

HKETO, Brussels promotes Hong Kong films at CinemAsia Film Festival in the Netherlands (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) and Create Hong Kong have jointly supported the participation of three Hong Kong films at the CinemAsia Film Festival 2020 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, being held from March 4 to 8 (Amsterdam time). The three Hong Kong films are Ray Yeung's "Suk Suk", Heiward Mak's "Fagara" and Law Wing-cheong's "Little Q".

Speaking at a reception on the occasion of the Hong Kong Film Night at the CinemAsia Film Festival yesterday (March 5, Amsterdam time), the Deputy Representative of HKETO, Brussels, Miss Fiona Chau, said the vibrant atmosphere of Hong Kong, with its Eastern heritage and Western influences, creates an environment that encourages creativity and diversity.

"Thanks to our diverse and international culture, and a solid legal system that protects the intellectual property rights of filmmakers, our film and entertainment industries continue to flourish and Hong Kong has one of the most dynamic film and entertainment industries in the world," Miss Chau said.

"The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is also keen on supporting initiatives to help our film industry to continue to thrive, in particular small and medium-size productions and new filmmakers," she added.

In this regard, Miss Chau said she was delighted that a young talent from Hong Kong, Lo Chun-yip, who stars in "Suk Suk" and "Fagara", was attending the Festival.

Referring to the inspiration that films can provide and to the coronavirus which has been affecting many cities around the world, including Hong Kong, Miss Chau said that all of the three Hong Kong films selected by this year's CinemAsia Film Festival carry messages that call for supporting and understanding each other in the spirit of mutual care and assistance, which is essential for prevailing in this challenging period.



Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (March 6), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 38 patients (23 male and 15 female, aged 21 months to 88 years) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 100 patients under isolation currently. So far, 51 patients with the COVID-19 infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Meetings of Legislative Council Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from March 9 to 13 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

Announcement by Judiciary

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary announced today (March 6) that plans are being made for orderly resumption of court proceedings upon the cessation of the General Adjourned Period (GAP) on March 22, if the prevailing public health situation permits, and that court registries will start to re-open stage by stage from next week, the first stage including the Court of Final Appeal Registry, the High Court Registry, the Probate Registry and the Competition Tribunal Registry on March 9.

The Judiciary has been making active plans to resume court proceedings and re-open its registries and offices since early March. In working out the detailed arrangements of resumption, the Judiciary has given due consideration to the following:

- (a) an orderly resumption of both registry business and court proceedings is of paramount importance;
- (b) a staggered and progressive approach is to be adopted to ensure orderly resumption; and
- (c) parties concerned, whether legally represented or litigants in person, will be given clear notification and sufficient lead time for preparation of their cases, regardless of whether the hearings are to be re-fixed or proceed as scheduled.

Gradual resumption of court proceedings

All hearings of the courts/tribunals originally scheduled between March 9 and 22 have been generally adjourned. The courts will however continue to handle urgent and essential hearings and/or matters during this period. The updated list of urgent and essential hearings and matters is uploaded onto the Judiciary website for reference of court users and the public.

The Magistrates' Courts will continue to adopt basically the Holiday or

Saturday sitting arrangement in the light of caseload and other factors. They will handle urgent and essential cases, including fresh remand cases and eight-day cases. The detailed arrangements are as follows:

- March 9 (Monday): Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 10 (Tuesday): No Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 11 (Wednesday): Shatin Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 12 (Thursday): No Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 13 (Friday): West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 14 (Saturday): The usual Saturday sitting will be adopted, i.e. Eastern Magistrates' Courts, Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts and Shatin Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 15 (Sunday): No Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 16 (Monday): Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 17 (Tuesday): No Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 18 (Wednesday): Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 19 (Thursday): No Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 20 (Friday): Fanling Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 21 (Saturday): The usual Saturday sitting will be adopted, i.e. Eastern Magistrates' Courts, Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts and Shatin Magistrates' Courts will open
- March 22 (Sunday): No Magistrates' Courts will open

Re-opening of registries and offices

Court registries will be re-opened in stages between March 9 and 19. Special arrangements will be made during these two weeks for the registries to handle filing and other business in an orderly and effective

manner. The details are set out as follows:

- March 9 (Monday): Re-opening of the Court of Final Appeal Registry, High Court Registry, Clerk of Court's Office, Probate Registry and Competition Tribunal Registry
- March 12 (Thursday): Re-opening of Family Court Registry
- March 13 (Friday): Re-opening of District Court Registry
- March 17 (Tuesday): Re-opening of registries and offices of Lands Tribunal, Magistrates' Courts, Coroner's Court, Obscene Articles Tribunal
- March 19 (Thursday): Re-opening of registries and offices of Labour Tribunal and Small Claims Tribunal (except the Information Centre)

It is important to note that while the above registries and offices will be generally re-opened for business with effect from the dates indicated above, some business will continue to be suspended during the period before March 23. A list of suspended business for the various registries is set out in the Annex. It is also uploaded onto the Judiciary website.

Re-opening of other offices of the Judiciary

In view of the need to minimise people flow for public health considerations, a staggered approach will also be adopted for the re-opening of the Judiciary's other offices providing services to court users and the public. The details are as follows:

- March 9 (Monday): Re-opening of the Certification counters of the Court Language Section in Wanchai Law Courts Building (WLCB), Public counters of Bailiff Offices at various court premises and Integrated Mediation Office in WLCB
- March 17 (Tuesday): Re-opening of the Building Management Mediation Co-ordinator's Office at the Lands Tribunal

- March 23 (Monday):
Re-opening of the High Court Library,
Resource Centre for Unrepresented
Litigants at the High Court Building
(HCB), Small Claims Tribunal
Information Centre and Counter
Services of Complaints Office at HCB

The Canteen in the HCB and the Tuck Shop in the West Kowloon Law Court Building will remain closed until further notice having regard to public health considerations.

As regards offices providing services located in the judiciary premises but are operated by other government departments or outside organisations, court users may wish to enquire with the relevant operators direct for details relating to the re-opening of these offices.

Preventive and crowd management measures

Having struck a careful balance between public health considerations and the orderly reopening of registries with effect from March 9, the Judiciary will continue to put in place appropriate preventive and crowd management measures for the health protection of all people who enter and remain in the court premises. Court users are required to have their body temperature taken and wear a surgical mask before they are allowed to enter and remain in the court premises. The Judiciary will constantly review the situation and introduce any new measures as appropriate.

It is expected that there will be more court users visiting the courts, in particular the HCB starting from March 9. The Judiciary considers it important to put in place special arrangements to regulate the entry of court users into and inside the court premises. These measures will include queuing, the introduction of a ticketing and triage system to ensure efficient processing of applications, the provision of expanded registry areas (and additional manpower where appropriate) and designated entry and exit points to facilitate orderly people flow, etc. Detailed arrangements for different court registries in different court premises will be provided and uploaded onto the Judiciary website before their re-opening. Court users are strongly advised to check the updated information from the Judiciary website, and follow the advice of the Judiciary staff and security personnel when they attend for court business upon the re-opening of the court registries.

Enquiries and information update

From March 9, for general enquiries, the following hotlines will be operated from Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 1pm and 2pm to 5.30pm:

- General Information: 2869 0869
- Court of Final Appeal: 2123 0123
- High Court: 2523 2212

- Probate: 2840 1683
- District Court: 2845 5696
- Family Court: 2840 1218
- Lands Tribunal: 2771 3034
- Labour Tribunal: 2625 0020
- Small Claims Tribunal: 2877 4068
- Magistrates' Courts: 2677 8373
- Bailiff Section: 2802 7510
- Court Language Section: 2388 1364

The Judiciary will continue to post updated information, including Daily Cause Lists, messages related to the Judiciary's arrangements arising from public health considerations, and advice to court users visiting the courts during the GAP, on the Judiciary website (www.judiciary.hk). Court users are advised to check the website for updated information as necessary.

Record of discussion of meeting of Exchange Fund Advisory Committee Currency Board Sub-Committee held on January 20

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

(Approved for issue by the Exchange Fund Advisory Committee by circulation)

Report on Currency Board Operations (October 12, 2019 – January 8, 2020)

The Sub-Committee noted that the Hong Kong dollar (HKD) exchange rate traded within a range of 7.7726 – 7.8452 against the United States dollar (USD) during the review period. The HKD had strengthened gradually since mid-October 2019 and gained further momentum in December, with the HKD exchange rate staying in the strong side of the Convertibility Zone. The strong demand for HKD was due mainly to initial public offerings and unwinding of short HKD positions near the year-end. As liquidity tightened during the review period, short-dated HKD interbank interest rates (HIBORs) broadly picked up, with overnight and 1-month HIBORs seeing larger fluctuations. Overall, the HKD exchange and interbank markets continued to trade in a smooth and orderly manner.

The Sub-Committee noted that the Aggregate Balance remained little changed at around HK\$54.4 billion, while the Monetary Base increased slightly to HK\$1,664.13 billion at the end of the review period.

The Sub-Committee further noted that, in accordance with the Currency Board principles, all changes in the Monetary Base had been fully matched by changes in foreign reserves.

The Report on Currency Board Operations for the period under review is at Annex.

Monitoring of Risks and Vulnerabilities

The Sub-Committee noted that in the United States, the Federal Reserve had signalled its intention to keep interest rates on hold, but trade and inflation developments would likely continue to cloud the monetary policy outlook.

The Sub-Committee noted that in Europe, growth momentum remained subdued. Future negotiations between the United Kingdom and the European Union on post-Brexit trade relations would likely remain a major source of uncertainty to the European economy.

The Sub-Committee noted that in Mainland China, economic activities continued to soften, leading to a number of policy responses on both the monetary and fiscal fronts.

The Sub-Committee noted that in Hong Kong, after entering into a technical recession in the third quarter of 2019, the economy weakened further in the early part of the fourth quarter, with the unemployment rate facing stronger upward pressure ahead.

Scenario Analysis of the Hong Kong Economy

The Sub-Committee noted a scenario analysis of Hong Kong's economic growth and unemployment rate for 2020 under different scenarios.