



Hong Kong Chief Executive visits London



CY Leung, Chief Executive of Hong Kong, visited the United Kingdom in October to further boost links between the two places.

During his two days in London, Mr Leung met Philip Hammond, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, to discuss how to further strengthen the flourishing links between the UK and Hong Kong. Mr Leung said he wanted to encourage more British businesses to use Hong Kong as a platform to explore Mainland and Asia markets.



Above: Mr Leung (first left) visits Crossrail, Europe's largest engineering project.

Left: Mr Leung (second right) meets Philip Hammond, UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.



Left: Addressing a luncheon hosted by the Hong Kong Association.

Above: Mr Leung meets Hong Kong people living in the United Kingdom at a reception.

"Transport"

Mr Leung also met Patrick McLoughlin, Secretary of State for Transport, to discuss major infrastructure projects in both Hong Kong and the UK, and visited Crossrail – the 118-kilometre railway project that will include a new East-West route across the capital.

After viewing work in progress on platform tunnels, escalator shafts and ticket halls, Mr Leung said the project, which will be operated by Hong Kong company MTR Corporation, was a great example of the close business links between Hong Kong and the UK.

Continued on p2

District council election



Above: Mr Leung (second left); Raymond Tam, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, (third left); and Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission (left), empty a ballot box for counting of votes.

A record 1.47 million people voted in the district council election held in Hong Kong last November. There were a total of 867 candidates competing for 363 seats in the election.

Congratulating successful candidates, CY Leung, Chief Executive, said the result represented "a very broad spectrum of views, which is very much a representation of the Hong Kong society."

The turnout of 47 per cent surpassed the previous record of 44 per cent made in 2003.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...



Hong Kong-UK health co-operation (page 2)



Lord Mayor's Show (page 4)



Michelin praise for Hong Kong street food (page 5)

●●● Health

Closer health links between Hong Kong and UK

Hong Kong and the UK have agreed to increase co-operation in the areas of healthcare policy and health protection, including the use of technology in healthcare and the development of new hospitals.

Speaking at the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on health co-operation, Dr Ko Wing-man, Secretary for Food and Health, said both Hong Kong and the UK are facing the challenges of providing healthcare to their residents. "This provides a framework for the two places to further share expertise and strengthen mutual co-operation."

Exchange visits

Under the MoU, Hong Kong and the UK will exchange information and share experience in the areas of healthcare policy and health protection, including on issues such as primary care delivery models, non-communicable diseases, the design and development of new hospitals, the redevelopment of existing hospital facilities, and the regulation of traditional medicines. Exchange visits for healthcare professionals will also be organised.



Above: CY Leung (back row, left), Chief Executive, attends the signing of the MoU with: Philip Hammond (back row, right), Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the UK; Dr Ko (front row, left); and Jane Ellison (front row, right), Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health.

Continued from p1

"Global trading hub"

While in London, Mr Leung also met members of the UK All-Party Parliamentary China Group and delivered the keynote speech at the Hong Kong Trade Development Council's annual London dinner.

Commenting on how much both places have changed since he was a student in Bristol in the 1970s, Mr Leung said Hong Kong had transformed "from an industrial city to a global financial and trading hub."

Describing the UK as "chic, creative, cultural and confident", he said these descriptions were fit for modern Hong Kong too. "Towering skyscrapers, extensive and efficient railway, a modern airport, and a fusion of Chinese and Western cuisine available in Michelin-starred restaurants – these are the hallmarks of Hong Kong today."



Above: Mr Leung addressing the annual dinner of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

"World's freest economy"

Addressing over 150 guests at a luncheon hosted by the Hong Kong Association, Mr Leung said Hong Kong's open markets, open minds, low and simple taxes, and free flow of capital and information helped to make it "the freest economy in the world".

Before leaving London, Mr Leung also visited the London Metal Exchange, the world's leading base metals market, owned by Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited. He also attended a reception for Hong Kong people living in London to boost links and hear about their life abroad. Speaking at the reception, Mr Leung encouraged the second generation of Hong Kong people in the UK to work and live in Hong Kong under the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents.



Above: Mr Leung (third right) with members of the All-Party Parliamentary China Group of the UK Parliament.

●●● People

Priscilla To is new Director-General

Priscilla To is the new Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), replacing outgoing Director-General, Erica Ng.

As the Hong Kong Government's chief representative in London, Ms To plays a key role in promoting bilateral relations between Hong Kong and the UK. Ms To also represents Hong Kong in eight other countries for which the HKETO is responsible: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia and Sweden.

"I am very honoured and excited to take up this new role," said Ms To. "I look forward to helping to consolidate and further strengthen our long-standing economic, business and cultural ties with the countries under our purview."

Ms To, who was appointed in October, joined the Hong Kong Administrative Service in 1995 and has served in various bureaux and departments in her career, most recently the Civil Service Bureau.



Above: Priscilla To, new Director-General of the HKETO.

● ● ● Business

Director-General visits Baltic states

Priscilla To, the new Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (see page 2), visited Riga in Latvia, Tallinn in Estonia and Vilnius in Lithuania during her visit to the region in November. This was her first official visit to the three countries since she took up her post in October 2015.

The main purposes of the visit were to give an update on the latest developments in Hong Kong, including the continued cooperation with other countries on tax matters, as well as the business opportunities in Hong Kong for companies of the three countries under the “Belt and Road” initiative. “Being the international financial and transport hub and strong provider of professional services, and having unrivalled close ties with Mainland China, Hong Kong is well placed to provide support to various projects of the “Belt and Road” initiative. Companies in the Baltic region are most welcome to join hands with us to tap the huge business potential,” Ms To said. As well as calling on the ministries of foreign affairs and finance in each country, Ms To also met with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts to discuss ways to enhance co-operation.

During meetings with Enterprise Estonia, Enterprise Lithuania, Invest Lithuania and the Lithuania China Business Council, Ms To took the opportunity to promote the strengths of Hong Kong and explore opportunities for future collaboration. In addition, she encouraged more co-operation on strengthening people-to-people ties. She also suggested more promotion of the tourism of Baltic states in order to increase the interest of Hong Kong people to visit the region.



Top: Ms To (right) with Hanno Tomberg, Chairman of the Board, Enterprise Estonia.

Above left: Ms To (2nd left) with Romualdas Gėgžnas, Vice-minister for Finance (2nd right) and Ms Daiva Brasiūnaitė, Deputy Director of Tax Department (1st left) in Lithuania.

Above right: Ms To (2nd left) with Ilmārs Šņucins, Deputy State Secretary, Tax, Customs and Accounting matters (middle) and Mr Andrejs Birums, Deputy Director, Head of Unit, Direct Tax Department (2nd right) in Latvia.

● ● ● Technology

New Innovation and Technology Bureau in Hong Kong

Innovation and technology in Hong Kong will be boosted by the Government’s new Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB),

Speaking at the launch event in November, Nicholas Yang, Secretary for Innovation and Technology, said the new bureau would enable Hong Kong to act as a technology ‘superconductor’ and help it leverage the huge development potential of the 13th Five-Year Plan of Mainland China.

“Pool of talent”

The new bureau will enhance collaboration with top global research institutes, encourage private-sector participation in innovation and

technology, help to develop Hong Kong into an even more technologically smart city, and create a strong pool of talent to boost the city’s competitive edge.

The bureau will help the Government, industry, universities and research institutes to work together and create clear and holistic innovation and technology policies, said Mr Yang.

Upon the establishment of the ITB, the Innovation and Technology Commission and Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, previously under the Communications and Technology Branch (CTB) of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, were transferred to ITB. CTB has



been renamed the Communications and Creative Industries Branch.

Above Nicholas Yang, Secretary for Innovation and Technology, speaking at the Hong Kong International Computer Conference in November 2015.

● ● ● Culture

Lord Mayor's Show 2015



Above: The dragon dance team perform in front of the Mansion House, the Lord Mayor's residence.

Left: Since 2005, the HKETO has created colourful and exciting displays at the Lord Mayor's show to celebrate Hong Kong's cultural heritage.

Below: More than half a million people line the streets to see the Lord Mayor's Show.

Hong Kong's proud maritime history provided the theme for its float at the 2015 Lord Mayor's Show in London in November.

Created from two double-decker buses, the float featured mock-ups of a Star Ferry, a container ship and a cruise liner, accompanied by a dragon dance troupe and traditional Chinese drummers.

Priscilla To, Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), which devised and organised the Hong Kong float, said it highlighted Hong Kong's long maritime history, which dates back more than 170 years.

"We look forward to ample opportunities in maritime and transport as Hong Kong prepares to play its role in the visionary concepts of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, or the "Belt and Road" initiative, outlined by President Xi Jinping in 2013," she said.

More than half a million people take to the streets to see the annual Lord Mayor's Show each year, with millions more worldwide watching the event live on the BBC. The Lord Mayor's Show celebrates the swearing-in of the new Lord Mayor of the City of London, and in 2015 celebrated its 800th year. This year's Lord Mayor is Alderman Jeffrey Muntevans, the 688th person to hold the position.



Left: On the way back to Mansion House, the parade moves along Victoria Embankment past the River Thames.

●●● Gastronomy

Wine and Dine Festival 2015



Fine wines and award-winning bites were on offer at over 300 stalls set against the stunning backdrop of Victoria Harbour during the 2015 Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival last October.

The harbour stalls kicked off a month-long programme of events for gastronomes, including street carnivals, masterclasses and culinary-themed tours. Around 140,000 people enjoyed the 2015 edition of this annual tongue-tickling festival.



Above left and left: Victoria Harbour provided a suitably stunning backdrop for a huge range of culinary treats.

●●● Gastronomy

Michelin boost for local street food

Hong Kong's delicious street food has made it into the region's Michelin Guide for the first time, with 23 street outlets listed in the 2016 edition.



"Street food is a part of many countries' culture, especially in Asia, and we found that as time goes on, street food gets better and better," said Michael Ellis, international director of the celebrated Michelin guides.

The list, compiled by Hong Kong-based inspectors, includes street food such as sweet soups and egg waffles.

The guide gives a prestigious star rating to 77 restaurants in Hong Kong and Macau. Eight were granted the top accolade of three stars.

●●● Culture

Hong Kong film premiere

The latest film from acclaimed Hong Kong director Johnnie To received its European premiere at the BFI London Film Festival last October.

Office, a dazzling musical comedy-drama about corporate culture's inner workings, was one of the 13 films competing for the coveted Best Film Award.

To mark the occasion, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), hosted a pre-screening reception attended by Johnnie To himself as well as the film's co-producer, screenwriter and star Sylvia Chang and co-star Tang Wei.

"Global reputation"

Speaking at the reception, Priscilla To, Director-General of the HKETO, said the Hong Kong film industry had gained "a global reputation" and was winning acclaim for its "unique style, incisive direction and sometimes off-beat storylines".

To support the film industry, the Hong Kong Government runs the First Feature Film Initiative, launched by Create Hong Kong, as well as the Film Production Grant Scheme, which subsidises small-budget film productions.

Johnnie To is one of Hong Kong's most renowned film directors, winning awards, nominations and commendations at film festivals around the world. The London Film Festival is the UK's largest public film event.



Above top: A reception organised by the HKETO, marks the European premiere of Johnnie To's film *Office*. From left: Tang Wei, actress; Ms To; Johnnie To; and Sylvia Chang, co-producer, screenwriter and actress.

Above: Johnnie To's new film *Office* dissects the inner workings of corporate culture.

●●● Business

Mainland 'is open' to Hong Kong services

Mainland China and Hong Kong have signed a new Agreement on Trade in Services.

Under the new agreement, which was signed in November, 153 services trade sectors in Mainland China will be fully or partially opened up to Hong Kong companies. The sectors, which include business and professional services as well as cultural and telecommunications services, represent over 95% of the services trade sectors listed by the World Trade Organisation.



"Most-favoured trading partner"

The new agreement is a stand-alone, subsidiary agreement that comes under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, CEPA, signed in 2003. It builds upon and enhances the Guangdong Agreement, signed in 2014 – the Agreement on Achieving Basic Liberalisation of Trade in Services in Guangdong, adding more liberalisation measures and expanding implementation of the majority of the measures piloted in Guangdong to the whole of Mainland China.

Under the terms of the new agreement, any preferential treatment the Mainland gives to other countries or regions will also be extended to Hong Kong. This guarantees Hong Kong's position as Mainland China's most-favoured trading partner.

The new agreement will be implemented on 1 June 2016. More information about CEPA can be found at www.tid.gov.hk/english/cepa/index.html

Above: CY Leung, Chief Executive, (back row, fourth left) and other guests witness the signing of the agreement by John C Tsang, Financial Secretary (front row, left), and Wang Shouwen, Vice Minister of Commerce (front row, right).

●●● Investment

Second in world for FDI

The number of business operations in Hong Kong with parent companies overseas and in the Mainland climbed to a new record of 7,904 in 2015, an increase of 4.2 per cent on a year ago, according to a joint survey conducted by Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and the Census and Statistics Department released in October. 631 of these companies originated in the UK.

The InvestHK London team, located in the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, has helped a number of UK companies to set up in Hong Kong. One UK company the team helped to set up its Asia head office in Hong Kong recently is LMAX, a broker for foreign exchange. Vikash Thanki, Head of Hong Kong Operations for LMAX HK, calls Hong Kong the obvious choice for the firm's head office in Asia. "The city is one of the largest global financial centres," he said. "The World Bank has recently rated Hong Kong the third easiest place to do business out of 189 economies."

Right: Vikash Thanki, Head of Hong Kong Operations LMAX Hong Kong.



Above: Mr Leung addresses the opening ceremony of Business of Design Week 2015 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in December.

●●● Design

The business of design

The world's most outstanding designers came to Hong Kong last November and December for the annual Business of Design Week (BODW), Asia's leading design, innovation and brands event.

BODW was organised by the Hong Kong Design Centre with the support of Create Hong Kong. Barcelona was this year's partner, with leading designers from the Spanish city showcasing their creativity and the city's rich artistic heritage.

"Vibrant"

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the event, CY Leung, Chief Executive said, "design is one of Hong Kong's fastest growing creative industries, having more than doubled its value added to the economy over the past decade. Vibrant and outward looking, our design community is blessed with close ties with designers from all over the world".

More than 75 business leaders and design professionals from 15 cities and countries around the world, including several from the UK, Sweden and Norway, spoke at BODW and its concurrent events this year.



●●● Technology

Carnival of technology inspires young people

A free nine-day carnival of technology at Hong Kong Science Park in October featured workshops, seminars, science competitions and guided tours designed to promote a culture of innovation and technology.



InnoCarnival featured the innovation and research achievements of over 70 organisations including universities, research and development centres, government departments and youth organisations. An exhilarating hands-on show also brought to life the convenience and fun which innovation and technology brings to our lives.

Speaking at the opening, John C Tsang, Financial Secretary, praised InnoCarnival for boosting young people's interest in technology. He encouraged youngsters to launch a career in research and development as a way of contributing to society through innovation.



Above: Gregory So, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (centre), visits InnoCarnival 2015.

Left: Mr Tsang addresses the opening ceremony of InnoCarnival 2015 at the Hong Kong Science Park.

●●● Finance

More opportunities for Hong Kong as Renminbi joins IMF currency basket



The Chinese renminbi (RMB) will join the international currencies that make up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Special Drawing Right – a foreign exchange reserve asset maintained by the IMF whose value is based on an agreed basket of currencies.

From October 2016, the RMB will become the fifth currency in the basket, joining the U.S. dollar, the euro, the Japanese yen and the British pound. The IMF's decision will be a very important milestone in the internationalisation of the RMB, as it will increase the use of the currency for trading and investment, and also benefit Hong Kong through increased demand for RMB offshore products in Hong Kong.

"Being the largest offshore RMB business centre with close economic and trade ties with Mainland China, Hong Kong should seize this historic opportunity and continue to strengthen our financial market infrastructure, as well as upgrading our talent pool and products. I believe Hong Kong can continue to play a pivotal role of bridgehead and financial hub in the process of Mainland's further opening up its financial markets and RMB internationalisation," said Norman Chan, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority.

IMF's decision was also welcomed by participants at the Hong Kong-London RMB Forum, which convened for its fifth meeting in December in Hong Kong. Aiming to promote cooperation on the development of international RMB business, the forum was attended by senior representatives of the London and Hong Kong offices of twelve banks, with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and HM Treasury acting as facilitators. The forum also reviewed other latest RMB developments, e.g. the increased uptake of RMB in trade, corporate treasury

management and investment activities, as well as rising activity in foreign exchange and the development of a wider range of investment products in Hong Kong and London, both reflecting the increasing breadth and depth of the offshore market.

●●● Culture

Holiday of Dance

Audiences in Hong Kong were taken on a dance tour of Eastern European folklore in December during the spectacular Holiday of Dance show performed by the Russian Seasons Dance Company at Tuen Mun Town Hall.



The show featured stunning dances from Russia, Serbia and Ukraine.

The event was part of 2015 Cheers! a programme of events organised by Hong Kong's Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

●●● Culture

Event Horizon opens in Hong Kong

Sir Antony Gormley's art installation *Event Horizon* features 31 life-size identical sculptures perching on the rooftops of some of Hong Kong's most iconic buildings and mingling with the crowds at ground level.

First shown in London in 2007, *Event Horizon* has since travelled to Rotterdam, New York, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, but this is the first time it has been seen in Asia.

The rooftop sculptures are made of fibreglass, while four cast iron figures are situated at ground level.

"Hong Kong's condensed urban environment, unique topography and vertical density provide an ideal setting for Sir Antony's project," said Carrie Lam, Chief Secretary for Administration, at the launch ceremony. Mrs Lam added: "Speaking in my other capacity as Chairman of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, the *Event Horizon* installation is most timely...[it] will no doubt help encourage discussions of public art in our city and give our local artists, art administrators and art critics much food for thought." Mrs Lam also said that the West Kowloon Cultural District's museum for visual culture, M+, had acquired Sir Antony's landmark installation "Asian Field" in 2014, and also has a piece of his work "Matrix". These will be on display when M+ opens in 2019.



Above: Sir Antony's sculptures are cast from his own body.

Left: Mrs Lam (second right) and other guests with one of Sir Antony's statues.

●●● Sport

Hong Kong to host ePrix race

Hong Kong is set to host motorsport as part of the FIA Formula E Championship, a class of racing involving only electric cars.

The Hong Kong ePrix will take place on 9 October 2016 on a 2km circuit running between Lung Wo Road and the Star Ferry, subject to the track's approval by the sport's governing body, FIA, with cars reaching speeds of up to 225kph (140mph).

"The Hong Kong ePrix will be one of the highlights on the FIA Formula E Championship calendar," said Alejandro Agag, Formula E CEO. "As one of the most innovative, cutting-edge and fun-loving cities in the world, Hong Kong and Formula E share many of the same qualities."

Welcoming the announcement, CY Leung, Chief Executive said: "The Hong Kong

Government is promoting e-transport, so what would be better promotion of e-transport than to hold this exciting event in Hong Kong."



Above: Formula E champion Nelson Piquet Junior (centre) at the unveiling ceremony for the Hong Kong ePrix with Mr Leung (left), and Gregory So, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, 26 January 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Stockholm, Sweden

Wednesday, 27 January 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Helsinki, Finland

Tuesday, 2 February 2016
Chinese New Year reception in St Petersburg, Russia

Wednesday, 3 February 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Moscow, Russia

Sunday, 14 February 2016
London Chinese New Year celebrations in Trafalgar Square and Chinatown

Wednesday, 17 February 2016
Chinese New Year reception in London, UK

Thursday 25, February 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Edinburgh, UK

Wednesday, 9 March 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Oslo, Norway

Thursday, 10 March 2016
Chinese New Year reception in Copenhagen, Denmark

FOR HONG KONG EVENT DETAILS:



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