

### UPCOMING ACTIVITY

#### **HKETO and HKTB will host Lunar New Year receptions in Toronto and Vancouver**

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Toronto (HKETO) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (Canada) (HKTB) will jointly host Lunar New Year business receptions in Toronto and Vancouver on February 3 and 13 respectively to celebrate the upcoming Year of the Rat. HKETO Director Ms Emily Mo and HKTB Director (Canada, Central & South America) Mr Michael Lim will present at the receptions the latest developments of Hong Kong. Acclaimed chefs will conduct live demonstrations of Hong Kong-inspired dishes at the events.

### HONG KONG NEWS

#### **Asian Financial Forum explores redefinition of growth through innovation and breakthrough**

The 13th Asian Financial Forum (AFF), co-organised by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, opened on January 13. Featuring the theme of “Redefining Growth: Innovation · Breakthrough · Inclusiveness”, the forum gathered global policymakers and financial regulators, financial and business leaders, as well as investors and entrepreneurs to share their insights on how best to redefine and reshape economic growth by exploring innovations to achieve breakthroughs for the benefit of all.

Addressing the opening session of the AFF, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mrs Carrie Lam, remarked that Hong Kong’s financial system remains stable and remarkably successful despite the challenges of global economic slowdown, trade disputes among major economies, geopolitical uncertainties and local issues over the past two years.

She emphasised that Hong Kong, with its strategic regional location and its extensive, ever-deepening cultural and financial links with the Mainland, is China’s international financial centre, contributing to the sustainable progress of the country, the region and the world. She remarked that through the two national policies, namely the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development and the Belt and Road Initiative, Hong Kong will enhance its role as the business bridge between the Mainland and the rest of the world.

To further promote the development of fintech, a FintechHK Start-up Salon was launched this year, featuring over 60 fintech start-ups showcasing their latest innovative solutions. The Fintech Showcase was also set up for the second time to allow

international financial institutions and technology corporations to present innovative solutions to industry on-site.

The two-day forum also comprises Deal Flow Matchmaking Session, InnoVenture Salon and Fireside Chat for investors and industry players to explore co-operation and exchange ideas in a variety of subjects, including artificial intelligence, blockchain, WealthTech and green finance.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/13/P2020011300654.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/13/P2020011300279.htm>

### **HKSARG responds to US report**

In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the HKSAR Government responded on January 9 to parts of a report related to Hong Kong issued by the United States (US) Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

It said the HKSAR Government expressed strong opposition to the enactment of the “Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act” in the US. The Act clearly intervenes in Hong Kong’s internal affairs. It is unwarranted, sends an erroneous signal to violent protesters, and harms the relations and common interests between Hong Kong and the US. The HKSAR Government deeply regretted that the US has disregarded the genuine concerns raised repeatedly by Hong Kong on the Act and let the Act become US law.

It emphasised that since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising “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 (PRC). The “one country, two systems” principle has been fully and successfully implemented. The HKSAR Government will continue to implement the “one country, two systems” principle resolutely in accordance with the Basic Law.

It also said that safeguarding human rights and freedoms is a constitutional duty of the HKSAR Government. Human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other legislation, in addition to the Basic Law. The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to human rights and freedoms and is determined to safeguard them.

In respect of the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 (the Bill), the Chief Executive announced on June 15 2019 that the Bill was suspended and later made it clear that all the legislative work had come to a complete halt. The Chief Executive further announced on September 4 2019

that the HKSAR Government would formally withdraw the Bill when the Legislative Council resumed business and the Secretary for Security withdrew the Bill at the Legislative Council meeting on October 23 2019. It is incorrect for the report to say that the Bill would “empower the Chief Executive to make decisions on fugitive arrangements on a case-by-case basis”. According to the now-withdrawn Bill, the Chief Executive could not bypass the Court to surrender a fugitive to any requesting party. The HKSAR Government regrets to see the inclusion of this inaccurate statement in the report.

From June 2019 until now, there have been over 1 000 public demonstrations, processions and public meetings in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, many ended in violent and illegal confrontations. All these have seriously endangered personal safety, public order and public safety. The Police have been carrying out enforcement actions in strict accordance with the law in order to protect life and property and restore order to society.

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

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/09/P2020010800865.htm>

### **CE announces ten new initiatives to benefit livelihoods for over a million grassroots and underprivileged people**

The Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mrs Carrie Lam, announced on January 14 a package of ten new livelihood initiatives to substantially enhance the support for grassroots and underprivileged people.

Mrs Lam said that the current-term Government attaches great importance to supporting the underprivileged. The recurrent expenditure on social welfare has increased from HK\$65.3 billion in 2017-18 to HK\$84.3 billion in 2019-20, representing a 29 per cent rise, the largest among all policy areas.

The ten new initiatives include:

- (1) Reforming the Old Age Living Allowance Scheme
- (2) Expanding the HK\$2 transport fare concession scheme
- (3) Paying Mandatory Provident Fund contributions for low-income persons
- (4) Increasing progressively the number of statutory holidays
- (5) Improving remuneration packages for employees under government outsourced service contracts

- (6) Providing cash allowance for low-income households not living in public housing and not receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA)
- (7) Conducting a study on tenancy control of subdivided units
- (8) Further increase transitional housing
- (9) Providing a time-limited cash allowance for the unemployed
- (10) Providing a time-limited cash allowance for the under-employed

These new initiatives will benefit over a million grassroots and underprivileged people, including the elderly, workers, low-income households not living in public housing and not receiving CSSA as well as the unemployed or underemployed and people who are inadequately housed.

Mrs Lam pointed out that the Financial Secretary is consulting the public on the 2020-21 Budget, and will propose measures to “support enterprises, safeguard jobs, stimulate the economy and improve people’s livelihoods” to further address the needs of the community.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/14/P2020011400712.htm>

### **Government holds inter-departmental meeting on cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan**

The HKSAR Government on January 2 held an inter-departmental meeting to examine the prevention measures adopted in response to the cluster of pneumonia cases detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province and to remind all relevant departments to heighten their vigilance and be well-prepared.

Chairing the meeting, the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, said that the purpose of the meeting is to let all relevant policy bureaux and government departments be well-prepared and make necessary arrangements. The HKSAR Government will stay alert with a view to ensuring necessary measures be put in place as soon as possible whenever necessary.

The Government had strengthened prevention and control measures in many aspects including enhancing health surveillance measures at all boundary control points, referring suspected cases to public hospitals for isolation and treatment. Also, the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health have already informed healthcare staff to stay alert.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/02/P2020010200831.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/04/P2020010400179.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/06/P2020010600912.htm>

In addition, the Government published the Prevention and Control of Disease (Amendment) Regulation 2020 and the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 1) Notice 2020 in the Gazette on January 8 to include “Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent” as a statutorily notifiable infectious disease set out in Schedule 1 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599) and amended its subsidiary legislation, namely the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A). The Amendment Regulation and the Notice will take effect on the same day as publication in the Gazette.

“Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent” refers to a cluster of viral pneumonia cases of unknown cause occurring in Wuhan, Hubei Province, since December last year. Since the causative pathogen is still unknown, the prevention work focuses on identifying cases with possible exposure to the high-risk area, i.e. Wuhan, and promptly carrying out public health measures to prevent the spread of disease to Hong Kong.

Apart from setting out the control and prevention measures of the spread of infectious diseases in Hong Kong, the Regulation also provides measures to prevent the introduction into and transmission from Hong Kong of specified diseases.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/07/P2020010700603.htm>

### **Government issues Red Outbound Travel Alert on Iran**

In view of the latest situation in Iran, the HKSAR Government on January 10 issued a Red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on Iran.

Residents who intend to visit the country should adjust their travel plans and avoid non-essential travel, including leisure travel. Those already there should monitor the situation, exercise caution, attend to personal safety and avoid large gatherings of people.

The Security Bureau will closely monitor the situation there. Any update will be issued through the media and the bureau's Mobile App and OTA webpage [www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota](http://www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota).

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Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/10/P2020011000734.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, 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/WhatSOon/HKUpdate2019.html>

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

Click the following links for details.

<https://youtu.be/--2ttEpV1rM> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第十二則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/zJ9VqWFeBbE> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第十三則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://youtu.be/Ejd5PcrpUU8> (睇真 D • 知多 D : 第十四則資訊 Chinese only)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4Yks3ahEi0> (Hong Kong is On, January 2020)

### International media partnership of the Information Services Department

A series of articles with branded contents were published at different international media platforms to promote Hong Kong. Please click the links of the articles for details.

#### **The Economist**

[Hong Kong connects the Belt and Road Initiative to the world](#)

#### **Financial Times**

[Hong Kong: Rethinking Finance](#)

### The 48th Hong Kong Arts Festival in February and March

The 48th Hong Kong Arts Festival (HKAF) will be held in February and March 2020, featuring nearly 1,800 outstanding international and local artists in 123 performances and over 400 PLUS, outreach and education events. The 48th HKAF officially opens with a concert by Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony Orchestra on 13 February 2020 and closes with a kaleidoscope of dance by the Igor Moiseyev Ballet on 14 March 2020.



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Highlights among the star-studded line up of the 48th HKAF include the Bayerische Staatsoper showcasing Richard Strauss's playful and inventive opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*; celebrated violinist Midori and the Festival Lucerne Strings performing Beethoven's complete works for violin and orchestra; Rudresh Mahanthappa and Terri Lyne Carrington celebrating Charlie Parker's legacy in their new project, *Fly Higher: Charlie Parker @ 100*. In theatre and dance, Tony Award-winning director Tom Morris leads Bristol Old Vic's new adaptation of the love story *Cyrano*; French movie star Isabelle Adjani starring in new theatre work *Opening Night*; and B ejart Ballet Lausanne explores its namesake's living legacy in *Dixit*.

For details, please visit [www.hk.artsfestival.org](http://www.hk.artsfestival.org)

### 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 \(Child Assessment\)\)](#)

To stay tuned to updates on HKETO and Hong Kong, please follow us at

HKETO Toronto Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/TorontoHKETO](https://www.facebook.com/TorontoHKETO)

HKETO Toronto Twitter Page <https://twitter.com/TorontoHKETO>

Brand Hong Kong Facebook page [www.facebook.com/brandhk.isd](https://www.facebook.com/brandhk.isd) or

Brand Hong Kong Instagram page [www.instagram.com/brandhongkong/](https://www.instagram.com/brandhongkong/)

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