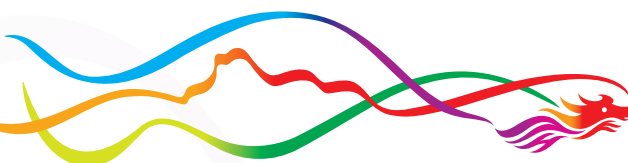


HONG KONG REVIEW

October 2020

Hong Kong Economic
and Trade Office, London



Saving Lives, Protecting Business

*Together,
We Fight the Virus!*

Swift and decisive government action has been taken to save lives and protect businesses in Hong Kong amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The Government moved swiftly to implement a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to contain the spread of the deadly coronavirus, and protect the health of the community. A key priority in the decision-making was to maintain Hong Kong's position as an international city and major aviation hub.

The response has been guided by three key principles: responding promptly, staying alert to the situation, and working in an open and transparent manner.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam was quick to advise that the actions "managed to keep the number of confirmed cases at a relatively low level in this pandemic, and prevent large-scale community outbreaks."

Not only were there health concerns for the population but unprecedented challenges facing the economy. For these reasons, Mrs Lam told everyone "we need the same fighting spirit and togetherness to preserve the vitality of the economy, retain jobs and relieve people's financial burdens."

Exceptional times call for exceptional measures and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government was quick to act in announcing and delivering some HK\$287.5 billion of aid in April which was broad-based enough to benefit large numbers of individuals and businesses while also focused on the hardest-hit sectors.

"The Government has introduced the largest package to date of relief measures" explained a Government spokesman.

Jobs and the economy

A key area of the strategy was an HK\$81 billion Employment Support Scheme which included wage subsidies to those employers who undertook not to make staff redundant and to spend the subsidy to pay employee wages.

"Given the epidemic's catastrophic impact on Hong Kong's economy, the Government has to dig deep into its fiscal reserves to help our businesses and people", explained Mrs Lam. Adding: "With Hong Kong's fundamental strengths and our people's resilience, we are confident that our city can ride out this storm and Hong Kong can be relaunched."

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●●● COVID-19

Commerce Secretary on pandemic's impact



In a video-link briefing organised by Asia House, London's centre of expertise on trade and investment, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development shared Hong Kong's response to coronavirus to an audience in the UK.

Edward Yau, Hong Kong's Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, briefed Asia House corporate members on the public health actions, and the

measures being taken to support businesses worst hit by the pandemic.

Members joined the online event from around the world and raised various questions, including how the Government viewed the latest meeting of G20 leaders and the outcome.

The potential for UK involvement in the ambitious Greater Bay Area scheme was also raised with Mr Yau. The project would see Hong Kong linked with Macau and nine other cities in southern China to foster growth by developing technology and innovation, boosting infrastructure and increasing financial links between them.

Above left: Mr Yau shares the latest from Hong Kong amid efforts to curb coronavirus.

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Saving Lives, Protecting Business

The unemployed were also given help, with asset limits for social security measures being temporarily lifted to allow more of those without work to become eligible for the support. Additionally, HK\$6 billion of Government funds has been invested to create around 30,000 jobs in the public and private sector. The Government is also recruiting about 10,000 civil servants and creating around 5,000 short-term intern positions within its departments to help ease the situation caused by the global pandemic.

An Anti-Epidemic Fund (AEF) was introduced by Government, which included over 70 measures to help the sectors struggling the most and to tide them over until they can begin trading again.

As the crisis continued, a second round of AEF funding has been made available. This targets, among other areas, the tourism industry with a subsidy to travel agents and their staff as well as the hotel industry.

There was a strong demand for the second tranche with nearly 185,000 applications, including around 160,000 from employees and over 26,000 from the self-employed.

Subsidies and grants

Restaurants and other catering outlets received a subsidy as long as they did not implement staff redundancy and used 80 per cent of the money on employee wages. Aviation, Education

and Construction sectors were also provided for.

For instance, a relief grant of HK\$80,000 was made available to tuck shops and refectories across educational establishments, and a subsidy of HK\$7,500 was granted to every eligible construction worker. The sport industry was not ignored, with the Government providing a one-off grant of HK\$7,500 to registered coaches.

Every permanent resident of Hong Kong over 18 benefited from a HK\$10,000 cash pay out while additional help came in the form of fare concessions on public transport and interest-free grant deferral payments for students who also received an additional grant support. Residents have also been assisted through relief of their tax burden, while those in particular need (including the elderly and disabled) were supported through specific measures designed to target their needs.

Banks step up

Hong Kong's banking sector has not stood still during the crisis. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) together with the major banks and Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Insurance Limited (HKMCI) have been in constant contact with business leaders (including Members of the Legislative Council) to produce a package of support measures aimed at small and medium-sized companies.



Nearly 9,000 applications from SMEs involving principal repayment holidays, loan extensions and relief loans have been approved already, amounting to over HK\$57 billion. This has helped ease cash-flow problems facing businesses and lessened the impact of the outbreak of Covid-19 on the local economy.

"With Hong Kong's fundamental strengths and Hong Kong people's resilience, I am confident that together we shall ride out the storm," Mrs Lam said, as she and principal Government officers showed solidarity with the people by taking a 10 per-cent pay cut for the coming 12 months.

Already this philanthropic action by forty-three officials has resulted in a cheques for over HK\$10 million being sent to Community Chest of Hong Kong to help grassroots citizens most in need.

Above: The Chief Executive, Carrie Lam (centre), holds a press conference on measures to fight the epidemic with the Chief Secretary for Administration, Matthew Cheung Kin-chung (third left); the Financial Secretary, Paul Chan (third right); the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Edward Yau (first left); the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-king (second left); the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Frank Chan Fan (first right); and the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan (second right).

Government

New law to protect prosperity and stability



A National Security law was enacted in Hong Kong on 30 June 2020. It is a historical step to improve the system for Hong Kong and safeguard the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security.

In an effort to maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, the National People's Congress has taken an important legal step towards full implementation of Basic Law. The new law is not intended to undermine any of the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by its citizens, and Hong Kong's judicial independence has been assured. The move has been taken to ensure a stable environment in which business and investment may flourish by boosting investor confidence.

Pursuant to the law, the committee for safeguarding national security of the HKSAR has been established and had its first meeting in early July.

The committee was chaired by Chief Executive Carrie Lam and the National

Security Adviser, Luo Huining, appointed by the State Council also sat in on the meeting.

The objective of the legislation is to prevent, curb and sanction secession, the subversion of state power, the organisation and carrying out of terrorist activities that seriously endanger national security, and interference by foreign and external forces in the affairs of the HKSAR.

Above: The Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, chaired by Chief Executive Carrie Lam (centre), convenes its first meeting with National Security Adviser Luo Huining (front row, second left) in attendance.

●●● COVID-19

Costly Covid, month by month

To keep everyone updated on a fast-moving epidemic, the HKSAR Government launched a dedicated Covid-19 thematic website to disseminate relevant information and useful resources; this includes health advice and a dashboard showing the Covid-19 cases in Hong Kong as well as the situation of various countries. Some of the highlights from this year are summarised below. <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/>

4 January 2020: Serious Response Level for the Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance activated.

25 January: Emergency Response Level activated.

26 January: Restrictions on all Hubei Province residents and people who visited the province in the last 14 days from entering.

30 January: Transport services and border control point services reduced or suspended – including express rail services and cross-boundary ferries, reduction in passenger flights.

From 5 February: Authorities move swiftly to ensure that everyone entering Hong Kong from the Mainland is placed under a mandatory 14-day quarantine – following the first local infection cases recorded on 4 February.

February – June: Global repatriation of Hong Kong residents is underway. Many charter flights are arranged.

From 13 March: Health quarantine on inbound travellers from overseas is imposed.

From 25 March: Non-residents denied entry to Hong Kong following a surge in Covid-19 cases worldwide, and transit services at Hong Kong International Airport suspended.

25 March: Government invokes order to temporarily prohibit alcoholic drink sales at about 8,600 restaurants, bars and clubs.

April – May: No local infections recorded for 12 consecutive days. Social distancing measures relaxed.

11 May: Government distributes free reusable face masks. The specially-made CuMask (pictured) has six layers and was developed by the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles & Apparel.



27 May: Resumption of Secondary school classes (3 to 5) with anti-epidemic measures in place.

8 June: Resumption of remaining school classes (primary 4 to secondary 2). Timetables staggered to reduce contact.

30 June: Postmen were kept busy for three weeks delivering 30 million free Covid-19 masks to all 2.8 million residential addresses in Hong Kong, a pack of ten being sent to each household in a massive government distribution scheme.



11 July: Following a local rise in Covid-19 cases, the Secretary for Food & Health, Prof Sophia Chan, announces that social distancing measures are tightened, initially for 14 days; reducing capacity at restaurants, fitness centres and nightclubs.

13 July: Schools and kindergartens start summer holidays early. Special arrangements were made for students with exams scheduled.



15 July: Epidemic measures are tightened further. Masks are made compulsory on public transport, and a dozen business types are ordered to close, including fitness centres and nightclubs; restaurant dining is prohibited after 6pm.

25 and 29 July: Negative test results are now required for travellers arriving in Hong Kong from high-risk areas.

30 July: Record high of 149 Covid-19 cases in a single day, with 145 of them deemed locally-transmitted, and four imported.

31 July: Chief Executive, Carrie Lam announces postponement of Legislative Council election until 2021.

7 August: The Government announces free Covid-19 testing for those who are worried. The programme, which promises privacy, will start in a few weeks.



14 September: Some 1.78 million have already registered at the community centres for Covid-19 tests since the launch of the universal community testing programme on 1 September.

1 October: UK designated as “high-risk area” where a negative test result is required before boarding a plane for anyone from the UK wishing to travel to Hong Kong.

●●● Travel

Ins and outs of Hong Kong Travel

In line with changing global travel restrictions, Hong Kong imposed conditions in order to protect its residents and help it cope better with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. These are subject to change and travellers are advised to check before making plans.

Entry restrictions imposed earlier this year on non-Hong Kong residents are still in place and would be subject to review from time to time.

It means that all non-residents arriving by air are refused entry to Hong Kong. Transfer/transit services at the Hong Kong International Airport may still be viable.

It is now necessary for all those arriving from the Mainland, Macao, Taiwan and from overseas to undergo a 14-day compulsory quarantine. Furthermore, travellers who arrive from specified high-risk places would also be required to submit a negative Covid-19 test result before boarding a plane to Hong Kong.

All inbound travellers are required to submit a health declaration form and upon arriving Hong Kong they will be required to proceed to the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre set up in the restricted area of the Airport for collecting their deep throat saliva samples. Depending on the time of their flight, passenger may either wait for the test result on the same date at the Collection Centre or be sent to one of the holding centres to spend a night before getting the test result.

●●● Finance

Balancing the Books for the year ahead



Supporting enterprises and livelihoods, safeguarding jobs and stimulating the economy were the main foci of Paul Chan's fourth budget for Hong Kong.

Amid the Covid-19 epidemic, Hong Kong's Financial Secretary announced a raft of relief measures in his latest budget including reducing 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.

"This [Budget] will not only broaden the foundation of our economy, but also provide diversified and quality employment opportunities for young people to unleash their potential," Mr Chan said.

Although the measures announced will contribute greatly to the Government's 2020-21 deficit, which is estimated at HK\$139.1 billion, or 4.8 per-cent of GDP, Mr Chan said there were to be no changes to tax rates or bandings. He also reiterated the Government's continuing support for various sectors including tourism, shipping and asset management.

Analysts generally welcomed the announced tax measures, including those to attract private equity funds and asset managers to Hong Kong to maintain its position as Asia's premier business gateway.

Among the proposals to fortify the city's competitiveness as an international financial centre are:

- issuing green bonds totalling HK\$66 billion over the next five years to develop Hong Kong's position as a premier hub for green finance;
- waiving the stamp duty on stock transfers paid by Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) market makers when creating and redeeming ETF units listed in Hong Kong to spur development of the ETF market;
- issuing inflation-linked retail bonds (iBond) and Silver Bonds totalling not less than HK\$13 billion; and
- providing tax concessions for carried interest issued by private equity funds and preparing to establish a limited partnership regime to encourage them to domicile and operate in Hong Kong.

Mr Chan also highlighted the importance of promoting innovation and technology as a driving force for future economic development.

To this end, he announced a series of proposals which include:

- earmarking HK\$3 billion for Phase 2 of the Hong Kong Science Park Expansion Programme;
- exploring the development of a third InnoHK research cluster, in addition to the two research clusters currently being set up at the Science Park, one focusing on healthcare



Above: The Financial Secretary, Paul Chan (second left) alongside the then Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, James Lau (second right); the Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury), Alice Lau (first left); and the Government Economist, Andrew Au (first right).

Left: The Financial Secretary, Paul Chan, outlines his Budget.

technologies and the other on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies;

- increasing the Government's funding ratio under the Technology Voucher Programme to three-quarters from two-thirds, and raising the funding ceiling from HK\$400,000 to HK\$600,000, to promote the wider use of technological services and solutions among local companies; and
- providing HK\$345 million for a pilot subsidy scheme to encourage the logistics industry to enhance its productivity through technology application.

Launching a strategy aimed at fostering talent, Mr Chan said: "To provide young people with more opportunities to broaden their horizons and apply their knowledge, the Government and relevant organisations have provided training, internship schemes, subsidies, etc. for young people to develop their strengths in different areas."

The key initiatives are:

- boosting the Researcher Programme and Postdoctoral Hub to cover all technology companies conducting research and development in Hong Kong;
- setting aside HK\$40 million to subsidise short-term internships for undergraduates and postgraduates taking STEM programmes at local universities; and
- increasing short-term internship opportunities in the Government and public organisations for students to almost 5000 in 2020-21.

Looking ahead, the Financial Secretary suggested that significant changes to the Hong Kong tax system may be required in response to local fiscal needs and, more importantly, international tax developments.

Mr Chan said that the measures in the Budget would help create "new areas of economic growth, with a view to increasing our revenue, promoting social development, coping with the challenges arising from an ageing population, and providing more quality employment opportunities."

The economic downturn and increasing expenditure mean the Government is forecasting deficits over the next five years. Nevertheless, its strong fiscal reserves mean Hong Kong is well placed to weather such 'rainy days'.

More details on the special Budget can be seen here:

www.budget.gov.hk/2020/eng

Trade

Hong Kong named world's "freest economy"



To trade with Hong Kong is to trade with the world's freest economy. And that's official!

The prestigious status has been conferred on Hong Kong for the fifth consecutive year by the Fraser Institute in its *Economic Freedom of the World 2020* annual report. In fact, the city has gained top ranking since the report's inception. Among the five areas of assessment,

Hong Kong was placed first in two: Freedom to Trade and Regulation.

"This is an unambiguous recognition of Hong Kong's long-standing and steadfast commitment to building a free economy with a level playing field," a Government spokesman said. "Free market principles have long been essential considerations of our policies and the cornerstone of the Hong Kong economy. We are fully committed to upholding Hong Kong's institutional strengths."

Economies in Asia are likely to continue to be the engine of global economic growth. Given its geographical location, Hong Kong is in an ideal position to capture future opportunities in the global economic shift from West to East – notably important national development strategies such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Finance

Top-ten finance centre

As the top-ten international financial centres were named, Hong Kong was ranked a credible fifth overall and even higher in several specific categories.

The Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI) 28 report, published by Z/Yen from the UK, and the China Development Institute from Shenzhen, conferred Hong Kong's worldwide status as a leading trade centre.

Remarking on the achievement, a Government spokesman said: "The recent report noted a high level of volatility in the ranking of the financial centres when compared with previous reports, probably reflecting the uncertainty around international trade and the impact of geopolitical and local unrest."

While the overall ratings of financial centres ranked number two to six were very close, Hong Kong ranked most favourably in several of the five areas of competitiveness: Business Environment, Human Capital, Infrastructure, Financial Sector Development, and Reputational and General. "Notably, Hong Kong was ranked number three in the areas of Business Environment and Human Capital," added the spokesman.

The publication confirms Hong Kong's institutional strengths and resilient financial system although there's no complacency, as the spokesman outlined plans to develop the city into a broader and deeper fundraising platform: "Hong Kong remains a leading international financial centre and the gateway to the Mainland Chinese market."



Finance

Record High HKEX results

For three consecutive years, Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) has achieved record high profits.

On the back of rising market turnover, as well as a wave of mainline Chinese technical giants seeking listings in the city, HKEX has announced a one per cent rise in profits to HK\$5.23 billion (US\$675 million) in the first six months. The figures exceed analysts' estimates and are the highest since the index was established in 2000.

Commenting on the news, HKEX Chief Executive Charles Li said in a results statement posted on the exchanges' website: "HKEX had a very good first half, set against a turbulent and volatile macro backdrop, reporting record half-yearly revenue and other income, and profit."

Mr Li said the strong earnings were because of high market turnover and initial public offerings, particularly the sizeable secondary listings, which offset softness in investment income caused by swings in global portfolio valuations during the period.

"I am confident that HKEX will continue to play a major role in connecting China and connecting the world," he added.

Sixty-four companies raised HK\$92.8 billion in the period, making Hong Kong the world's Number Two IPO destination for investors to float private companies onto a public stock market.



●●● COVID-19

Local innovation

Local innovations in Hong Kong help combat the Covid-19 virus as the so-called third-wave of the virus hit the city in mid-July.

Drawing on expertise, R&D companies have created a virus-killing disinfectant spray, 3D-printed medical face shields and artificial intelligence-monitored temperature screening, all in an effort to contain the coronavirus outbreak. Hong Kong faces an acute difficulty from being a small, densely populated city of some 7.5 million inhabitants.

The Government moved swiftly to cope with the rising number of patients being admitted to hospital. Anti-epidemic facilities were expanded, with the AsiaWorld-Expo exhibition halls transformed into a community isolation and treatment centre. Additionally the Government has decided to provide 3,500 quarantine units at Penny's Bay, in northeastern Lantau Island, by the end of the year.

How innovation helps

Innovation plays a key part in helping the city fight against coronavirus.

In March, the Innovation and Technology Commission launched a scheme to offer up to HK\$2 million to each project that helps prevent and control the Covid-19 outbreak through trials of local research and development (R&D) innovation.

The city's scientific community has also been hard at work. At the end of July, researchers at Hong Kong Polytechnic University revealed that, after comparing coronavirus samples taken from people recently infected in Hong Kong, evidence had been found that showed the virus may have stopped mutating.

The information will be invaluable during the world's continued fight against Covid-19, although it does indicate that the virus has effectively adapted to humans and become more transmissible.

University innovation

Since the 2003 Sars outbreak, Hong Kong's R&D community hasn't stopped preparing for the possibility of another epidemic. Innovations created in universities and incubation campuses, such as Cyberport and Hong Kong Science Park, continue to play their part. From the mass production of 3D-printed protective face shields for use in local hospitals to the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) for screening travellers suspected of having fevers.



Above: Professor Alexander Wai Ping-kong, vice-president of research development at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, explains the use of a mass-produced 3D protective face shield that is being worn by hospital workers during the Covid-19 outbreak. Photo © K.Y. Cheng.



Above: The Germagic Thyme antimicrobial coating, invented by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology scientists, is sprayed inside a Hong Kong bus. Photo © May Tse.

Germagic Thyme, a germicidal disinfectant spray product invented in Hong Kong, is yet another example. Its spray-on antimicrobial coating kills 99.9 per cent of viruses for up to three months.

"After the Sars outbreak, our team saw need for a long-term disinfectant strategy, which is more innovative than traditional sterilisation," said Hamilton Hung, a former student at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and now co-founder of Germagic Biochemical Technology and Germagic products.

He said that conventional ways for disinfecting, or the 'instant kill process', can actually make a surface so clean it ends up inviting pathogens to come back at a more aggressive rate. "That's the concept behind a long-term disinfectant strategy," Hung explained. "You have a protective layer, acting as a shield for the whole surface, which makes sure of a continuous microbe-killing process."

The city's Science Museum used the Germagic Thyme spray technology to minimise the risk of coronavirus transmissions. Paulina Chan, Museum Director of the Hong Kong Science, remarked: "... we can showcase the achievements of scientific research in Hong Kong and further encourage young people to pursue their careers on innovation and technology."

Despite the turmoil of the current pandemic, Hong Kong has shown itself to be a powerhouse for nurturing these types of technology to showcase across international platforms.

●●● Finance

Global Index

Consolidating its position as a world leader in the Global Innovation Index, Hong Kong has been ranked eleventh in the 2020 edition, bucking an international trend.

Up from thirteenth last year, and one of only three countries to improve their position year-on-year, Hong Kong fared well in the measure of latest global innovation trends and annual innovation ranking of 131 economies.

The latest edition of the prestigious index was published with the theme Who Will Finance Innovation? The publication sheds light on the state of innovation financing. Its title is timely given the human and global economic damage wreaked by the Covid-19 global pandemic.



●●● Law

World Justice Project reaffirms Hong Kong's position in Rule of Law

When the World Justice Project released its 2020 Rule of Law Index, Hong Kong retained its ranking in fifth position among the East Asia and Pacific region, and sixteenth globally.

The city improved its ranking by one place, to eighth, in the Absence of Corruption category. An official statement from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government said: "Combining law enforcement, corruption prevention and public education would have been futile without our strong adherence to the rule of law and a formidable system of checks and balances including an independent judiciary".

There was also improvement by one position 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 seen as a prime venue for international dispute resolution, including arbitration and mediation. "We will consolidate Hong Kong's position as a leading international deal-making and dispute resolution hub", the statement continued.

There was a two-rank improvement to second-place regionally and globally in the Order and Security category, as crime in the city has enjoyed a downward trend for 12 consecutive years.

●●● Business

UK Design Studio expands global remit to Hong Kong



Left: Directors, Sam Bompas (Left) and Harry Parr.

Seeing the current global economic environment as 'a road to creativity', a UK studio renowned for its expertise in multi-sensory design experience, has chosen Hong Kong to open its first international studio.

Bompas and Parr aims to establish new projects and an ongoing presence in the region as director Sam Bompas explained: "We recognise Hong Kong as a premier business hub in Asia. The new studio aims to capitalise on the dynamism of the cultural and creative industries in the city."

InvestHK provided guidance and help throughout their setting up process.

Their new premises are situated in the city's central business district, a convenient location for the company to connect to existing clients and reach out to new ones. The company has already undertaken projects across Asia.

Founded in 2007, Bompas and Parr is a London-based design studio, operating globally, to experiment, develop, produce, and install projects, artworks and exhibitions. It works with commercial brands, artistic institutions, private clients and governments to deliver emotionally compelling experiences to a wide variety of audiences. The company has grown from just Sam Bompas and Harry Parr into a team of 20 skilled and ambitious people eager to generate a wide range of projects.

●●● Commerce

Director-General visits Norway

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO) joined members of Invest HK for a business breakfast in Oslo with the Norway-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce.



The seminar, held earlier this year before the Covid-19 lockdown, provided an ideal opportunity to update the Norwegians on commercial opportunities in Hong Kong.

HKETO's Director-General, Winky So, gave a speech outlining the latest developments in Hong Kong and highlighting the city's fundamental strengths and values.

Also speaking at the early morning event were Einar Steen-Olsen, President of the Norway-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce, Stephen Phillips, Director-General of Invest Hong Kong, and Binh Johansson, Community Director of Nordic Innovation House in Hong Kong.

Above left: Delegates attend the breakfast seminar in Oslo.

Above right: Winky So, Director-General, HKETO speaking in Oslo.

●●● Culture

Honour for first female Chinese film director



Congratulations to Ann Hui for being awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

Hong Kong's Ann Hui has become the first female Chinese director to receive the prestigious Golden Lion for a lifetime of achievement in the movie business.

"I just hope everything in the world will turn better and everybody can feel again as happy as I am in this moment," she said after accepting the award at the 77th Venice Film Festival.

Hui's latest film, *Love after Love*, has taken over a year to make and was shown at the festival. It features Ge Weilong, a young girl from Shanghai travelling to Hong Kong in pursuit of her education during the 1940s. To fund her studies, she asks her cynical aunt, Mrs. Liang, for help.

Hong Kong's Secretary for Commerce & Economic Development, Edward Yau, congratulated the renowned director on her achievement: "Ann is a pioneer of our cinemas; the award is in recognition of her exceptional contribution to the film industry."

The 73-year-old director, who studied at the University of Hong Kong and at the London Film School in the early 1970s, said she still retains a huge passion for films.

Above: Ann Hui, 73, has been honoured for a lifetime of achievement in the movie industry.

●●● Government

New names, new faces at the top

New Hong Kong principal officials have taken up their posts after recommendation from the Chief Executive, Carrie Lam. Several former-serving officials stood down at the same time.

The following appointments have been made: Patrick Nip Tak-kuen, Secretary for the Civil Service; Caspar Tsui Ying-waim, Secretary for Home Affairs; Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs; Christopher Hui Ching-yu, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury and Alfred Sit Wing-hang, Secretary for Innovation and Technology.

On the appointment of Mr Nip, Mr Tsui, Mr Tsang, Mr Hui and Mr Sit,

Chief Executive, Carrie Lam said: "I have no doubt that they are competent for their new posts and will lead their respective policy bureaux to rise to the challenges in serving the community."



Above: The new Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Alfred Sit (left), was one of those taking the oath of office, witnessed by the Chief Executive, Carrie Lam.

●●● Film

Hong Kong films screened in London



Above: The screening of *All's Well Ends Well* at the British Film Institute, London

The Chinese New Year was marked in London by the screening of two Hong Kong films during a special celebration at the British Film Institute on the Southbank.

The films, from different genres, were featured at the Chinese Visual Festival showcasing the creativity and excellence of Hong Kong's film industry which is one of the largest and most dynamic in the world.

Supported by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), the programme featured the UK premiere of Hong Kong director Law Wing-Cheong's heart-warming drama *Little Q*; and a special screening of the Hong Kong classic Chinese New Year film *All's Well Ends Well*.

HKETO's Director-General, Winky So, said she was delighted to bring two very different films before a London audience: "Not only do they demonstrate the creativity of our filmmakers and the diversity of the films we make, they also share with the UK audience our long-standing "Chinese New Year film" tradition which brings joys to everyone during the festive season."

●●● COVID-19

Special work arrangement from March 2020

Since 20 March, special working arrangements have been put in place by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), to do our part to tackle this public health emergency.

The decision in March was taken in light of the UK Government's guidance for employers to enable employees to work from home where possible, and the advice of the Mayor of London to avoid the use of the public transport network unless absolutely necessary during the pandemic.

Under the special arrangement, staff are working from home, with communication and office operation maintained electronically.

The Office may continue to be reached by email at general@hketolondon.gov.hk, or by phone at +44 (0) 20 7499 9821. For urgent assistance outside office hours, Hong Kong residents abroad can call the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit 24-hour hotline at +852 1868.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 4 October

Asiatiska FilmFestivalen, Umeå, Sweden

Sunday, 11 October

Asiatiska FilmFestivalen, Luleå, Sweden

Thursday, 22 October

Asiatiska FilmFestivalen, Stockholm, Sweden

More information:
www.facebook.com/asiatiskafilmfest/

Thursday, 19 November

– Saturday, 21 November
London East Asia Film Festival, London

Sunday, 13 December

Deadline for applications to attend the inaugural 2021 Hong Kong Laureate Forum. A great opportunity for young scientists to engage with and be inspired by acclaimed scientists working in their disciplines around the world at Hong Kong Science Park (15-20 November 2021). Financial support available. More information:
www.hklaureateforum.org/en/forum-2021/forum-overview

FOR HONG KONG EVENT DETAILS:



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