

13 nomination forms for District Council Ordinary Election received today (with photo)

A total of 13 nomination forms for the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election were received by the Returning Officers for the 18 District Committees constituencies (DCCs) and 44 District Council geographical constituencies (DCGCs) today (October 25).

This brings to 374 the total number of nomination forms received since the start of the nomination period on October 17. The nomination period will continue until October 30.

The Returning Officer for the Tuen Mun East DCGC received a notice of withdrawal of candidature from one nominee today.

The number of nomination forms received for each District Council is as follows:

	DCCs		DCGCs	
District Council	No. of nomination forms received today	Cumulative total	No. of nomination forms received today	Cumulative total
Central and Western District Council	0	7	0	10
Eastern District Council	0	15	0	10
Kowloon City District Council	2	10	0	8
Kwun Tong District Council	4	10	0	15
Sham Shui Po District Council	0	10	0	8
Southern District Council	1	5	0	8
Wan Chai District Council	0	5	0	5

Wong Tai Sin District Council	0	10	0	8
Yau Tsim Mong District Council	0	9	0	10
Islands District Council	0	6	1	4
Kwai Tsing District Council	2	16	2	10
North District Council	0	10	0	8
Sai Kung District Council	0	15	0	11
Sha Tin District Council	0	19	0	14
Tai Po District Council	0	12	0	11
Tsuen Wan District Council	1	10	0	8
Tuen Mun District Council	0	15	0	9 (1 nominee withdrawn)
Yuen Long District Council	0	20	0	13
Total	10	204	3	170

The Registration and Electoral Office reminds nominees that due to limited space in the Returning Officer's office, each nominee shall be accompanied by only one companion during submission of the nomination form. Please refer to the "Points to Note for Submission of Nomination Forms" on the election website ([www.eac.hk/pdf/distco/2023dce/Points_to_Note_for_Submission_of_Nomination_Forms\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.eac.hk/pdf/distco/2023dce/Points_to_Note_for_Submission_of_Nomination_Forms(Eng).pdf)).

Particulars of the nominees received today will be available on the election website (www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/eng/nomination2.html).



Family Council welcomes “The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address”

The following is issued on behalf of the Family Council:

The Family Council (Council) welcomes the initiatives on promoting family education in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" delivered by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, today (October 25).

The Chief Executive announced in the Policy Address the launching of a new five-year Funding Scheme on the Promotion of Family Education by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Council, with an annual amount of funding of \$8 million to support community projects to promote family education.

The Chairperson of the Council, Ms Melissa Kaye Pang, said, "I am very delighted that the Government will launch the new scheme by consolidating the existing Thematic Sponsorship Scheme to Support Family-related Initiatives by the Council and increase the funding to support families on the matters relating to raising children, maintaining family relationship, etc. The Council will work closely with the Government on the implementation details."

The Council also supports the initiatives to further enhance women's development as announced in the Policy Address, including organising the first Family and Women Development Summit; launching a one-stop family and women information portal; and introducing a maintenance mediation pilot scheme through the Community Care Fund in 2024. Ms Pang hoped that these initiatives would help women to play their unique function in the family and society, with an aim to enhancing family happiness and social harmony.

The Council was established in 2007. It is committed to publicising the culture of loving families through organising various promotional activities. The Council has also been promoting the three sets of family core values, namely "Love and Care", "Respect and Responsibility" and "Communication and Harmony" in the community.

Policy Address: Boosting the economy, supporting business

Delivering his second Policy Address today (October 25), the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, outlined a range of measures to boost Hong Kong's economy and support businesses, taking full advantage of Hong Kong's strengths under "one country, two systems".

The initiatives include Hong Kong's development of the "eight centres" outlined in the National 14th Five-Year Plan.

To consolidate Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre, one of the "eight centres", it is dependent on a vibrant stock market. Responding to the report of the Task Force on Enhancing Stock Market Liquidity, the Government accepted its recommendations and would implement initiatives including reducing stamp duty on stock transfer, reviewing stock trading spread and reducing market data fees. They also include reforming GEM (formerly known as the Growth Enterprise Market), for which the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited would implement the revised Listing Rules for GEM in the first quarter of 2024 after considering public views. These would include new listing routes for research and development (R&D)-focused companies and streamlining the transfer mechanism to the Main Board.

Other measures on reinforcing Hong Kong's competitiveness as a financial centre include:

- strengthening the offshore Renminbi business;
- deepening financial co-operation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA);
- establishing a new platform to expand fund distribution; and
- promoting the development of green and sustainable finance in Hong Kong.

Attracting companies to Hong Kong remains a central policy priority. The Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), introduced in last year's Policy Address, has been well received with 30 companies planning to establish a base or expand their operations in Hong Kong, investing about \$30 billion and adding some 10 000 employment opportunities. OASES will continue its good work, reaching out to at least 300 strategic enterprises in 2024, with a focus on those specialising in advanced technology, innovation and other strategic industries. These are pertinent to Hong Kong's development of the "eight centres".

So, too, is Hong Kong's arrival as a "headquarters economy", attracting companies to establish their headquarters or divisional operations in the

city. And legislative amendments will be introduced into the Legislative Council next year to help overseas incorporated companies re-domicile in Hong Kong, especially those with a business focus in the Asia-Pacific region. Foreigners working in overseas companies in Hong Kong will be eligible for multiple-entry visas, of two or more years, to the mainland, with fast-track processing of their applications.

Alongside attracting strategic enterprises, the Government is committed to bringing in, and retaining, talent. A Hong Kong Talent Engage office will open at month's end to support incoming talents and follow up with their development and needs. Next year, a "Global Talent Summit cum Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area High-quality Talent Development Conference" will be held to promote co-operation in talent recruitment throughout the GBA.

In addition, the Top Talent Pass Scheme will add eight prominent Mainland and overseas institutions to its network for attracting global talent. A Capital Investment Entrant Scheme will also be implemented, details of which will be announced by the end of this year. The scheme will allow eligible investors who make investments of \$30 million or above in assets such as stocks, funds, bonds and so on (excluding real estate) to apply for entry into Hong Kong.

Hong Kong will augment its longstanding status as an international trade centre, another one of the "eight centres". While maintaining close ties with long-established markets in Europe and the United States, the Government will explore and tap into the new markets of Belt and Road countries, including those of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa.

Hong Kong has been negotiating investment agreements with Bahrain, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia and would soon sign an investment agreement with Türkiye. Hong Kong has also been negotiating a free trade agreement with Peru. In addition, Hong Kong has applied for accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, comprising Mainland China, the 10 member states of ASEAN, as well as Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

Deepening economic and trade co-operation with the Mainland is equally important. Hong Kong will organise more outbound missions with Hong Kong and Mainland enterprises to promote business opportunities for Hong Kong's professional services together with Mainland partners. The Government will also organise visits to the GBA for overseas enterprises operating in Hong Kong. In addition, more consultant offices would be set up along the Belt and Road by Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

Advanced logistics is essential for an international trade centre, an Action Plan on Modern Logistics Development would be published before year's end. The Government would formulate strategies and action measures to promote the logistics industry along the directions of smart development, modernisation, green and sustainability, internationalisation and facilitation.

Beyond finance, trade, logistics, shipping and professional services sectors, the Government will continue to develop emerging strategic industries. These included innovation and technology, cultural and creative, pharmaceutical research and development, Chinese medicine and new-energy transport industries.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are critical to both Hong Kong's traditional and emerging industries. To help them remain competitive in today's technology-driven economy, the Government would establish an E-commerce Development Task Force. It will help SMEs develop e-commerce business on the Mainland. In addition, Cyberport will launch its Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme by year's end, subsidising SMEs in the retail and catering sectors in adopting electronic payment and other digital initiatives.

Hong Kong also enjoys the nation's support as an international innovation and technology centre. To further that goal, the Government would:

- set up the New Industrialisation Development Office to help strategic enterprises develop their businesses, to assist the manufacturing sector in its upgrading and transformation by making use of innovation and technology and to support the growth of start-ups;
- establish the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute in 2024 to work with universities, R&D centres and the industry, providing advanced infrastructure and hardware support;
- expedite the establishment of an artificial intelligence (AI) supercomputing centre at Cyberport;
- create a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme to support enterprises setting up production facilities in Hong Kong. The Scheme will target enterprises specialising in life and health technologies, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new-energy technologies;
- support the transformation of R&D outcomes from start-ups by doubling the maximum funding provided for the Technology Transfer Office of each specified university to \$16 million;
- develop a third Science Park InnoHK cluster focused on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development; and
- promote the cross-boundary data flow of financial and medical services within the GBA.

Despite Hong Kong's many challenges in the near term, the Policy Address measures would help Hong Kong realise a future as bright, energetic, competitive and prosperous as ever.

Policy Address promotes vibrant, strong and stable Hong Kong

“The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, today (October 25) announced his second Policy Address entitled "A Vibrant Economy for a Caring Community", setting out a range of initiatives to revive the economy, create opportunities and ensure long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.”

“The Government's policy focus is on upholding "One Country, Two Systems", and strengthening the economy to improve people's livelihoods. The Government aspires to create a cohesive and caring community, with a vibrant economy where everyone can enjoy life. The Government will continue enhancing governance systems and foster a stronger sense of national identity and patriotism in the community.

“Uphold the principle of "One Country, Two Systems" and safeguard national security

“The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government would fully, faithfully and resolutely implement the principles of "One Country, Two Systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy, safeguard the constitutional order of the HKSAR as laid down by the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China.

“To fulfil the HKSAR Government's constitutional duty to implement Article 23 legislation of the Basic Law, which relates to prohibiting acts and activities that endanger national security, the Government would press ahead to draw up effective legislative options and complete the legislative exercise in 2024.

“The Government would also address increasing risks of cybersecurity of critical infrastructure by introducing a bill into the Legislative Council in 2024.

Enhancing governance systems

“Since taking office, the current-term Government has strived to improve the governance systems, capability and efficacy.

“To cultivate a result-oriented culture among the civil service, the Policy Address set a total of 150 indicators, including key performance indicators (KPIs), of which 73 are new this year.

“The performance of departments has generally met my expectations,” Mr Lee said. “The indicators have enabled me to monitor work progress and outcomes more effectively. More importantly, they have helped cultivate a result-oriented culture within the Government.”

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¶¶¶The Government also announced plans to set up a Digital Policy Office, to formulate policies on digital government, data governance and information technology.

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Revitalising the economy

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¶¶¶The Policy Address outlined a series of initiatives to revitalise the economy and create opportunities for the development of priority sectors. The Government will boost the economy and drive growth through infrastructural creation, moving ahead with land and transport development projects to expand Hong Kong's economic capacity.

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¶¶¶To boost the city's strength as a global hub for commerce and finance, the Government would promote a "headquarters economy" to attract more Mainland and overseas enterprises and talents to the city. The Government will also introduce a mechanism to facilitate the re-domiciliation of companies to Hong Kong, in particular those with a business focus in the Asia-Pacific region. Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited will reach out to and encourage major Hong Kong listed companies domiciled overseas to re-domicile to Hong Kong.

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¶¶¶Other measures to attract enterprises, investment and talents include enabling foreign staff of eligible companies to apply for multiple-entry visas to the Mainland. The Government will also implement the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme, which allows eligible investors who make investments of \$30 million or above in Hong Kong to enter the city.

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¶¶¶A New Industrialisation Development Office will be set up to promote new industrialisation and support strategic enterprises to develop their businesses in Hong Kong. A \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme will also be launched to provide financial assistance for enterprises in the fields of life and health technologies, artificial intelligence and data science, advanced manufacturing, and new energy technologies.

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¶¶¶The Government is taking forward a number of major development projects, including the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, which will bring about substantial economic and social benefits, while also requiring significant funding.

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¶¶¶As such, the Government will establish the Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects, led by the Financial Secretary, and the Office for the Financing of Major Development Projects to advise on feasible investment and financing options, taking advantage of market capital and efficiency.

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¶¶¶Upon full development, the Northern Metropolis will provide about 500 000 new housing units and create 500 000 new jobs. Adopting an "industry-driven and infrastructure-led" approach as its key planning axle, the Northern Metropolis will forge a major node for Hong Kong to integrate into the overall development of the country. The Government will shortly publish

the Action Agenda for the Northern Metropolis. It will integrate deeply with the planning of Shenzhen and other Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area cities.

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¶¶¶With tourism being a pillar industry for Hong Kong, the Government would formulate the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0, to be published next year.

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¶¶¶To promote arts and culture, a new Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency will be set up with the aim of developing arts, culture and creative industries. The Government will also inject \$4.3 billion into the Film Development Fund and the CreateSmart Initiative to provide incentives for attracting private sector capital and expanding new markets.

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¶¶¶Noting that Hong Kong has among the world's longest life expectancies and coupled with a low birth rate, the Policy Address announced various initiatives to create a more family friendly environment and encourage more couples to have children.

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¶¶¶Among these initiatives are plans to disburse a Newborn Baby Bonus of \$20,000, raising the tax deduction ceiling for eligible parents and priority arrangements for public rental housing under a new "Families with Newborns Allocation Priority Scheme" and purchase of subsidised sale flats under a new "Families with Newborns Flat Selection Priority Scheme" to be introduced by the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

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National identity and culture

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¶¶¶The Government will continue to roll out various programmes and initiatives to enhance national identity and promote Chinese culture and history.

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¶¶¶The Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee will extend its scope to cover patriotic education. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department will establish a Chinese Culture Promotion Office. A Chinese Culture Festival will also be organised starting from next year, while two museums will be set up; one showcasing China's development and achievements and the other focusing on the War of Resistance.

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¶¶¶"I have faith in the building of China into a great country through Chinese modernisation. I have faith in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. I have faith in our 'One Country, Two Systems'. And I have faith in you, the people of Hong Kong. As we stay united and embrace our diversity, I firmly believe that we will be able to build a better Hong Kong together." Mr Lee said.

Commissioner of Customs and Excise Leads delegation to visit Shenzhen Customs District (with photos)

â€‹The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, today (October 25) led a delegation to visit the Shenzhen Customs District and met with the Director General in Shenzhen Customs District, Mr Zheng Jugang, to have in-depth discussions and exchanges on matters of mutual concern. This was the first meeting arranged after Mr Zheng took office in September.

Ms Ho stressed that the Shenzhen Customs has always been the closest partner of Hong Kong Customs and a close friendship and a solid foundation for collaboration have been established over the years between the two sides. The two Customs administrations have yielded remarkable achievements in different aspects of co-operation, including the combat of cross-boundary drug trafficking activities and smuggling activities involving parallel traders. Both have been also maintaining full communication, together with thorough planning and flexible manpower deployment, in addressing the challenges brought by the full resumption of normal travel, the opening of the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Control Point, as well as the redevelopment of the new Huanggang Port, so as to ensure smooth traveller and vehicle flows of the two places. She said that Hong Kong Customs will fully support the Mainland Customs in organising the 6th World Customs Organization Global Authorized Economic Operator Conference in Shenzhen for the first time next year in May which will strengthen the co-operation of trade facilitation between both sides.

Moreover, she also expressed gratitude to the Shenzhen Customs District for supporting youth development work of Hong Kong Customs, citing that several key officials from the Guangdong Sub-Administration of the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China and the Shenzhen Customs attended the exchange tours organised by Customs YES earlier and provided guidance to the Hong Kong youngsters on thorough understanding of the development, history and culture of the country.

Looking ahead, Ms Ho said she hoped the two Customs administrations will continue to co-operate, strengthen enforcement actions and capabilities in tackling money laundering activities, and establish two-way exchange and staff training mechanisms, as well as exploring the expansion of "One Form, Two Declarations" to control points linked with Shenzhen.

