

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

#### **HKETO Director attends “The Annual Rings of Prosperous Era” photo exhibition**

Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (HKETO), Ms Emily Mo, attended the opening ceremony of the photo exhibition entitled “The Annual Rings of Prosperous Era” to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto on December 15. This exhibition is jointly organised by the Confederation of Toronto Chinese Canadian Organizations and China News Service.

Speaking at the event, Ms Mo noted that the world has witnessed China’s remarkable achievements in economic and social development. Over the past decades, Hong Kong contributed to the development of the Motherland, and benefitted from the prosperity of the Mainland. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is committed to upholding the “one country, two systems” principle, and will continue to play an active role in the country’s Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development.

Ms Mo also mentioned that despite the challenges Hong Kong have been facing in recent months, the HKSAR is determined to resolve the challenges by extensive and in-depth dialogues with the community, and to look into the city’s deep-seated problems.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-attends-the-annual-rings-of-prosperous-era-photo-exhibition.html>

#### **HKETO Director attends MRVCBA’s Appreciation Gala**

Director of HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, attended the Appreciation Gala of the Markham, Richmond Hill & Vaughan Chinese Business Association (MRVCBA) on December 8.

In her opening address, Ms Mo highlighted the accomplishments of Hong Kong in 2019 with examples including the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN, a 43% increase in the number of start-ups in two years, and the recognition as the third most competitive economy in the world.

Ms Mo remarked that although 2019 is a challenging year for Hong Kong, with the HKSAR Government’s determination to support the community to overcome the economic situation, the city continues to be the international financial and business hub. She encouraged Canadian companies to seize the investment and business opportunities in Asia through Hong Kong.

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Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-attends-mrvcbas-appreciation-gala.html>

### **HKETO Director meets with MP Jean Yip**

Director of HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, had a meeting with Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Agincourt Ms Jean Yip, who also sits on the Public Accounts and Government Operations Committees in Parliament on December 3.

During the meeting, Ms Mo briefed Ms Yip on the latest situation in Hong Kong and the efforts made by the HKSAR Government to restore peace and order, and that Hong Kong remains a welcoming city for visitors and investors from around the world. They also exchanged views on issues of mutual interest during the meeting.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-meets-with-mp-jean-yip.html>

### **HONG KONG NEWS**

#### **IMF commends resilience of Hong Kong's financial system and welcomes Government's policies to support economy and safeguard financial stability**

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) Staff Mission has commended the resilience of Hong Kong's financial system and Linked Exchange Rate System (LERS) despite a slowing economy, noting that a history of prudent macroeconomic policies has left Hong Kong with significant buffers to navigate through cyclical and structural challenges. The Mission also expressed support for the HKSAR Government's various policies to support the economy and safeguard financial stability.

The assessment was made in the Concluding Statement of the IMF Mission published on December 4, following the 2019 Article IV Consultation with the HKSAR.

The Concluding Statement notes that Hong Kong's economic activity weakened significantly in 2019 and fell into a technical recession in the third quarter. Hong Kong's real Gross Domestic Product is expected to contract by 1.2 per cent in 2019 and return to positive growth of 1 per cent in 2020, led by a recovery of private consumption.

The Mission reckoned that Hong Kong's financial markets remain resilient despite a slowing economy. It assessed that a history of prudent macroeconomic policies has

provided Hong Kong with strong buffers to address cyclical and structural challenges. These buffers include sizeable foreign exchange reserves, a large net international investment position, banks' strong capital and liquidity buffers at levels well above international standards, and large fiscal reserves.

The Mission commended Hong Kong for strengthening the regulatory and supervisory framework for safeguarding financial stability and noted that its solid anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing system is delivering good results. The Mission also reckoned that the development of green finance and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area offers opportunities for Hong Kong to maintain its competitiveness as a global financial centre.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/04/P2019120400324.htm>

### **CE visits Beijing**

The Chief Executive (CE) of the HKSAR, Mrs Carrie Lam, paid a duty visit to Beijing from December 14 to 17 to brief state leaders on the latest economic, social and political situation in Hong Kong.

The state leaders endorsed the efforts made by the HKSAR Government and by CE in trying to end the violence that is unprecedented and has never happened in Hong Kong after reunification. Given the severity of the situation and the difficulties that the government is facing, the leaders are fully appreciative of the efforts needed in order to achieve the objective.

In his opening remarks, President Xi Jinping mentioned that he very much hoped that all sectors in Hong Kong society will join hands in order to achieve the objective of ending the violence and return Hong Kong to a normal situation. Mrs Lam said that it has also been her appeal over the last few months and she hope very much that Hong Kong people will help the HKSAR Government and support the Police in achieving this mission.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/16/P2019121600828.htm>

### **HKSAR Government attaches importance to protecting people's rights and freedoms**

In response to media enquiries regarding the Human Rights Day rally on December 8, a spokesman for the HKSAR Government said:

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"The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to its constitutional duty to safeguard and protect human rights and freedoms. The Government also hopes that members of the public, when expressing their views and opinions as well as striving for their own rights and freedom, can embody the tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to respect others' rights and freedom. All violent and illegal acts are contrary to the spirit of the Declaration.

"Article 4 of the Basic Law states that the HKSAR shall safeguard the rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and of other persons in the Region in accordance with law. Apart from the Basic Law, human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other laws.

"Provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as applied to Hong Kong remain in force. Through regular reports to the United Nations in accordance with various human rights treaties, the performance of the HKSAR Government in promoting and safeguarding human rights is under the scrutiny of members of the public, including the Legislative Council, the media and a number of non-governmental organisations.

"The rule of law and freedom are not only the core values of Hong Kong, they are also the foundations of Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability. Hong Kong's judicial independence is safeguarded by the Basic Law, and the power of final adjudication in the HKSAR is vested in the Court of Final Appeal, which may invite judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on the Court. According to the Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum, Hong Kong ranks second in Asia and eighth in the world for judicial independence. Also, according to the Worldwide Governance Indicators of the World Bank, Hong Kong's percentile ranking in the rule of law has steadily improved from less than 70 per cent before Hong Kong's return to the Motherland to currently over 95 per cent.

"Hong Kong has consistently ranked as the world's most free and open economy by international organisations. The Heritage Foundation of the United States has ranked Hong Kong the world's freest economy for 25 consecutive years. Canada's Fraser Institute has ranked Hong Kong as the world's freest economy since 1996. These achievements are premised on the HKSAR's strengths including the fine tradition of the rule of law, a free and open market, an efficient public sector and a robust institutional framework.

"Members of the public have the unquestionable freedom of peaceful assembly, of procession and of demonstration. Over the past five years, Hong Kong has held about 44 000 public assemblies and 6 000 public processions – an average of about 27 such events a day.

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"From June this year until now, there have been over 900 public demonstrations, processions and public meetings. Unfortunately, many ended in violent and illegal confrontations, including reckless blocking of roadways, throwing petrol bombs and bricks, arson, vandalism, setting ablaze individual stores and facilities of the Mass Transit Railway and Light Rail, and beating people holding different views. All this has seriously endangered people's personal safety, public order and security. The Hong Kong Police Force has been carrying out enforcement actions in strict accordance with the law, to protect life and property and to restore order to society.

"The HKSAR Government has steadfastly safeguarded the freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. But, as in other jurisdictions, such freedom is not absolute. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that restrictions might be imposed by law if this was necessary to protect national security, public safety, public order or the rights and freedoms of others.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/07/P2019120700316.htm?fontSize=1>

### **Government urges political figures to stop asking other governments or legislatures to intervene in Hong Kong affairs**

The HKSAR Government on December 6 expressed deep regret over the spreading of untrue claims overseas in recent days by several members of the Legislative Council and political figures who urged foreign governments or legislatures to interfere with the affairs of the HKSAR.

The Government responded that since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China. Hong Kong's human rights and freedoms, including the freedom of speech, of assembly, of the press, of publication, of religion and so on, have been fully protected since the return to the Motherland.

In the past few months, many demonstrations and public meetings that were proceeding peacefully changed into violent and illegal clashes, resulting in damage to local and community facilities. Some politicians in Hong Kong openly supported the United States' "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act", and suggested similar legislation in other countries or regions with the intent to demand foreign intervention in Hong Kong affairs. This only conveys the wrong message to violent protesters and misleads them into thinking they have gained the support from other countries or regions. These politicians must bear the responsibility for society descending into chaos.

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The Government urges these Hong Kong politicians, who wantonly smear the city's reputation, to treasure Hong Kong's freedom. The entire society should say no to violence and persuade protesters to express their views in a peaceful manner, to prevent peaceful protests from mutating to violent confrontations, and to stop depriving people with different opinions the freedom to live a normal life, to voice their discontent against violence and to take photos of rioters' destructive acts.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/06/P2019120600908.htm>

### **FS announces further measures to support enterprises and employment**

With the social and economic environment of Hong Kong facing unprecedented challenges, the Financial Secretary of the HKSAR Government, Mr Paul Chan, announced on December 4 a new package of measures to support enterprises and employment.

The measures include waiving water and sewage charges for non-domestic households, providing electricity subsidy to the eligible non-residential electricity account holders, providing an enhanced rates concession to all non-domestic properties, offering benefits to the local recycling industry, waiving the annual licence fees for all licensed individuals and intermediaries for one year, and enhancing the Youth Employment and Training Programme to assist young people to enter the labour market, etc. These measures by the Government and the Securities and Futures Commission involve over HK\$4 billion in total.

Moreover, the Lands Department will also introduce additional support measures for most of the short-term tenancies of government land and short term and temporary waivers for varying the terms of the land grants under the Department issued for community and business use.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/04/P2019120400793.htm>

### **High Court amend Interim Injunction Order on “doxxing and harassment against police officers and their families” such that special constables would also be protected**

Since this June, Hong Kong Police Officers' personal information has been unlawfully disclosed and widely published on the Internet. Such information includes schools and classes that their children attended. Police Officers and their family members, who had



been “doxxed” were affected by different levels of nuisance and intimidation, caused grievous concern over their personal safety and mental distress.

The Secretary for Justice of the HKSAR Government as guardian of the public interest and the Commissioner of Police as a representative on behalf of all Police Officers applied to the Court for an ex parte injunction (HCA 1957/2019) to restrain persons from unlawfully and wilfully conducting themselves in those acts.

The Court granted an interim injunction order on 25 October 2019 (with subsequent amendments dated 28 and 31 October 2019) which was to last until the return day on 8 November 2019 at 10:30a.m. On the return day, the Court ordered it be continued (with two variations) until trial or further order. Further, on 10 December 2019, the Court amended the interim injunction order such that Special Constables would also be protected.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/11/P2019121100832.htm>

### **Hong Kong team excels at the International Junior Science Olympiad**

A team of six secondary school students representing Hong Kong achieved outstanding results in the International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) 2019, being awarded two gold and four silver medals.

The IJSO is a science competition for secondary school students aged 15 or below. The competition covers three disciplines, namely physics, chemistry and biology up to the senior secondary level. It comprises written assessments and science experiments on unfamiliar problems that require analytical and problem-solving skills. This year, the IJSO was held from December 4 to 11 in Doha, Qatar with participation of about 320 students from 70 countries or regions.

The Hong Kong team was fully funded by the Education Bureau to join this competition. The members of the Hong Kong team performed well in the International Junior Science Olympiad – Hong Kong Screening last year. They subsequently completed the science enhancement programmes provided by the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education. The best performers of the programmes were then selected as contestants representing Hong Kong to participate in the IJSO this year.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/12/P2019121200295.htm>

### **Hong Kong Customs reminds public not to bring cannabis products from overseas into Hong Kong**

With the Christmas and New Year holidays approaching, Hong Kong Customs on December 16 reminds members of the public that they should pay attention to whether the products they purchased when travelling contain cannabis since illicit import of cannabis is a criminal offence. They are urged not to break the law.

The recreational use of cannabis has been legalised in individual overseas jurisdictions including Canada where products containing cannabis or controlled cannabinoids (such as tetrahydro-cannabinol, or "THC") in the form of food, drinks or topicals, may be available for sale. The Hong Kong Customs reminds the public that cannabis and THC are controlled dangerous drugs in Hong Kong. It is a criminal offence to bring such products into Hong Kong.

Under Cap 134, trafficking in dangerous drugs, or illicitly importing to and exporting from Hong Kong, procuring, supplying, manufacturing, or dealing in or with dangerous drugs, constitutes a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment and a fine of HK\$5 million. Illicitly possessing, or smoking, inhaling, ingesting or injecting dangerous drugs is subject to a maximum penalty of imprisonment for seven years and a fine of HK\$1 million.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201912/16/P2019121300545.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>

In addition, the Information Services Department (ISD) has produced a series of episodes, promotional videos and global ad to update the public about the situation in Hong Kong.

Click the following links for details.

<https://youtu.be/CZawz8gQzB8> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第六則資訊 Chinese only)



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<https://youtu.be/oa488D-Bk5s> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第七則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/746iT-AqWg8> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第八則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/746iT-AqWg8> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第九則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qs-wwSlrI7k> (“Give Peace a Chance”)

<https://www.facebook.com/brandhk.isd/photos/a.616516398483611/1678422645626309> (Global ad: “Hong Kong On”)

[https://twitter.com/Brand\\_HK/status/1206868758146379779](https://twitter.com/Brand_HK/status/1206868758146379779) (Global ad: “Hong Kong On”)

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6612633173807464448/> (Global ad: “Hong Kong On”)

### International media partnership with the Information Services Department

A series of articles with branded contents about various sectors of Hong Kong were published at different international media platform, under the partnership with ISD, to promote the unparalleled advantages of Hong Kong. Please click the links of the articles for details.

#### CNBC

[Hong Kong's finance-related businesses are going on “as usual”](#) (video)

[Hong Kong: Pulse of the Bay Where Innovation Meets Connectivity](#)

#### Quartz

[Discover Asia's Most Promising Entrepreneurial Hub](#)

#### New York Times

[How Talent, Location and Global Links Drive Hong Kong's Legal Tech Scene](#)

### **Hong Kong Arts Festival features Canadian Director Robert Carsen to lead Bavarian State Opera in performing Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos***

Canadian opera and theatre director Robert Carsen leads the Munich cultural icon Bayerische Staatsoper (Bavarian State Opera) in marking a glorious return to the Hong Kong Festival, with the city's premiere of Richard Strauss's most playful and inventive tragicomedy, *Ariadne auf Naxos*—an opera about fidelity to love and art.

In a backstage world that mirrors the lives of Strauss and librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Ariadne auf Naxos* is an enticing mash-up of high art and comedy, where grand passions and romantic ideals collide to create unexpected outcomes and splendid melodies.

Soprano Eva-Maria Westbroek and Grammy-winning Heldentenor Peter Seiffert, both regular guests of prestigious opera houses worldwide, shine in a Wagnerian duet by Ariadne and Bacchus, while Zerbinetta's extravagant aria is brilliantly rendered by celebrated coloratura soprano Erin Morley. With the accompaniment of the distinguished Bayerisches Staatsorchester under the baton of Asher Fisch, this stellar cast will bring Hong Kong a true taste of the Bayerische Staatsoper experience.

For information and tickets, please click the link below:

<https://www.hk.artsfestival.org/en/programmes/opera-bayerische-staatsoper-richard-strauss-s-ariadne-auf-naxos/>

### **Recruitment of qualified doctors outside Hong Kong**

The Department of Health in Hong Kong is recruiting qualified doctors outside Hong Kong for the positions of Non-civil Service Contract Doctor (without Full Registration) and Contract Doctor (without Full Registration) (Child Assessment). Applications for the above two posts are accepted all year round. Eligibility requirements are set out in the attached recruitment notices of the Department of Health.

Enquiries can be made to the Department of Health at [appts\\_registry1@dh.gov.hk](mailto:appts_registry1@dh.gov.hk) and online application can be made through the Civil Service Bureau's website at <http://www.csb.gov.hk>. Job numbers are 40221 (Contract Doctor (without Full Registration)) and 40248 (Contract Doctor (without Full Registration) (Child Assessment)).

[Click here to read the details of Contract Doctor \(without full registration\)](#)

[Click here to read the details of Contract Doctor \(without full registration \(Child Assessment\)\)](#)

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