

HONG KONG REVIEW



Hong Kong Week in Russia



A series of special events took place in Moscow, Russia, during October to mark Hong Kong Week, organised by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to promote cultural ties between the two places.

The week began with the opening of the exhibition “A Journey to Hong Kong” on 9 October, officiated by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Tsang Tak-sing, during his visit to Moscow (see page 2). It was the first time the Hong Kong Government has mounted such a large-scale exhibition in Moscow.

Other events included an ensemble concert by the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra on 10 October and a Hong Kong Film Festival from 11 to 13 October (see page 2).

Deepening cultural links

“Hong Kong Week is a good example of how we are promoting and deepening Hong Kong’s cultural links with Russia,” said Mr Tsang. “We hope to introduce Hong Kong’s glamour as the ‘Pearl of the Orient’ to the Russian people by showcasing the city’s outlook and social life in the exhibition.”

“A Journey to Hong Kong”, which runs at the Chinese Cultural Centre in Moscow until 14 November, features a giant streetscape complete with replica tram stop and information on how to explore Hong Kong, including an eye-catching panorama of the world-famous skyline.

‘East meets West’ culture

Visitors to the exhibition can also explore Hong Kong’s unique ‘East meets West’ culture, including martial arts movies, Cantonese Opera, traditional festivals and local cuisine. There is even a virtual ferry ride across Victoria Harbour.

Hong Kong’s natural beauty isn’t forgotten either, with a special zone devoted to its countryside, wetlands, beaches and urban greenery.

The exhibition “A Journey to Hong Kong” was organised with assistance from the Chinese Ministry of Culture and the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Russian Federation.

Above top: Mr Tsang (centre) and guests tour the tram stop exhibit at the exhibition “A Journey to Hong Kong”. Far right, Erica Ng, Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London; Far left: Zhang Zhonghua, Minister-Counsellor for Culture of the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Russian Federation.

Above: Visitors to “A Journey to Hong Kong” can pretend to be Cantonese Opera stars in the exhibition’s cultural heritage zone.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...



Financial Secretary,
John C Tsang, visits
Russia (page 3)



Secretary for Justice,
Rimsky Yuen, visits
London (page 3)

●●● Culture

Moscow festival celebrates Hong Kong cinema

The third Hong Kong film festival in Moscow, organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), took place in October, with screenings of five recent Hong Kong movies including “Bodyguards And Assassins”, which was awarded Best Film at the Hong Kong Film Awards in 2009. Academia Rossica and Vertov Real Kino were co-organisers of the festival, which was part of Hong Kong Week in Russia (see page 1).



Above: From right: Natalia Manskaya, Director of Vertov Real Kino; Erica Ng, Director-General of the HKETO, London; Svetlana Adjoubel, Director of Academia Rossica; and Dennis Ching, Deputy Director-General of the HKETO, London, at the opening screening of the Hong Kong Film Festival in Moscow 2013.

“The Hong Kong film industry has been thrilling and entertaining people for many decades and highlights the talent, creativity and competitiveness of Hong Kong,” said Erica Ng, Director-General of the HKETO, London, speaking at the opening screening of “Bodyguards And Assassins”. “This film festival is one more example of how we are strengthening Hong Kong’s cultural links with Russia.”

The other films shown were “Drug War” (2013), “Cold War” (2012), “The Silent War” (2012), and “Life Without Principle” (2011).

●●● Culture

Secretary for Home Affairs visits Russia

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Tsang Tak-sing, visited Moscow in October to strengthen cultural, youth exchange and sport co-operation between Russia and Hong Kong.

Mr Tsang met with Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, Grigory Ivliev, to review the growing cultural exchanges between the two places following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Co-operation in September 2011.

He also met with Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Veniamin Kaganov, to explore the possibility of starting youth exchanges between Hong Kong and Russia, as well as President of the Rugby Union of Russia, Vyacheslav Kopiev, to discuss co-operation on rugby sport.

While in Moscow, Mr Tsang officiated at the opening ceremony of the exhibition “A Journey to Hong Kong” (see front cover) and attended an ensemble concert of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra. He also visited the Bolshoi Theatre and Winzavod Centre for Contemporary Art.

Musical odyssey in Russia



The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra (HKCO) performed at the International Music Festival in Ekaterinburg, Russia, in October, as well as giving concerts in Chelyabinsk and Tyumen, thereby becoming the first performing arts group from Hong Kong to perform in the Ural region of Russia. The HKCO’s wide-ranging programme included re-arranged ancient melodies, and contemporary pieces by Hong Kong composers Chan Ming Chi and Law Wing Fai.

The orchestra is pictured above performing at the Chelyabinsk Opera House. The HKCO went on to give an ensemble concert in Moscow, pictured below, which was attended by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Tsang Tak-sing, and formed part of Hong Kong Week in Russia (see page 1).



Above: The HKCO ensemble pictured after the concert in Moscow, with Tsang Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs (sixth from right), and Erica Ng, Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (sixth from left).



Above: Mr Tsang (right) with Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Veniamin Kaganov (third left).



Above: Mr Tsang (second right) meets Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, Grigory Ivliev (second left).

●●● Economy

Financial Secretary visits Russia to build closer ties

Financial Secretary, John C Tsang, visited Russia in September to strengthen financial and economic co-operation between Hong Kong and Russia and take part in the G20 Leaders’ Summit.

In Moscow, Mr Tsang met with Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Arkady Dvorkovich. Mr Tsang said at the meeting that Hong Kong and Russia can strongly complement each other on the economic front.

While in Moscow, Mr Tsang met Minister of Finance of the Russian Federation, Anton Siluanov. Both sides took note of growing bilateral relations between Hong Kong and Russia and welcomed more collaboration on various fronts. Mr Tsang also met with Governor of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, Elvira Nabiullina, and Deputy Minister of Regional Development of the Russian Federation, Sergey Darkin.

After leaving Moscow, Mr Tsang went on to attend the G20 Leaders’ Summit in St Petersburg as part of the delegation of the People’s Republic of China.

While in St Petersburg, Mr Tsang also attended the opening ceremony of the 2013 Chinese Film Festival, hosted by Vice-Premier of the State Council, Wang Yang, and Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister, Olga Golodets. Some of the films shown at the Festival featured Hong Kong film directors and actors. Mr Tsang also met with Chinese Consul-General in St Petersburg, Ji Yanchi.



Mr Tsang (left) meets Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister, Arkady Dvorkovich.



Mr Tsang (right) with Russia’s Minister of Finance, Anton Siluanov, in Moscow.



Mr Tsang pictured outside the venue of the G20 Leaders’ Summit in St Petersburg.

Government confirms US dollar link. The exchange rate link between the Hong Kong and US dollars is the “cornerstone of Hong Kong’s monetary and financial stability,” said John C Tsang, Financial Secretary, in a statement on the 30th anniversary of the introduction of the Linked Exchange Rate System (LERS). “We strongly believe that [the LERS] is still the most appropriate monetary system for Hong Kong in light of the challenges ahead,” said Mr Tsang. “The Government sees no need and has no intention to change the system.”

Hong Kong is ‘international legal centre’

Secretary for Justice, Rimsky Yuen, visited London in September to promote Hong Kong as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services.

Addressing a forum organised by the Hong Kong Association, he said Hong Kong’s legal system had played a crucial role in maintaining the city’s competitiveness and status as one of the leading global financial and

commercial centres.

“We will spare no efforts to ensure that our legal infrastructure will stay at the forefront of international development so as to maintain and fortify Hong Kong’s status as a global centre for finance and commerce,” Mr Yuen said at the forum.

While in London, Mr Yuen called on Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling; the Attorney General, Dominic

Grieve; the President of the Supreme Court, Lord Neuberger; and the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Sir John Thomas, to enhance ties with the legal and judicial profession in the United Kingdom and to update them on Hong Kong’s latest developments. Mr Yuen also met with officials of the major legal and arbitration bodies while in London.



Above: Mr Yuen (right) with President of the Supreme Court, Lord Neuberger.

●●● Business

Norway – Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce celebrates 25th anniversary

The Norway – Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 25th anniversary in September with a reception in Oslo.

Speaking at the reception, Dennis Ching, Deputy Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO) encouraged Norwegian companies to take advantage of Hong Kong’s unique position as a gateway to China and Asia. He also highlighted the opportunities in Hong Kong’s infrastructure projects for Norwegian companies.



Above: Stephen Wong, Regional Director, Europe, Hong Kong Trade Development Council (third from right), Dennis Ching, Deputy Director-General of the HKETO, London (third from left), pictured with Board Members of the Norway – Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce.

Creative Hong Kong takes centre stage

Hong Kong's creative industries took centre stage at the 2013 City of London Lord Mayor's Show.



Featuring a giant comic book and live-action mascots, the Hong Kong float was greeted enthusiastically by around half a million people who lined London's streets on 9 November. Millions more around the world watched the parade on TV. The Lord Mayor's Show, which was first held in 1215, celebrates the swearing-in of the new Lord Mayor of the City of London. This year's Lord Mayor is Alderman Fiona Woolf.

"Our float in this year's Lord Mayor's Show demonstrates that as well as being one of the world's most forward-looking, business-focused cities, Hong Kong is also home to a vibrant and thriving creative sector," said Erica Ng, Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, which devised and organised the Hong Kong's float.



Top: A comic-style image of the Hong Kong skyline bursts out of a giant comic book in the centrepiece of the Hong Kong float.

Above: Erica Ng, Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (left), helps cartoon character McDull get ready for the Lord Mayor's Show.

Above centre: Cloud, from the comic book series "Fung Wan", performs some martial arts moves. He was accompanied by Wind, another character in the series, who also took part in the Hong Kong float.

Above right: Well-known comic and animation characters McDull and McMug charm the crowds at the Lord Mayor's Show – showcasing Hong Kong's thriving creative industries.

Right: The Hong Kong float at this year's Lord Mayor's Show featured seven characters from Hong Kong comic book art and animation. Here, characters from Fatina Dreams – Fatina and her friend Chefo – together with Old Master Q greet cheering crowds outside St Paul's Cathedral.

●●● Sport

East Asia Games Success

Hong Kong athletes claimed 10 gold, 16 silver and 30 bronze medals at the 2013 East Asian Games in Tianjin, China, in October.

The Hong Kong team competed in 23 sports, including swimming, athletics, badminton, basketball, cycling, fencing, football, gymnastics, hockey, judo, karate-do, shooting, squash, table tennis, weightlifting and wushu.

Notable achievements included gold medals won by the fencing team in the men's foil event and the women's cycling 200m sprint, won by Lee Wai-sze.

"We are very proud of their outstanding achievements," said Secretary for Home Affairs, Tsang Tak-sing.



Above: The Hong Kong team is welcomed back home by Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Bobby Cheng (second row, 12th right), and the Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Olivia Chan (second row, third right), following their remarkable achievements at the East Asian Games.

●●● Culture

Bruce Lee 40 years on

The world's largest exhibition honouring martial arts movie star Bruce Lee opened in Hong Kong in July to mark the 40th anniversary of his death.



Above: Financial Secretary, John C Tsang (centre), and other guests officiate at the opening ceremony of the Bruce Lee exhibition.



Above: The exhibition features set reconstructions inspired by prominent scenes in Lee's classic movies.

Over 600 relics relating to Bruce Lee, including costumes, books, gym equipment and writings are on display at the "Bruce Lee: Kung Fu•Art•Life" exhibition, which opened at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum in July.

First Asian superstar

Lee, who died suddenly during the shooting of his last film, "The Game of Death", in 1973 aged just 32, is often called the first Asian international film star. His portrayal of martial arts on the big screen awakened global interest in age-old Chinese traditions and did more than anyone else to introduce Hong Kong to the world through film.

His films are widely acclaimed by critics as transcending generational, cultural and geographical boundaries.

His own path

Lee's daughter, Shannon, hopes young visitors in particular will experience and learn from her father's emphasis on self-expression, and his advice to follow one's own path, rather than simply copying what others have done before.

"I think people know his name because he was a movie star – but I want people to know about his philosophies, know about his struggles, know about all the things he created and did in his lifetime," she said.

●●● Culture

Comic and animation boost

Historic buildings in the heart of Hong Kong have been transformed into a major centre for the comics and animation industry.

Comix Home Base, which opened in July, has studios for comic and animation artists, venues for events and exhibitions, a library of print and rare digital comic books and magazines, and comic art-related shops.

Visiting the centre in September, Gregory So, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, said: "Comix Home Base helps nurture local talent, enhances the public's understanding of the culture of comics and animation, and strengthens the development of creative industries."



Above: Mr So (left) is briefed by Head of Conservation Portfolio of Urban Renewal Authority, Herman Fung, on the architectural features of Comix Home Base.

●●● Economy

Closer links with Mainland China

Trade links between Hong Kong and Mainland China will be further strengthened by a new Consultative Committee on Economic and Trade Co-operation.

The Committee will work with chambers of commerce, trade offices and other associations in both Hong Kong and Mainland China in order to prepare recommendations to the governments of both places on how to develop even closer economic co-operation.

●●● Economy

3,000 projects for Invest Hong Kong

Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), the government department which provides free advice and support to businesses wanting to set up or expand in Hong Kong, celebrated its 3,000th project in September.

Since its launch in 2000, InvestHK has helped businesses invest over HK\$78 billion in the area. Companies supported by InvestHK have created more than 33,950 jobs in Hong Kong in their first years of operation alone.

The 3,000th project supported by InvestHK is the ASB Biodiesel plant in Tseung Kwan O, which also marks Hong Kong's first project with Bahrain.

●●● Finance

Renminbi trading increases

Renminbi (RMB), the currency of Mainland China, is now the ninth most traded currency in the world, according to a recent report from the Bank for International Settlements.

This was one of many developments discussed at the third meeting of the Hong Kong-London Forum, a private-sector led forum attended by senior representatives from ten banks: Barclays, Bank of China, China Construction Bank, Citi, Deutsche Bank, HSBC, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, J.P. Morgan, Royal Bank of Scotland and Standard Chartered Bank.

The forum, which promotes co-operation on the development of international RMB business, meets alternately in Hong Kong and London.

The growth in RMB trading was further underlined by figures published by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in September. The total remittance of the RMB for cross-border trade settlement amounted to RMB304.2 billion in August, compared with RMB285.4 billion in the previous month. RMB deposits in Hong Kong picked up by 2.1% to RMB709.5 billion at the end of August.

Above: Financial Secretary to the Treasury of the United Kingdom, Greg Clark (left), and Acting Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Eddie Yue, at the third meeting of the Hong Kong-London RMB Forum.



●●● Business

Finalists in business start-up competition

Twelve innovative businesses have been chosen as finalists in Invest Hong Kong's 2013 StartmeupHK Venture Programme competition, designed to highlight Hong Kong's potential for start-up businesses. The competition attracted 384 entries from 39 countries.

The finalists come from the US, India, Canada, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Israel and have business ideas ranging from ophthalmology solutions to the recycling of oil-based waste into clean fuel (see box).

All entries were judged on the scale of the challenge or opportunity they addressed, the venture's viability and sustainability, and the potential economic benefit to Hong Kong.

The 12 finalists will be invited to Hong Kong to take part in StartmeupHK Week from 2 to 7 December, at which the three Grand Award Winners will be announced.

Finalists in the 2013 StartmeupHK competition.

- D'Arcy Polychrome Ltd (New Zealand) – polychromatic dry granulated pigment
- Forus Health Pvt Ltd (India) – mass-screening ophthalmology solution
- Global Spatial Technology Solutions (Canada) – air and maritime traffic data management
- Hanson Robotics (US) – humanoid robot manufacturing
- IT Central Station (Israel) – social media platform for enterprise technology
- J Plus Corporation Ltd (Hong Kong) – sports coaching application
- Phoenix Depot International Inc (Canada) – recycling of oil-based waste for clean fuel
- Pinnacle Engines (US) – energy-efficient engines
- Sanguine Biosciences, Inc (US) – biomedical data research
- VajraSoft Inc (US) – intellectual property management solution
- Wifinity Ltd (India) – IoT (Internet of Things) semiconductor
- Zimfly, Inc (US) – mobile Building Information Modelling system

Full details at www.startmeup.hk.

●●● Environment

Further HK\$3 billion to remove polluting diesel vehicles

The Hong Kong Government has announced a further three billion dollars to help take older diesel vehicles off the road and reduce air pollution. This brings to HK\$11.7 billion the total subsidy available to help take older vehicles out of service – an initiative first announced in this year's policy address.

There are currently around 130,000 registered diesel commercial vehicles in Hong Kong, of which around 84,000 are old, more polluting models. Taking these off the streets will reduce vehicle emissions of suspended particulates by 80% and nitrogen oxides by 30%, officials said.

After taking into account the actual numbers of vehicles involved, it was originally estimated that phasing out the vehicles would cost HK\$8.7 billion. Recognising the difficulties facing some people running diesel vehicles, the Secretary for the Environment, KS Wong, also said he would extend by one year the deadline for taking older vehicles out of service.

The Hong Kong Government has welcomed measures announced by Mainland China to help reduce air pollution, including targets to promote desulphurisation and denitrification technologies, improve fuel quality, increase the use of cleaner energy and reduce industrial emissions.

●●● Economy

Top of the freedom charts



Hong Kong is again ranked as the world's freest economy in the Fraser Institute's annual Economic Freedom of the World report, published in September.

Hong Kong, which has held the number one spot for over 30 years, topped the rankings once again, followed by Singapore, New Zealand, and Switzerland.

Compiled by independent researchers, the report is the leading measurement of economic freedom in 151 countries and territories and takes into account size of government, legal system and property rights, access to sound money, freedom to trade internationally and regulation of credit, labour and business.

●●● Economy

Free trade with Mainland China

Trade between Hong Kong and China has been further boosted by a new supplement to the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), the landmark free trade agreement between Hong Kong and Mainland China which this year celebrates its tenth anniversary.

CEPA has been described as the most liberal free trade agreement ever signed by Mainland China and makes it easier for Hong Kong and Mainland companies to access each other's markets.

The new agreement, Supplement X, will come into force in January 2014 and further extend the scope of CEPA by liberalising trade in areas including legal services, financial services and telecommunications.



Above: Financial Secretary, John C Tsang (front row, left), and Vice Minister of Commerce, Gao Yan (front row, right), sign Supplement X.

10 years of closer economic partnership

- Over 4,400 Hong Kong residents have set up individually owned stores in Mainland China in the past ten years.
- Goods worth HK\$52.4 billion have been exported tariff-free thanks to CEPA.
- Over 114 million Mainland residents have visited Hong Kong under the Individual Visit Scheme, which is part of CEPA.

●●● Economy

HK and ASEAN to negotiate FTA

Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have agreed to pursue a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Formal negotiations are expected to commence in early 2014.

Hong Kong's Chief Executive, C Y Leung, attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in October. Hong Kong is a member of the APEC.

The APEC Finance Ministers' Meeting 2014 will be held in Hong Kong.



Above: President Xi Jinping (first right), Mr Leung (second left) and other leaders of APEC member economies meet with APEC Business Advisory Council Members.

● ● ● Culture

Hong Kong Children's Choir in London

The Hong Kong Children's Choir gave a special concert at St John's Smith Square, London, in July, performing songs in Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Latin and Hebrew to an appreciative audience. The concert also featured a guest performance by the East Midlands Youth Choir from the UK.



Fifty two children aged between 11 and 17 travelled to London to sing at the concert, which was organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO). The choir also performed at the International Children's Choir Festival in Canterbury and London.

The choir, which was formed in 1969 and frequently performs around the world, has grown into a highly respected arts organisation, led by Music Director and Principal Conductor, Kathy Fok.

"Our Office is very glad to host the concert for these very young talents from Hong Kong," said Erica Ng, Director-General of HKETO, London. "We support arts and culture, which thrive on the core values of Hong Kong as a free, diversified and open society."

Top Left: Members of the Hong Kong Children's Choir perform in traditional Chinese costume.

Left: The Hong Kong Children's Choir tour leader and member of its Board of Directors, Peony Wong (right), presents a souvenir to the Director-General of HKETO, London, Erica Ng (left).



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Monday,
18 November 2013**
Hong Kong Trade Development Council Annual Dinner in London, UK

**Sunday,
2 February 2014**
Hong Kong in London Chinatown – Chinese New Year Celebration

**Thursday,
6 February 2014**
Chinese New Year reception in London, UK

**Thursday,
13 February 2014**
Chinese New Year reception in Moscow, Russia

**Friday,
14 February 2014**
Chinese New Year reception in St Petersburg, Russia

● ● ● Regeneration

New cultural district brings opportunities

UK businesses are being urged to take advantage of one of the world's largest cultural projects – the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) in Hong Kong.

The WKCD, situated on a massive waterfront site, will be a new vibrant cultural quarter for Hong Kong and will include:

- Xiqu Centre for Chinese Opera
- Hong Kong's new museum for visual culture, M+
- Freespace – a hub for live music, theatre, dance and other cutting edge cultural events
- Centre for Contemporary Performance
- Music Centre – concert hall, recital hall and arts education facilities

The WKCD will host world-class exhibitions, events and performances.

At a recent seminar in London about the West Kowloon project, Michael Lynch, CEO of West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, and Erica Ng, Director-General of Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), told UK businesses about Hong Kong's infrastructure development plan and the attractive opportunities it presents to UK business.

The seminar was organised by the HKETO, London, the Hong Kong Association, the British Council, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UK Trade & Investment.



Above: Artist's impression of the future West Kowloon Cultural District. (Photo credit: West Kowloon Cultural District Authority)



Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, 6 Grafton Street, London W1S 4EQ
Tel 020 7499 9821 Fax 020 7493 1964
Email general@hketolondon.gov.hk Website www.hketolondon.gov.hk
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