

Hong Kong e-News Bulletin

June 17, 2020



SPECIAL NOTICE

In response to the local government's appeal for concerted efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (HKETO) has been closed temporarily until further notice. Users may continue to reach us via the following channels:

Toronto

Phone: (416) 924-5544 or

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For urgent assistance outside office hours, Hong Kong residents in Canada may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the Immigration Department in Hong Kong at +852 1868. In the event that Hong Kong residents who need assistance are not able to call the hotline due to the service settings of their telecommunication services operators or other reasons, they may try adding "0000" after entering "1868". Hong Kong residents in Canada in need of consular assistance may contact the Chinese Embassy or Consulate Offices in your province (<http://ca.china-embassy.org/eng/zlqj/>).

HONG KONG NEWS

Remarks by CE in video on national security legislation in Hong Kong

The following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Mrs Carrie Lam, in a video on national security legislation in Hong Kong on June 15:

"Hong Kong is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China. As a Special Administrative Region directly under the Central People's Government, Hong Kong enjoys a high degree of autonomy under 'One Country, Two Systems'.

"Over the past year, the Hong Kong community has been traumatised. Violence by rioters has escalated, with illegal firearms and explosives posing a terrorist threat. Groups and individuals advocating 'Hong Kong independence' and colluding with foreign forces to interfere with Hong Kong's affairs have seriously undermined national interests and security. Hong Kong has become a gaping hole in national security, and our city's prosperity and stability are at risk.

“Sadly, there is now little hope of the HKSAR enacting local laws to safeguard national security. Against this background, the Central Authorities have no option but to exercise their constitutional power to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong SAR to safeguard national security. This is a decision not taken lightly.

“The national security legislation will only target an extremely small minority of illegal and criminal acts and activities, while the life and property, basic rights and freedoms of the overwhelming majority of citizens will be protected. Above all, it will restore stability in Hong Kong.

“I appeal for your full understanding and staunch support for putting in place national security legislation in Hong Kong.”

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/15/P2020061500689.htm>

HKSAR Government firmly opposes UK report

The HKSAR Government responded on June 12 to the Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong (July to December 2019) issued by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (the Report) reiterating its firm commitment to the implementation of the “one country, two systems” principle in accordance with the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the People’s Republic of China (Basic Law). The Government firmly oppose and express deep regret over the Report’s inaccurate and biased remarks on the national security law and the high degree of autonomy enjoyed by the HKSAR.

The spokesman of the HKSAR Government said that since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has maintained stability and prosperity under the principle of “one country, two systems”, and implemented “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law.

He noted that it is absolutely wrong and totally groundless for the Report to allege that the enactment of the national security law for the HKSAR by the Central Authorities “lie[s] in direct conflict” with Article 23 of the Basic Law. In accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law, the HKSAR is authorised to legislate national security laws. However, it does not preclude the Central Authorities from legislating at a state level for national security. Legislating on national security is within the purview of the Central Authorities and is outside the limits of the autonomy of the HKSAR. In view of the current situation in Hong Kong and the difficulty faced by the HKSAR to complete on its own legislation for safeguarding national security in the foreseeable future, the Central Authorities have the

right and duty to introduce a national law to improve at the state level the legal framework and enforcement mechanisms for national security for the HKSAR.

The spokesman also said that the Decision adopted by the National People's Congress (NPC) on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security (the Decision) is within the power and authority of the NPC. The national security law to be formulated by the Standing Committee of the NPC in accordance with the Decision aims to prevent, stop and punish acts and activities to split the country, subvert state power, organise and carry out terrorist activities and other behaviour that seriously endanger national security, as well as activities of foreign and external forces to interfere in the affairs of the HKSAR. It will only target an extremely small minority of criminals.

The national security law will neither undermine "one country, two systems" nor change the executive, legislative and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication, enjoyed by the HKSAR. There will be no impact on the various rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people in accordance with the law. The national security law will create favourable conditions for strengthening the foundation of the successful implementation of "one country, two systems" and ensuring the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

The spokesman reiterated that foreign governments, legislatures and politicians 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/202006/12/P2020061200035.htm>

Updates on National Security Legislation in Hong Kong

An information page "Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong" has been created to provide updates on the National Security Law in Hong Kong. It is also added to the official website of the HKETO.

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

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

<https://www.brandhk.gov.hk/html/en/WhatSON/Hong-Kong-Update-National-Security-Law.html>

In addition, a booklet containing 15 Q&As on legislation for the HKSAR to safeguard national security was issued. Please click the link below for details.

<https://www.isd.gov.hk/nationalsecurity/eng/pdf/NSLBooklet.pdf>

National Anthem Ordinance comes into effect

The National Anthem Ordinance (NAO) has been published in the Gazette and comes into effect on June 12.

The Standing Committee of the NPC added the Law of the People's Republic of China on National Anthem (National Anthem Law) to Annex III to the Basic Law on November 4, 2017. The HKSAR Government has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility to implement the National Anthem Law locally in accordance with Article 18 of the Basic Law.

A Government spokesman said that the core legislative principle of the NAO is to promote respect for the national anthem, which is the symbol and sign of the country, and provide guidance on the standard, etiquette, and occasions for playing and singing of the national anthem. The NAO prohibits and imposes penalties to the misuse of the national anthem or the lyrics or score of the national anthem, and public and intentional acts with an intent to insult the national anthem. There is no cause for concern of breaching the law inadvertently if one does not misuse the national anthem or the lyrics or score of the national anthem, nor has any public and intentional act with an intent to insult the national anthem.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/12/P2020061200855.htm>

The Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mrs Carrie Lam, on June 11 signed the NAO passed by the Legislative Council (LegCo) in accordance with Article 48(3) of the Basic Law.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/11/P2020061100793.htm>

Hong Kong ranked fifth in World Competitiveness Yearbook 2020

Hong Kong was ranked fifth globally in the latest World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) 2020 published by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), down from second last year. IMD attributed Hong Kong's lower ranking to a decline in economic performance, social turmoil as well as the rub-on effect of the Chinese economy.

Among the four competitiveness factors in WCY 2020, Hong Kong's ranking in "Economic performance" dropped from 10th to 28th, with the "Domestic economy" sub-factor sliding from 18th to 49th while other economic sub-factors like "International trade" and "International investment" remained unscathed. In addition, Hong Kong's rankings in "Government efficiency" and "Business efficiency" remained unchanged at first and

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second respectively, and that in “Infrastructure” improved to 14th, indicating that Hong Kong’s core competitiveness remains intact.

Among various sub-factors, Hong Kong’s ranking remained first globally in “Business legislation”. Within the “Institutional framework” sub-factor, Hong Kong’s ranking improved from second to first globally in the indicator “Legal and regulatory framework” and from 19th to first in the indicator “Exchange rate stability”. These top-of-the-world rankings reaffirm Hong Kong’s institutional strengths, particularly in legal and monetary affairs.

Commenting on the lacklustre economic performance and social unrest last year that affect Hong Kong’s ranking, a Government spokesperson said on June 16, “The unprecedented social unrest that has taken place in Hong Kong since June last year dealt a severe blow to inbound tourism, local consumption activities and investment sentiment in the second half of 2019, pushing the economy into recession. The social unrest involving a high level of violence, acts of vandalism and intimidation of people holding a different political standpoint has also affected how Hong Kong was perceived, as certain survey indicators of the IMD report showed that survey respondents were deeply concerned about Hong Kong’s social and political stability.

“The HKSAR Government is committed to enhancing the competitiveness and vibrancy of the Hong Kong economy. Faced with further economic setbacks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the HKSAR Government has implemented various packages of initiatives to protect jobs, support enterprises and revive the economy. We will strive to maintain our competitive advantages, and at the same time step up investment in infrastructure, and innovation and technology in order to add growth impetus to our development. Moreover, Hong Kong is poised to be both an active promoter and a beneficiary of important national development strategies such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative alongside the further opening up and deepening of economic reform in the Mainland.

“We have every confidence in Hong Kong’s long-term economic development.”

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/16/P2020061600521.htm>

Government announces details of Cash Payout Scheme

The HKSAR Government announced on June 8 that the Cash Payout Scheme will open for registration on June 21, 2020. Hong Kong permanent residents aged 18 or above on or before March 31, 2021, may register electronically or use a paper form to receive HK\$10,000. Registration will close on December 31, 2021.

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The public may choose to register through 21 participating banks to have the sum deposited to their sole-name bank account. Those who wish to receive the payment with a cheque can register with Hongkong Post and collect it in person at the post office. Banks will start accepting electronic registrations from 7am on June 21 (Hong Kong time).

Payment for electronic registrations submitted through banks in June will be deposited simultaneously into the bank accounts from around July 8. People who submit electronic registrations on or after July 1 will receive the payment about one week after registration.

From June 15, paper registration forms will be available for download from the websites of the participating retail banks, Hongkong Post and the Scheme (www.cashpayout.gov.hk). They are also available at the bank branches, post offices, Home Affairs Enquiry Centres of the Home Affairs Department, District Social Welfare Offices of the Social Welfare Department, and Public Housing Estate Offices and Customer Service Centres of the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/08/P2020060800658.htm>

For the 21 participating retail banks that entered into agreement with the HKSAR Government to provide electronic registration platform for the Cash Payout Scheme, please refer to the link below:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/03/P2020060300487.htm>

Government upholds Hong Kong's international aviation hub status through Land Fund investment

The Financial Secretary of the HKSAR Government, Mr Paul Chan, announced on June 9 an investment in Cathay Pacific Airways Limited (Cathay Group) through the Land Fund. This would uphold Hong Kong's status as an international aviation hub, and at the same time generate a return for the Government.

The operating environment of the aviation industry worldwide has been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a near halt in passenger flights, and causing serious impact to air cargo business. As Hong Kong's most important local airline and the key driver of Hong Kong's aviation development, Cathay Group is also facing unprecedented operational and financial pressure.

Mr Chan said that the Government's investment in Cathay Group would help it overcome its present challenge so that it may continue to contribute to Hong Kong's international aviation hub development as well as overall economic development, and at the same time generate a return for the Government.

The total amount involved in the Government's investment is around HK\$27.3 billion, comprising preference shares with detachable warrants of around HK\$19.5 billion and a bridging loan of around HK\$7.8 billion. Cathay Group will also launch a HK\$11.7 billion rights issue of shares to existing shareholders.

Under the Resolution of the Provisional Legislative Council on Land Fund (Cap. 20), the Financial Secretary may, at his discretion, authorise and direct the investment of any assets of the Land Fund which are not immediately required to meet expenses in respect of the Land Fund at any time in such a manner as he may determine.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/09/P2020060900753.htm>

Government announces mechanism for specified categories of persons to apply for exemption from compulsory quarantine arrangement

The HKSAR Government announced on June 8 and 15 respectively the mechanism for the following categories of persons to apply for exemption from compulsory quarantine arrangement:

- 1) directors or executives of certain companies listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong who (i) travel from the Mainland to Hong Kong for essential business activities or (ii) return from the Mainland to Hong Kong after completing essential business activities, and satisfy certain eligibility criteria; and
- 2) legal practitioners providing necessary professional services in relation to important and large-scale commercial transactions.

The Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) is in force until July 7, 2020. According to section 4(1)(b) of the Regulation, the Chief Secretary for Administration may designate any person or category of persons for exemption from the compulsory quarantine arrangement if he is satisfied that the person's or persons' travelling is necessary for purposes relating to, among others, business activities in the interest of Hong Kong's economic development.

The exempted persons will be subject to certain conditions. All exempted persons should note that currently travellers to the Mainland of China would still be subject to the 14-day compulsory quarantine requirement imposed by the Mainland authorities.

Click the following links for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/08/P2020060800369.htm>

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/15/P2020061500567.htm>

Updates on COVID-19 infection in Hong Kong

The HKSAR Government 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.

An information page "Latest Situation of Novel Coronavirus Infection in Hong Kong" has 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>

InvestHK unveils details of virtual StartmeupHK Festival 2020

Invest Hong Kong on June 4 announced details of its five-day [StartmeupHK Festival 2020](http://www.startmeup.hk/startmeuphk-festival-2020/) (www.startmeup.hk/startmeuphk-festival-2020/), which will run from July 6 to 10. Befitting its theme of start-ups and technology, the festival is making the unprecedented move of transforming from an in-person event to a fully virtual experience.

The week-long extravaganza of startup events will feature keynote addresses by renowned industry figures from around the world, exhibitions, investor matching and a jobs fair, and will be open to attendees across the globe for free, with additional paid premium sessions.

The festival will showcase the latest developments in smart cities, retail tech, artificial intelligence, fintech, lifestyle tech, and global start-up trends and insights. It represents a unique opportunity for start-ups, entrepreneurs, investors, industry leaders, students and government representatives to connect, exchange ideas and benefit from business opportunities in Hong Kong, the mainland of China and elsewhere in Asia.

The number of startups in Hong Kong in 2019 reached 3 184, up 21 per cent year on year. The number of people working in the city's startup sector grew 31 per cent to 12 478. Hong Kong's appeal as a startup hub extends to a wide variety of industries, with sectors such as fintech, e-commerce, supply chain management and logistics technology all having experienced phenomenal growth in recent years.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/04/P2020060300553.htm>

Recruitment of qualified doctors outside Hong Kong

The Department of Health 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 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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Mr. Christopher Chen, Head of Investment Promotion at christopher_chen@hketotoronto.gov.hk or visit www.InvestHK.gov.hk

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