.

The backers are now discussing a site near Nam Fung Road, in Wong Chuk Hang, with the Government.

"The doctors were upset by the setbacks after they spent so much time and resources on studying the Lung Cheung Road site.

"The Wong Chuk Hang site is our last hope. I think they will abort the plan if this attempt fails."

The director of the Buildings and Lands Department, Mr Darwin Chen, said he did not know if plans to use the Wong Chuk Hang site would be successful, but pointed out that the area had been reserved for hospital use.

Although the Government had yet to receive a formal planning application, consultation was under way, he said.

The Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Elizabeth Wong Chien Chi-lien, said it was good to have private hospitals serving the community.