

## **SFST visits Wan Chai District**

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, visited Wan Chai District this afternoon (May 20).

Mr Lau first met with the Chairman of the Wan Chai District Council (WCDC), Mr Stephen Ng; the Vice-chairman of the WCDC, Dr Jennifer Chow; and other WCDC members to exchange views on issues of concern, including the impact of the trade conflict between China and the United States and taxation matters in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

He then visited the Secondary Section of Rosaryhill School, where he was briefed by the principal on the teaching and learning at the school. He also chatted with a group of students, including ethnic minority students, and watched their performance. Mr Lau said he appreciated their efforts to participate in extra-curricular activities to develop personal interests while pursuing academic goals at the same time.

Before concluding his visit, Mr Lau proceeded to the Methodist Rejoice Centre to tour its facilities and chat with some elderly people there. He said he was pleased to learn that the centre provides various services to enrich and improve elderly life. The Methodist Rejoice Centre is a community care centre offering day care and home care services, including cognitive training, rehabilitative therapy, social and recreational activities, and home support and meal services. It also provides professional training and support services to help carers better take care of the elderly.

---

## **Director of WHETO attends Expo Central China 2019 in Nanchang (with photos)**

The Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan, Mr Vincent Fung, represented the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to attend the keynote forum and opening ceremony for Expo Central China 2019 on May 18.

The theme of Expo Central China 2019 was "High-level Opening Up, High-quality Development". It was held in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, from May 18 to 20. Mr Fung accompanied the Vice-Premier of the State Council, Mr Hu Chunhua, and the Vice Minister of Commerce, Mr Wang Shouwen, to visit the Hong Kong Pavilion before the keynote forum and opening ceremony. During the Expo, he exchanged views with the government leaders of Hubei, Hunan, Henan, Jiangxi and Shanxi Provinces and representatives of Hong Kong enterprises, and attended the Promotion Meeting for the Investment Environment of Central

China and Projects as well as the Culture and Tourism Integration Development Forum of Central China to understand the latest economic, trade, social, investment and tourism developments of the central region of the Mainland.



---

## Chinese Opera Festival to present Guangdong Quadrangle folk concerts

The Chinese Opera Festival will present "Guangdong Quadrangle – Four Folk Music Types in Concert" in June and July. The programme will showcase four indigenous art forms of Guangdong folk music which are worthy of preservation because of their historical and retention values.

To encourage a comprehensive revival of these musical folk art forms, the renowned percussion ensemble leader Ko Yun-kuen will lead a five-piece ensemble in a revival of sounds of the "bayin" troupes in their heyday. Yuen Siu-fai, a renowned Cantonese opera actor, and Leung Hoi-li, a young singer of "nanyin", will perform the narrative singing items of "banyan", "moyuge" and "nanyin". A Cantonese music ensemble led by Yu Siu-wah and Chan Chi-chun will perform classics such as "Autumn Moon over a Placid Lake" and "The Peacock in Its Full Glory". Yuen Siu-fai, Ng Chin-fung and Sun Kim-long will sing the classic repertoire, including "Jia Baoyu's Lament for the Wrong Match in the Arranged Marriage" and "Waiting in the West Chamber under the Moon" in the classic singing style.

The titular "Guangdong Quadrangle" is a figurative description of the combined showcase of four indigenous Guangdong musical art forms. They are "dabayin", narrative singing, Cantonese music and the Cantonese operatic song in classic singing style. Among the local community "Dabayin" is also called "luogugui" or "percussion in a cabinet". In 1854, when Cantonese opera was banned, the "bayin" troupes used "suona" in two different sizes (and hence two different pitches) to mimic the vocal ranges of "sheng" (male) and "dan" (female) roles in Cantonese opera. Narrative singing is one of the essential

elements of the ballad-singing system in Guangdong, and can be subdivided into "nanyin", "moyuge" (singing with woodblock beat), "banyan" and "longzhou". Among them, "nanyin" and "moyuge" have been inscribed onto the listing of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Cantonese music is distinguished by the south China temperament. The Cantonese operatic song in classic singing style involves the ancient provenance of the central plains, where Chinese traditional theatre originated. Today almost all Cantonese opera productions are performed in the Cantonese dialect, and few actors can sing with the correct enunciation and vernacular traits in the classic singing style. Traditional theatre is an art that needs to be passed on from mentor to mentee with one-on-one attention. As old veteran artists bow out, there are no followers to carry on their legacy. It is necessary for the present generation to safeguard these art forms that are on the verge of extinction.

The programme includes the "dabayin" pieces "Jin-Fan-Kai", "An Ingot of Gold", "The Advent of Spring", "Wuzhao Pass"; Cantonese music "A Monk Misses His Wife", "The Toll of the Temple Bell", "Autumn Moon over a Placid Lake"; narrative singing performances featuring "moyuge", "The Fable of the Ungrateful Wolf" and the "nanyin" excerpt from "Nocturnal Lament"; and the Cantonese operatic songs in classic singing style "Jia Baoyu's Lament for the Wrong Match in the Arranged Marriage", "Waiting in the West Chamber under the Moon", "Rendezvous at the Monastery of Sweet Dew".

Jointly presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Xiqu Centre, West Kowloon Cultural District, "Guangdong Quadrangle – Four Folk Music Types in Concert" (with Chinese and English surtitles) will be staged at 7.30pm on June 25 and 26 (Tuesday and Wednesday) at the Theatre, Hong Kong City Hall; and at 7.30pm from July 4 to 7 (Thursday to Sunday) at the Tea House Theatre, Xiqu Centre, West Kowloon Cultural District. Ticket price ranging from \$230 to \$430 are now available at URB TIX ([www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk)) and the Xiqu Centre Ticket Office. For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit [www.cof.gov.hk/2019/en/guangdong.html](http://www.cof.gov.hk/2019/en/guangdong.html).

There will also be talks and exhibitions. All talks will be held at AC2, Level 4, Administration Building of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Free admission for the talks and exhibitions with details as follows:

Talk – The Dying Art of Narrative Singing in Cantonese Music

May 3 (Friday) 7.30pm

Speaker: Yuen Siu-fai

Moderator: Chan Chi-chun

Talk – "Of Guangdong" and "In Music" – The Two Essential Elements of Cantonese Music

May 22 (Wednesday) 7.30pm

Speaker: Yu Siu-wah

Moderator: Chan Chi-chun

Talk – "Dabayin" and Cantonese Operatic Song in Classic Singing Style  
May 29 (Wednesday) 7.30pm  
Speakers: Yuen Siu-fai, Ko Yun-kuen, Ko Yun-hung  
Moderator: Musette Tsang

Talk – The Way Forward for the Four Indigenous Musical Arts of Guangdong  
July 16 (Tuesday) 7.30pm  
Speakers: Yuen Siu-fai, Yu Siu-wah, Ko Yun-kuen, Ko Yun-hung  
Moderator: Chan Chi-chun

Exhibition – The Four Indigenous Musical Arts of Guangdong: Where Have All These Genres Gone?  
June 7 – 23 / Foyer Exhibition Area, Hong Kong Cultural Centre  
June 20 – July 8 / Foyer, Hong Kong City Hall  
June 25 – July 7 / Exhibition Gallery, Ko Shan Theatre New Wing  
July 1 – October 1 / Arts Resource Centre, 10/F, Hong Kong Central Library  
July 3 – 8 / Foyer, Tuen Mun Town Hall  
July 23 – August 4 / Exhibition Corner, Yuen Long Theatre

---

## Unemployment and underemployment statistics for February – April 2019

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for February – April 2019) released today (May 20) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 2.8% in February – April 2019, same as that in January – March 2019. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.0% in the two periods.

Comparing February – April 2019 with January – March 2019, movements in the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) and underemployment rate in different industry sectors varied, but were generally small in magnitude.

Total employment increased by around 4 600 from 3 860 400 in January – March 2019 to 3 865 000 in February – April 2019. Over the same period, the labour force also increased by around 6 500 from 3 970 800 to 3 977 300.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 1 900 from 110 400 in January – March 2019 to 112 300 in February – April 2019. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons decreased by around 900 from 38 900 to 38 000.

### Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong said, "The labour market stayed tight in February – April 2019, with the unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) and

the underemployment rate remaining unchanged at 2.8% and 1.0% respectively."

"When compared to the preceding three-month period, movements in sectoral unemployment rates varied but were mostly small in magnitude. On a year-on-year basis, the unemployment situation improved in many major service sectors. In particular, the unemployment rate of the retail, accommodation and food services sector declined further on the back of sustained expansion in inbound tourism."

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "The labour market is expected to remain largely stable in the near term. Nevertheless, given the still challenging external environment, the Government will keep a close watch over development of the local labour market."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) is running a special programme – "Career Let's Go" from May to August 2019 to help this year's secondary school leavers find suitable work. Among others, various training courses will be organised under the "Youth Employment Start". These include assisting graduates to enhance their job-interview skills; and providing graduates with career assessment and career consultation services.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will co-organise the Hong Kong International Airport Career Expo 2019 with the Airport Authority Hong Kong from May 31 to June 2 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Ample vacancies involving the aviation industry and airport operation will be provided. The LD will also organise the Kowloon East Job Fair from June 20 to 21 at the Yau Tong Community Hall and about 50 employers will participate.

Further information

The unemployment and underemployment statistics were compiled from the findings of the continuous General Household Survey.

The survey for February – April 2019 covered a sample of some 26 000 households or 74 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong.

Data on labour force characteristics were obtained from the survey by interviewing each member aged 15 or over in the sampled households.

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization.

Detailed analysis of labour force characteristics is given in the "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" which is published four times a year. The latest issue of the publication contains statistics for the quarter October – December 2018 while the next issue covering the quarter January – March 2019 will be available by end-May 2019. Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001)).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the



## **Construction Safety Week 2019 promotes innovation in safety (with photos)**

â€‹Construction Safety Week (CSW) 2019, jointly organised by the Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council (CIC), is being held from today (May 20) to May 27. Under the main theme "Innovation in Safety", a series of events will be held, including the Construction Safety Week Conference, BIM Talks x Safety, visits to construction sites with exemplary safety performance, and the award presentation ceremony of the 25th Considerate Contractors Site Award Scheme.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, said that the Government has been actively promoting application of innovation and technology, and expressed the hope that industry stakeholders would adopt the same to raise efficiency and enhance the safety of construction sites. He also appealed to the industry for its effort on creating a safe and healthy working environment.

â€‹The Chairman of the CIC, Mr Chan Ka-kui, said that the CIC has been encouraging the construction industry to apply innovative technology and to reduce the processes done on-site so as to enhance construction site safety and reduce accidents.

The Construction Safety Week Conference was held after the launch ceremony today. Local and overseas experts were invited to discuss the emerging technologies and good practices regarding site safety improvement. The conference today attracted over 800 practitioners.

Launched in 2012, CSW aims to promote a zero-accident site environment and a caring environment in the construction industry. The campaign has received support from various sectors of the community including professional groups, organisations, trade associations and labour unions. Details of CSW are available at [www.safetyweek.hk](http://www.safetyweek.hk).

