

## Hong Kong e-News Bulletin

November 4, 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) is closed temporarily. You may reach us via the following channels:

#### Toronto

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The "COVID-19 Thematic Website" of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has been added to the official website of HKETO. 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>

For the latest entry restrictions and quarantine requirements in Hong Kong, please refer to the webpage <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html> for details.

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

#### **HKETO Director joins webinar to promote business opportunities in the GBA development**

Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (HKETO), Ms Emily Mo, joined the "Opportunities for Canadian Companies: The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area" (GBA) webinar hosted by the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA) (Ottawa Section) to discuss new opportunities arising from the GBA development for Canadian businesses on October 22.

In delivering the welcome remarks, Ms Mo updated participants that with the concerted efforts of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and its citizens, the latest COVID-19 situation in Hong Kong is under control and the city is rebounding gradually. In addition, Hong Kong and Singapore recently reached an in-principle agreement to establish a bilateral Air Travel Bubble.

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Ms Mo also presented on the latest development of the GBA, a fast-developing economic region in China. The vast business opportunities presented by the GBA development are available to overseas companies when they make use of the Hong Kong platform.

Regarding some recent speculation of Hong Kong's rule of law and freedoms being possibly undermined, Ms Mo took the opportunity to clarify that the crimes stipulated in the National Security Law should not bother the business operators who have no intention to commit those crimes. The rule of law as well as the various legitimate rights and freedoms are the fundamental core values of Hong Kong and are much cherished by the government and community.

Moderated by President of HKCBA (Ottawa Section), Ms Amy Willis, the webinar was also joined by representatives of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Invest Hong Kong in Canada.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-joins-webinar-to-promote-business-opportunities-in-the-gba-development.html>

### **HKETO supports Yee Hong's 9-Hour Online Singing Marathon**

Director of the HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, spoke at the "9-Hour Online Singing Marathon" hosted by the Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation on October 25. The online singing marathon lasted for nine hours and is the first of its kind for fundraising in Canada.

In addressing the online singing marathon, Ms Mo gladly noted that over 50 performers from Hong Kong participated in this fundraising event. The event featured a special section of popular Hong Kong TV theme songs and a re-arranged version of the song "Hong Kong Memories" to promote the Hong Kong spirit and culture.

Ms Mo said that Hong Kong is an international cultural metropolis where the eastern and western cultures meet. In the previous financial year, the HKSAR Government's total expenditure on culture and arts exceeds HK\$5 billion.

Ms Mo also stressed that HKETO will continue to promote cultural exchange between Hong Kong and Canada and facilitate Hong Kong arts groups and artists to showcase their achievements in Canada.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-supports-yee-hongs-9-hour-online-singing-marathon.html>

### **HKETO Director joins webinar to promote the Hong Kong platform for Canadian businesses**

Director of the HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, joined the “A New Connected World Beyond the New Normal” webinar to promote Hong Kong as a platform for Canadian companies to connect with the global trading market. This webinar was hosted by the HKTDC as one of its “Autumn Sourcing Week” activities on October 28.

In delivering the welcome remarks, Ms Mo noted that with COVID-19, HKTDC has acted fast to convert its annual Summer Sourcing Week into an online event earlier this year, attracting over 1,300 exhibitors and over 13,000 buyers from nearly 120 countries and regions.

The event provides a one-stop virtual sourcing and AI-enabled Business Matching Platform for Canadian businesses in 11 industries, including electronics, lighting, outdoor tech light, eco, watch & clock, etc. Ms Mo encouraged Canadian companies to make use of the Hong Kong platform and this virtual event to make connections and build potential partnerships with overseas companies.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-joins-webinar-to-promote-the-hong-kong-platform-for-canadian-businesses.html>

### **HKETO Director joins webinar to promote the advantages of Hong Kong for Canadian businesses**

Director of the HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, joined the “Benefiting from the HKCBA Advantages in the New Normal” webinar to promote Hong Kong as a platform for Canadian companies to expand their business in Asia under the new normal. This webinar was hosted by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) on November 3.

In delivering the welcome remarks, Ms Mo updated the participants that the COVID-19 situation in Hong Kong was generally stable in the past two months and businesses are gradually reopening.

Regarding the city’s economy, Ms Mo pointed out that Hong Kong continued to benefit from the strong growth of China’s economy and the city has always been the business bridge between the mainland of China and the western world including Canada.

Besides, Hong Kong’s institutional strengths and fundamentals are recognised widely on the global stage. “In September, Hong Kong topped the rank again as the world’s freest economy according to the Ottawa-based Fraser Institute,” Ms Mo noted.

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Ms Mo remarked Hong Kong will be an excellent base for Canadian companies to expand their businesses in Asia. She encouraged Canadian companies to grasp the emerging business opportunities in Hong Kong. She also took the opportunity to invite participants to join HKTDC's Hong Kong Forum to learn the latest insights and information on doing business in Hong Kong and mainland China, and to network with like-minded executives from around the world.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-director-joins-webinar-to-promote-the-advantages-of-hong-kong-for-canadian-businesses.html>

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

#### Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

The 24th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival will be held virtually from November 12 to 19. HKETO will sponsor the screening of a short Hong Kong film "THE LAST FERRY FROM GRASS ISLAND" (島嶼故事). Directed by Linhan Zhang, the film tells the story of a Hong Kong hitman retiring as a fisherman on the peaceful Grass Island.

For details, you can visit the official website of the Festival:

<https://www.reelasian.com/>

#### Vancouver Asian Film Festival

The 24th Vancouver Asian Film Festival is now open until November 8. HKETO is supporting its closing film - a Hong Kong movie "BEYOND THE DREAM" (幻愛). Directed by Kiwi Chow, the film is about a recovering schizophrenic who yearns for love.

Please visit the official website for details: <https://festival.vaff.org/2020/movies/beyond-the-dream/>

### HONG KONG NEWS

#### HKSAR Government extends social distancing measures under Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance

Having regard to the development of the COVID-19 epidemic situation in Hong Kong, the HKSAR Government gazetted directions and specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering)

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Regulation (Cap. 599G) and the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I) on November 3 to maintain the social distancing measures currently in place. These measures will take effect at 0.00am on November 6 for a period of seven days till November 12.

Taking into account the latest public health risk assessment, starting from this Friday (November 6), apart from refinements to the social distancing restrictions for spectator stands at public skating rinks, sports premises and swimming pools, the HKSAR Government will maintain all other requirements and restrictions applicable to catering business and scheduled premises. The HKSAR Government will continue to closely monitor the development of the epidemic situation and consider if there is room for relaxing social distancing measures in the next stage, subject to whether the epidemic situation is continually under control and the number of locally confirmed cases is maintained at a low level.

You can click the following link for details about the latest social distancing measures:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202011/03/P2020110300750.htm>

In view of the global development and severity of the COVID-19 epidemic situation, the HKSAR Government announced on November 3 that it will gazette the specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to include Turkey as a specified place starting from November 13 to more effectively combat the epidemic, and impose conditions based on public health grounds on travellers who have visited any country outside China (excluding very high-risk areas currently specified under Cap. 599H) within 14 days before arrival in Hong Kong starting from November 13, in order to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to household members during home quarantine of imported cases.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202011/03/P2020110300613.htm>

Meanwhile, the HKSAR Government gazetted on October 27 the latest specifications to include Belgium as a specified place under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) starting from November 3 to more effectively combat the epidemic.

The Government has earlier introduced Cap. 599H to impose testing and quarantine conditions on travellers coming to Hong Kong from very high-risk places (i.e. Bangladesh, Ethiopia, France, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) to reduce the health risk they may bring to Hong Kong.

According to the latest specifications, a traveller who, has stayed in the above specified place(s) within 14 days before boarding the flight arriving in Hong Kong would be required to provide relevant COVID-19 test report, documentary proof, and make hotel reservation for the purpose of quarantine. Travellers to Hong Kong should note that they will be mandated to wait for their test results at a designated location after their deep throat saliva samples are collected for conducting testing for COVID-19. If their test results are negative, they will be allowed to go to the hotel for which they made the reservation to continue the 14-day compulsory quarantine until completion. If their results are positive, the travellers will be transferred to hospital for isolation and treatment.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/27/P2020102700505.htm>

### **HKSAR Government officially launches dispute settlement procedures in accordance with WTO mechanism on US' new requirement on origin marking**

The HKSAR Government on October 30 formally launched procedures in accordance with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Mechanism with respect to the new requirement on origin marking for Hong Kong products announced by the United States (US) Customs and Border Protection on August 11.

The Permanent Representative of the HKSAR to the WTO sent to the Permanent Representative of the US to the WTO Hong Kong's request for consultations with the US Government in respect of the new US requirement in accordance with the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism. The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, also wrote to the United States Trade Representative to inform the US that the HKSAR has officially taken action against the US under the WTO mechanism.

Mr Yau said that The US' unilateral and irresponsible attempt to weaken Hong Kong's status as a separate customs territory is highly inappropriate. Such a move also confuses the market and undermines the rules-based multilateral trading system. The US' new requirement concerns Hong Kong's status as a separate customs territory conferred by the Basic Law, which is a basic principle under "one country, two systems". The HKSAR Government will do its utmost to safeguard it.

Mr Yau reiterated that under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China, and the special status of the HKSAR is conferred by the motherland through the Basic Law. HKSAR is a separate customs territory and may, using the name "Hong Kong, China", participate in international organisations such as the WTO and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation as a separate member, and develop mutually beneficial economic and trade relations with economies around the world. The special status of Hong Kong has been widely recognised and respected by the

international community, and Hong Kong's economic and trade status is on par with that of other WTO members.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/30/P2020103000455.htm>

### **HKSAR Government strongly opposes reported granting of refugee status by Germany to a Hong Kong suspect who has jumped bail**

In response to press enquiries on media reports which allege that Germany has granted refugee status to a Hong Kong suspect who has reportedly committed serious crimes and jumped bail, a spokesman for the HKSAR Government said on October 21 that if confirmed to be true, the HKSAR Government expresses strong opposition.

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, met with the Consul General of Germany in Hong Kong, Mr Dieter Lamlé, at the Central Government Offices.

Mr Cheung said at the meeting that the HKSAR Government strongly objects to the harbouring of criminals under different pretexts by other jurisdictions. This would only send a plainly wrong message to criminals that they need not face any criminal liability. He reiterated that the Basic Law ensures that the freedoms of speech, media, publication, association, assembly, procession and demonstration, etc. are fully protected under the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights.

Mr Cheung also stressed that anyone accused of breaching the law will face an open and fair trial. The Hong Kong courts will, as always, with their sound rule of law and human rights protection, handle all cases in an independent, fair and just manner.

Mr Cheung reiterated that foreign governments should stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs, which are internal matters of the People's Republic of China. He asked the Consul General of Germany in Hong Kong to convey the HKSAR Government's position to the relevant German authorities.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/21/P2020102100880.htm>

### **Orders on Comprehensive Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreements with Serbia and Georgia to be gazetted**

The Chief Executive in Council has made two orders under the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112) to implement the Comprehensive Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreements (CDTAs) with Serbia and Georgia. The orders were gazetted on October 23.

Under the CDTAs, investors will not have to pay tax twice on a single source of income. This will bring tax savings and a greater certainty on taxation liabilities for the residents of Hong Kong and the treaty partners when they engage in cross-border trade and investment activities.

The CDTAs will enter into force after both Hong Kong and the respective treaty partners have completed their ratification procedures. Hong Kong signed the CDTAs with Serbia and Georgia in August and October 2020 respectively.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/21/P2020102000231.htm>

### **New enhancements for HKSAR passport collection**

The Immigration Department (ImmD) announced on October 29 the implementation of two new enhanced measures which aim at enabling the collection of an HKSAR passport (passport) from October 30 onwards.

#### *Passport Collection Kiosks*

At present, applicants may collect their passports at the service counters of Immigration Headquarters in Wan Chai and the six Immigration Branch Offices. To further enhance the service standard, the ImmD will introduce Passport Collection Kiosks by phases from October 30 onwards. In addition to the existing collection means, eligible applicants may, upon application, choose to collect their passports at Passport Collection Kiosks which are installed in the first phase at Immigration Headquarters and West Kowloon Office in a self-service manner.

#### *Launch of new measures for passport collection*

Currently, Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents residing overseas have to submit their applications via the Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions in order to collect their passports at the respective Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.

Under the new measure, local or overseas applicants, who submit applications directly to the ImmD by whichever means (including in person, by post, drop-in, through the Internet,



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ImmD mobile application or Travel Document Submission Kiosk), may choose to collect their passports at the Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/29/P2020102900530.htm>

### **Hong Kong Legal Week 2020 launched**

The opening of the Hong Kong Legal Week 2020 was held on November 2 at the former French Mission Building. It also marked the opening of the Hong Kong Legal Hub and the official launch of the “Vision 2030 for Rule of Law” (“Vision 2030”). This remarkable event signified an important milestone in the Department of Justice’s work on enhancing Hong Kong’s status as an international legal hub for legal, deal-making and dispute resolution services, as well as promoting and strengthening the rule of law.

The Hong Kong Legal Hub comprises the offices of the Department of Justice housed in the historical building of the former Central Government Offices, the former French Mission Building which is a declared monument and part of Two Exchange Square. By consolidating top-notch local, regional and international law-related organisations in the heart of the central business district, the Hong Kong Legal Hub will attract global legal and dispute resolution talents to Hong Kong, providing a platform for the provision of premier legal services which will significantly contribute to business and economic growth in this region and beyond.

The Hong Kong Legal Week is an annual flagship event of the Department of Justice. In response to the challenges posed by COVID-19, for the first time, the opening ceremony and a series of webinars would be broadcast live from November 2 to 6. As part of the “Vision 2030” initiative and in support of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Inaugural Rule of Law Congress, with the theme “Towards 2030: A Decade of Action for Rule of Law” was held on November 3. Renowned local and international legal professionals, academics and experts shared their insights and experiences on legal and dispute resolution issues of current times through an array of webinars during the week.

Click the following link for details.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202011/02/P2020110200423.htm>

For the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Opening of the Hong Kong Legal Week 2020 cum Opening of Hong Kong Legal Hub on November 2, please click the link below:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202011/02/P2020110200715.htm>

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### World City Festival

The world's first and largest virtual event dedicated to cities, the "World City Festival", was held from October 22 to 24. Co-hosted by Hong Kong, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles, London and Singapore, the festival explored all facets of urban life, stewardship and creativity with contents such as financial services, fight against COVID, design, Cyberport, lifestyle, art, music, experiences etc.

You can visit this link to watch part of the event programme:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwnrT-l8joE&list=PLIgyee4ZBzGCcc65m-vkVnuilwG04yqUF>

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