

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

ACCE Chinese Canadian Entrepreneur Awards

The Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACCE) will organise its 2020 ACCE Chinese Canadian Entrepreneur Awards on March 28 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre North Building. HKETO has been sponsoring the Best Asia Pacific Business Award since its inception in 2010 to recognise entrepreneurs who successfully used Hong Kong as the platform to expand its business to the Asia Pacific region.

For details of the Awards Gala, please visit its official website at:

https://www.acce.ca/new/2020-acce-awards-0328_en/

Table Tennis Tournament by Canada-Hong Kong New Horizon Lions Club

Canada-Hong Kong New Horizon Lions Club will hold its 11th Annual Charity Table Tennis Tournament in Toronto on July 25 and 26 at My Table Tennis Club. This year, HKETO will continue to sponsor the "Media Cup" which will be presented to the winning team in the Media category, and the new "Alumni Cup". The deadline for the competition registration is July 17.

For more information, please visit the official website of the organiser:

<http://www.newhorizonlions.org/>

HONG KONG NEWS

FS unveils HK\$120 billion spending plan to support enterprises, safeguard jobs, stimulate the economy and relieve people's burden

The Financial Secretary of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Mr Paul Chan, in his 2020-21 Budget, announced on February 26 a wide range of measures to help Hong Kong tackle the current economic difficulties and to support the community during challenging times by making optimal use of the fiscal reserves.

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Mr Chan said Hong Kong's economy contracted by 1.2 per cent in 2019, and he forecast full-year growth of between -1.5 per cent and 0.5 per cent in 2020. Therefore, the Government of the HKSAR has decided to implement counter-cyclical measures of a massive scale involving above HK\$120 billion so as to meet the public's expectations as far as possible.

To stimulate the economy by boosting local consumption and relieve the financial burden on the community, Mr Chan also announced a cash payout of HK\$10,000 to Hong Kong permanent residents aged 18 or above. This measure, which involves an expenditure of about HK\$71 billion, is expected to benefit about seven million Hong Kong people.

Mr Chan stressed that making good use of fiscal reserves to support enterprises and relieve people's hardship is certainly in line with Hong Kong people's expectations towards the Government of the HKSAR under the current difficult environment.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/26/P2020022600420.htm>

In his 2020-21 Budget, Mr Chan, also offered a wide range of measures to strengthen Hong Kong's pillar industries while identifying new growth engines among emerging sectors. He said that this will not only broaden the foundation of Hong Kong's economy, but also provide diversified and quality employment opportunities for young people to unleash their potential.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/26/P2020022600456.htm>

In term of tax measures, Mr Chan proposed a one-off reduction of profits tax, salaries tax and tax under personal assessment for the year of assessment 2019-20 by 100 per cent, subject to a ceiling of HK\$20,000 per case. This measure will cost the Government of the HKSAR HK\$20.8 billion, benefiting about 2.09 million taxpayers.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/26/P2020022600453.htm>

In addition, Mr Chan highlighted the importance of creating a liveable city, with particular focus on measures targeting healthcare, environmental protection and housing.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/26/P2020022600452.htm>

For full version of the Budget Speech, please visit:

<https://www.budget.gov.hk/2020/eng/index.html>

World Justice Project reaffirms Hong Kong’s position in the Rule of Law Index

The Government of the HKSAR on March 11 acknowledged the Rule of Law Index 2020 released by the World Justice Project, in which Hong Kong maintains its ranking as No. 5 in the East Asia and Pacific region and No. 16 globally.

In the “Absence of Corruption” category, Hong Kong improved one rank to eighth globally. The spokesman of the HKSAR Government said that the effort by Hong Kong in the anti-graft strategy combining law enforcement, corruption prevention and public education would have been futile without the city’s strong adherence to the rule of law and a formidable system of checks and balances including an independent judiciary.

Hong Kong also improved one rank in the global rankings of “Civil Justice” and “Criminal Justice”, scoring well in “No corruption” and “Impartial and effective ADRs (alternative dispute resolutions)”. Hong Kong is always considered a prime venue for international dispute resolution, including arbitration and mediation.

Hong Kong moved up two ranks, standing at second regionally and globally in the “Order and Security” category. It is worth noting that the overall crime situation in Hong Kong had been on a downward trend for 12 consecutive years.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/11/P2020031100687.htm>

HKSAR Government issues Red Outbound Travel Alert on some regions in France, Germany, Japan and Spain, as well as on Italy and Iran

In view of the health risks arising from the outbreak of the COVID-19 in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est regions in France, the North Rhine-Westphalia region in Germany, Hokkaido in Japan as well as the La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco regions in Spain, the Government of the HKSAR on March 10 issued the Red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on the aforementioned regions. As well, the Government expanded the Red OTA in force on Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy to cover the entire country.

Apart from the aforementioned countries/regions, the Government also issued the Red OTA on Korea on February 24, 2020, and alerted the public on February 28, 2020, about the outbreak of COVID-19 cases and associated health risks in Iran under the Red OTA currently in force, in light of the persistent and rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in these countries.

The Red OTA urges members of the public planning to travel to the aforementioned regions to adjust travel plans and avoid non-essential travel. In general, members of the public are advised to consider delaying all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

If it is unavoidable to travel to the aforementioned countries/regions, the public should pay close attention to the latest situation of COVID-19 and the corresponding travel health advice issued by the Department of Health (DH). If assistance is needed, they may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit (AHU) of the Immigration Department (ImmD) at (852) 1868.

In addition, Hong Kong residents are encouraged to use the online Registration of Outbound Travel Information service (www.gov.hk/roti) to register their contact details and itinerary when outside Hong Kong. The information provided allows the DH and AHU of the ImmD to disseminate practical information to them through appropriate means, including SMS on mobile phones, on a timely basis when necessary.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/10/P2020031000715.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/28/P2020022800789.htm>

DH to further strengthen health quarantine arrangements on inbound travellers from overseas

Following the Government of the HKSAR's announcement on March 10 on the Red Outbound Travel Alert issued on the whole of Italy, France (Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est), Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), Japan (Hokkaido) and Spain (La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco) in response to the latest situations of COVID-19, the DH will also strengthen health quarantine arrangements on inbound travellers arriving from these countries/regions.

Starting from 0.00am on March 14, the DH's Port Health Division officers will issue quarantine orders under the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) to people arriving in Hong Kong who have been to the regions mentioned above in the past 14 days, regardless of whether they are Hong Kong residents. They will be arranged to stay in a quarantine centre for quarantine. The arrangement also extends on the same day to people arriving from the whole of Italy.

Separately, the quarantine measures announced earlier for those who have been to Korea and Iran in the past 14 days remain unchanged.

A spokesman for the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) said that the Government of the HKSAR has been conducting detailed assessments for formulating port health measures in response to the occurrence of outbreaks in countries or areas outside Hong Kong. The assessment will take into account factors such as the number, distribution and rate of increase of infected persons, measures put in place for surveillance and control of the outbreak, and the frequency of visits by Hong Kong residents. The Government will review and adjust the measures in view of the developments.

The CHP reminded members of the public that as the transmission of the COVID-19 virus has been increasing around the world, members of the public are advised to consider delaying all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong. Meanwhile, the

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Government has drawn up corresponding port health and quarantine measures in response to the health risk of individual countries/areas. Before travelling outside Hong Kong, members of the public should be aware of the potential health risk and applicable quarantine arrangements upon returning to Hong Kong.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/10/P2020031000663.htm>

In addition, the DH on March 6 announced that starting from 0.00am on March 8, the health declaration arrangements at the Hong Kong International Airport will be expanded from inbound flights from the Mainland of China to all flights arriving Hong Kong. All inbound travellers arriving at the Hong Kong International Airport will be required to complete and submit a health declaration form.

The DH has rolled out an electronic health declaration form for the convenience of travellers and to reduce the use of papers. Currently, all travellers on flights arriving Hong Kong from the Mainland of China can choose to fill in and submit the health declaration form on their smartphone or mobile device.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/06/P2020030600821.htm>

Public services to resume in a safe and orderly manner while we fight the virus together

A Government of the HKSAR spokesman announced on February 27 that, upon the instruction of the Steering Committee cum Command Centre in relation to the COVID-19 virus, the Government of the HKSAR will implement targeted measures to reduce social contact and infection control measures and gradually resume more public services from March 2 in an orderly manner.

The spokesman said that since the implementation of the special work arrangement for government employees on January 29, government departments have been monitoring their operations closely and making adjustments having regard to the situation on the ground. The objective is to continue to provide essential, emergency and limited-scale public services to members of the public while fighting the virus.

However, in order to prevent the spread of the virus more effectively, certain public facilities, such as public swimming pools, indoor sports facilities, etc. are not suitable for reopening at this stage.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/27/P2020022700685.htm>

HKSAR Governing team riding out difficult times with the public

To show that the governing team are fighting COVID-19 and riding out the difficult times with the public, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR and all politically appointed officials will donate one month's remuneration for charity purposes. The Non-official Members of the Executive Council have also unanimously agreed to donate one month's honorarium to the charity.

The governing team of the HKSAR appeals to the public to be united to win the battle against the disease. The governing team will spare no efforts in implementing relief measures under the Anti-epidemic Fund and the 2020-21 Budget so that Hong Kong can ride out the difficult times as soon as possible and regain momentum in going forward.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/28/P2020022800810.htm>

Updates on Novel Coronavirus Infection in Hong Kong

The Government of the HKSAR has implemented a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus and protect the health of the community while maintaining Hong Kong's position as an international city and aviation hub. The Government response is guided by three key principles: responding promptly, staying alert to the situation, and working in an open and transparent manner.

An information page “Latest Situation of Novel Coronavirus Infection in Hong Kong” has also been added to the official website of HKETO. Information in the page includes the latest local situation, reported cases, health tips, travel advice etc.

You are invited to browse the page by clicking the banner on top of HKETO website or the following link:

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>

Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between Hong Kong and United Arab Emirates enters into force

The Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (IPPA) between Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) entered into force on March 6, bringing the total number of IPPAs in force between Hong Kong and foreign economies to 21.

Under the IPPA, the two sides undertake to provide investors of the other side with fair, equitable and non-discriminatory treatment of investments; compensation in the event of expropriation of investments; and the right to free transfers abroad of investments and returns. The IPPA also provides for settlement of investment disputes under internationally accepted rules, including arbitration.

The IPPA was signed in June 2019. Both sides have completed their respective internal procedures required for the entry into force of the IPPA.

The IPPA with the UAE is one of the four IPPAs that this term of Government has signed since taking office in July 2017. The other three are the investment agreements with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Australia, which have already entered into force, and the one with Mexico respectively.

Apart from the economies mentioned above, Canada is also one of the other foreign economies with which Hong Kong has signed an IPPA.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/28/P2020022800479.htm>

Hong Kong residents born in 1960 or 1961 should apply for new smart identity cards on or before April 20, 2020, and caring arrangement of identity card replacement with accompanied elderly has been extended to persons with disabilities

ImmD announced on March 9 that Hong Kong residents born in 1960 or 1961 should apply for a new smart Hong Kong identity card (HKIC) in person at a Smart Identity Card Replacement Centre (SIDCC) on or before April 20, 2020 (Monday). The SIDCCs will be open from Mondays to Saturdays, from 8am to 10pm (except public holidays).

Furthermore, the caring measure of the Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise (Replacement Exercise) has been extended to persons with disabilities (PwDs). An eligible applicant for HKIC replacement may bring along up to two PwDs, in addition to two family members or friends aged 65 or above, to replace HKICs together during the same visit to an SIDCC.

Eligible applicants may make appointment bookings via the Internet (www.gov.hk/newicbooking), the ImmD mobile application or the 24-hour telephone booking hotline 2121 1234. The ImmD appeals to applicants to pre-fill the application form when making appointment bookings through the Internet or mobile application in order to enjoy faster service.

If eligible Hong Kong residents are absent from Hong Kong during their call-up period, they can apply within 30 days of their return to Hong Kong. For details of the Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise, please visit the website www.smartid.gov.hk or call the enquiry hotline 2824 6111.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202003/09/P2020030900542.htm>

International media partnership of the Information Services Department

The Economist, in partnership with the Information Services Department, created a piece of branded content entitled “How Hong Kong Becomes Asia’s Education Hub”

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to shed light on factors that make Hong Kong stand out to become Asia's Education Hub. Please click the link below for details.

<https://hkglobalconnections.economist.com/how-hong-kong-becomes-asias-education-hub/>

Taste of Hong Kong on Netflix

Tai O, a fishing village on Lantau Island dubbed "Venice of Hong Kong", is featured in a newly released Netflix lifestyle series – Restaurants on the Edge. The hosts help a struggling undergo a complete makeover: a new menu with strong local flavours; rearranged display and revitalised design according to feng shui principles; and above all, a new identity on social media.

The series trailer can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverHongKong/videos/236058000886339/>

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

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