

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

#### HKETO Director visits Calgary for business promotion

Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (HKETO), Ms Emily Mo, visited Calgary from November 27 to 28 to promote Hong Kong as the best gateway to business opportunities in Mainland China and the rest of Asia.

In delivering a speech at the “Best of Best Competition for Hong Kong Startup Zone” organised by the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (Calgary Section) on November 27, Ms Mo introduced the vibrant start-up scene in Hong Kong. She welcomed start-ups in Calgary that are looking for medium-and-long-term new opportunities to consider using Hong Kong as their springboards to access the Asian market.

Ms Mo also talked about the latest situation in Hong Kong and remarked that the city remained a safe, open and welcoming cosmopolitan city. Although the social unrest in recent months has had a dampening effect on investment sentiment in Hong Kong, the fundamentals and institutional underpinning Hong Kong’s economy and society are strong.

During the visit, Ms Mo paid a courtesy call on Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi. She briefed him on the latest developments in Hong Kong and exchanged views with him on issues with mutual interests.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-visits-calgary-for-business-promotion.html>

### HONG KONG NEWS

#### CE visits Thailand and signs MoU on strengthening economic relations

The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Mrs Carrie Lam, on November 29 called on the Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr Prayut Chan-o-cha, and led a delegation to attend a high-level meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Dr Somkid Jatusripitak, to discuss collaboration between Hong Kong and Thailand in various areas.

Mrs Lam said the visit to Thailand was fruitful, with detailed discussion between both

sides on co-operation in various areas. She believed that the two places will open up groundbreaking co-operation in areas of finance, creative industries and youth exchanges down the road.

After the meeting, Mrs Lam and Dr Somkid, representing the Governments of the two places, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on strengthening economic relations. The MoU covers a wide range of co-operation areas including trade and investment, enterprise partnerships, creative industries, financial services, technology start-ups and enterprises, and human resource development.

On bilateral trade co-operation, both sides agreed to broaden and deepen commitments in trade and investment liberalisation. Exploratory talks on negotiating a Hong Kong, China-Thailand Free Trade Agreement will commence with a view to establishing the work plan for negotiations by 2021, and the Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement signed in 2005 will be reviewed and upgraded.

At the signing ceremony, Mrs Lam and Dr Somkid also witnessed the signing of five other MoUs on strengthening co-operation in specific areas between various agencies from the two sides. These MoUs cover domains such as design and creative industries, trade and investment, and innovation and technology.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/29/P2019112900726.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/29/P2019112900552.htm>

### **Mainland and Hong Kong sign Agreement Concerning Amendment to the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services**

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, witnessed the signing of the Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) Agreement on Trade in Services (Amendment Agreement) by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, and the Vice Minister of Commerce, Mr Wang Bingnan, on November 21.

The HKSAR Government and the Ministry of Commerce agreed to enhance the level of liberalisation on trade in services of the Mainland for Hong Kong under the framework of CEPA. The Amendment Agreement updates the commitments on liberalisation and facilitation of trade in services under the Agreement on Trade in Services implemented in June 2016. It lowers the market access thresholds in the Mainland for Hong Kong enterprises and professionals in response to proposals of the Hong Kong business community for more participation in the development of the Mainland market.

The Amendment Agreement introduces new liberalisation measures in a number of important services sectors such as financial services, legal services, construction and related engineering services, testing and certification, television, motion pictures and tourism services, making it easier for Hong Kong service suppliers to set up enterprises and develop business in the Mainland, allowing more Hong Kong professionals to obtain qualifications to practise in the Mainland, and allowing more of Hong Kong's quality services to be provided to the Mainland market.

In addition, the Amendment Agreement introduces some liberalisation measures for pilot implementation in the nine Pearl River Delta municipalities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The measure can facilitate Hong Kong's tourism trade to develop more multi-destination products targeting foreign visitors, which can attract more overseas travellers to visit Hong Kong and the Mainland via Hong Kong.

The Amendment Agreement will be implemented on June 1, 2020.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/21/P2019112000703.htm>

### **HKSARG strongly objects to acts on Hong Kong becoming US law**

The HKSAR Government on November 28 expressed strong opposition to the fact that the "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act" (the Act) and another act on Hong Kong have become United States (US) law and deeply regretted that the US has disregarded the genuine concerns raised repeatedly by Hong Kong on the two acts. The two acts clearly intervene in Hong Kong's internal affairs. They are unnecessary and unwarranted, and would harm the relations and common interests between Hong Kong and the US.

A Government spokesman said that the two acts are unreasonable. Although human rights and democracy are mentioned in the title of the Act, some of the provisions in the Act are actually about export control and enforcement of the sanctions imposed by the United Nations in Hong Kong, which are totally unrelated to human rights and democracy in Hong Kong. The two acts will also send an erroneous signal to protesters, which is not conducive to alleviating the situation in Hong Kong.

The spokesman further said that the US has enormous economic interests in Hong Kong, including earning from Hong Kong the largest bilateral trade surplus amongst her global trading partners for the past decade, and the surplus stood at over USD 33 billion last year. Any unilateral change of US economic and trade policy towards Hong Kong would create a negative impact on the relations between the two sides as well as the

US' own interests. Furthermore, Hong Kong and the US have all along had close co-operation on export control and law enforcement.

The HKSAR Government hopes that the US Government would adopt a pragmatic attitude, and would, with the interest of the mutually beneficial relations between Hong Kong and the US as well as the US' own interests in Hong Kong in mind, maintain her economic and trade policy and principled positions towards Hong Kong as well as continue to respect Hong Kong's status as a separate customs territory.

The spokesman reiterated that foreign governments and legislatures should not interfere in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/28/P2019112800260.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/20/P2019112000037.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/21/P2019112100579.htm>

### **CE thanks public for voting in District Council election**

In response to the sixth District Council election held on November 24, the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, thanks public for their active participation in District Council election. She issued a statement on November 25, saying that a total of about 2.94 million registered electors casted their votes in the 2019 District Council election, representing a record high cumulative turnout rate of about 71.2 per cent. It shows that voters hoped to express their views through this election.

Mrs Lam said that this District Council election was conducted in very difficult circumstances due to the social incidents of recent months. She thanked all candidates for their participation despite the challenges. The District Councils are an important component of Hong Kong's political system. Apart from reflecting views from the districts to the Government and contributing to the development of the communities, they also play a positive role in monitoring the provision of public services in the districts. With the sixth-term District Councils assuming office on January 1, 2020, the HKSAR Government will strengthen co-operation with the District Councils to solve district problems which are of concern to the public.

In general, the election was held in a peaceful, safe and orderly manner. The HKSAR Government respects the election results. There are various analyses and interpretations in the community in relation to the results, and quite a few are of the view that the results reflect people's dissatisfaction with the current situation and the deep-seated problems in society. The HKSAR Government will listen to the opinions of members of the public humbly and seriously reflect.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/25/P2019112500435.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/25/P2019112500524.htm>

## Premium personal training fitness brand opens first outlet in Hong Kong

Premium personal training fitness brand Physique Evolution announced on November 20 the opening of its first fitness studio in Hong Kong, taking the first step in accessing the local fitness industry.

Physique Evolution was founded by a former British international athlete in 2016. The fitness studio covers approximately 5 000 square feet and is located in the heart of Central, commanding spectacular views of Victoria Harbour. It offers a wide range of equipment and diverse packages that address specific physical conditioning and fitness needs.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/20/P2019112000477.htm>

## Details of third cycle of Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise

The Immigration Department (ImmD) announced on November 20 that the third cycle of the Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise will commence on February 18, 2020.

The Secretary for Security has made an Amendment Order to announce the details of the third cycle of the Replacement Exercise. Subject to the negative vetting procedure of the Legislative Council, the arrangement will be as follows:

Eligible Persons	Application Period
Holders of existing Hong Kong Identity Cards (HKICs) born in 1960 or 1961	February 18 - April 20, 2020
Holders of existing HKICs born in 1962 or 1963	April 21 - June 24, 2020
Holders of existing HKICs born in 1970, 1971 or 1972	June 26 - September 16, 2020

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Holders of existing HKICs born in 1973 or 1974

September 17 -  
November 13, 2020

Holders of existing HKICs born in 1975 or 1976

November 14, 2020 -  
January 8, 2021

From the third cycle onwards (i.e. February 18, 2020), ImmD will implement a new facilitation measure for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). An eligible applicant may bring along up to two PwDs, in addition to bringing along up to two elderly persons aged 65 or above under the existing facilitation measure, to replace HKICs during the same visit.

If eligible Hong Kong residents are absent from Hong Kong during their call-up periods, they need not rush back to Hong Kong to replace their identity cards. They can apply within 30 days upon their return to Hong Kong.

Eligible applicants may make appointment bookings via the Internet ([www.gov.hk/newicbooking](http://www.gov.hk/newicbooking)), the ImmD mobile application or the 24-hour telephone booking hotline 2121 1234. To enjoy a faster registration process, applicants are encouraged to pre-fill the application form when making appointment bookings through the Internet or mobile application.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/20/P2019112000804.htm>

### **Hong Kong Immigration Department wins Regional Identity Document Awards of the Year of High Security Printing Asia 2019**

The new Hong Kong Smart Identity Card and the Next Generation HKSAR Electronic Passport (e-Passport) introduced by the ImmD have won Regional Identity (ID) Document of the Year 2019 of the High Security Printing Asia (HSPA) awards for the Best New ID card and the Best New e-Passport. The awards were presented during a ceremony on November 26 in Yokohama, Japan.

The Regional ID Document Awards aim to promote the best in security printing, system infrastructure and implementation of a government passport, identity or other security card scheme. The awards have commended the excellence and recognised the distinguished achievement of ImmD in developing the new smart identity card and the new e-Passport.

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The new Hong Kong Smart Identity Card and the Next Generation HKSAR e-Passport were launched on November 26 last year and May 14 this year respectively. They are produced under strict control with state-of-the-art security features and sophisticated designs incorporated with a view to safeguarding personal data privacy and better deterring forgeries in the race of today's advancing technologies, providing the public and international communities with greater confidence in the documentation.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201911/28/P2019112800584.htm>

### **International study shows Hong Kong students' good performance in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy**

The Education Bureau on December 3 said that Hong Kong students as a whole performed well in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, maintaining their achievements in the previous assessment.

Among the 79 countries/economies participating in the study, Hong Kong's 15-year-old students ranked fourth in both mother tongue reading and mathematical literacy, and ninth in scientific literacy. Their performance in these three areas was significantly higher than the international level.

PISA is organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and conducted every three years with a view to assessing the mother tongue reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of 15-year-old students.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/03/P2019120300476.htm>

### **Updates on Hong Kong**

The information page "Hong Kong Update" under the Brand Hong Kong website provides topical info for overseas audiences to learn the updates in Hong Kong, including information on known processions, public transport and airport situation, as well as Government responses to the protest actions and clarifications. It also provides social media links about Hong Kong.

You are invited to browse the page by clicking the link:

<https://www.brandhk.gov.hk/html/en/WhatSON/HKUpdate2019.html>

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In addition, the Information Services Department (ISD) has produced a series of episodes and videos to update the public about the situation in Hong Kong and clarify some rumors on Internet.

Click the following links for details.

<https://youtu.be/Otvp7hXmfQ0> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第一則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/Fzx4mV9CNY4> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第二則資訊 Chinese only)

[https://youtu.be/gB\\_GPtbGCYc](https://youtu.be/gB_GPtbGCYc) (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第三則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/13FMP-PP-ZQ> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第四則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/XIPoCmU3Gj8> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第五則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/XSiYde98CpU> (珍惜香港 回復理性 停止暴力 (環境影響) Chinese only)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwhIhfFrS10&list=PLSIOvjUwNfi7yVdH5gVtYmUqi>

[NGBN3pQN](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwhIhfFrS10&list=PLSIOvjUwNfi7yVdH5gVtYmUqi) (Title: Treasure HK, Respect Rational Discussion, Reject Violence & Vandalism (Dangerous weapons seized))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJayrjF647w> (Title: Check facts to keep fake news in check)

### **Video and article to promote Innovation and Technology development in Hong Kong**

The ISD has produced a thematic video to promote the different aspects of Innovation and Technology development in Hong Kong.

#### [“The Best is Yet to Come - I&T”](#)

In addition, the Financial Times, in partnership with the ISD, published a piece of brand content on fintech to showcase Hong Kong’s fintech research and development. Please click the link of the article for details.

[the Financial Times](#)

[“Hong Kong’s Fintech Transformation”](#)

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