

SCED speaks on business mission to Malaysia (English only)

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, at a media session at a business seminar cum networking luncheon in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia today (November 26):

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I'm delighted to bring along a delegation of 50 business leaders from Hong Kong to KL (Kuala Lumpur). This is part of our mission riding on the Belt and Road Initiative and also promoting Hong Kong as a global financial centre. Hong Kong and Malaysia enjoy very strong, cordial and positive trade relations. ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) has in fact emerged as Hong Kong's second largest trading partner, and within ASEAN, Malaysia ranks number two. In fact, the common trading value surged to almost US\$29 billion in the year before last, which also recorded a very substantial phenomenal growth of 56 per cent in a single year, but there is still a lot of potential that more will come between Hong Kong and Malaysia.

The delegation itself is also quite revealing on the possible collaboration between Hong Kong and Malaysia. I am bringing along a strong delegation which is composed of not just traditional investors or commerce leaders from chambers, but also a long list of professionals from architecture, engineering, accounting, legal, arbitration and environmental professions. They are all interested in the development of this country, which is emerging and also increasingly open to both goods and services. We come also at a time where Hong Kong is encountering certain difficulties. Some are global and some are local. Like Malaysia or ASEAN, Hong Kong also suffers from the setback in global trade because of the US-China trade war. In addition, we are also suffering from our own social unrest at the moment. Having said that, the fundamentals of Hong Kong still stand. Businesses go on as usual in most of the sectors. And I believe the large delegation that we are able to bring along today speaks for itself that there are a lot of interests and also confidence between Hong Kong and Malaysia. We had great meetings with the Minister of Finance (of Malaysia) and the Deputy Minister of Transport (of Malaysia) yesterday. We got a briefing on the (Malaysia-China) Kuantan Industrial Park where we saw a lot of interest. We will also be meeting the Deputy Minister from MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) and we are excited to see Malaysia taking a leadership role in APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) next year where Hong Kong will continue to take part as a member. So far, although it's only one and a half day, the delegates have shown their interest and we have got very good reception from the Malaysian government and the business sectors, so I look forward to even closer partnership between Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Reporter: According to Bloomberg, the economy of Hong Kong in the third quarter performed worse than the whole economy expected. How can Hong Kong

attract more local (Malaysian) investors to Hong Kong to do more investment since the economic performance is worse than estimated?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: Thank you. As I mentioned, Hong Kong is suffering a double-hit at the moment. First, it's the external relations which hits Hong Kong and the entire world. It is the consequence of the US-China trade war. That has in fact slowed down the global trade and the global economic performance. That's why the World Bank, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) are all adjusting downward their projections for this year's trade and also GDP growth globally. I think Hong Kong and ASEAN as a whole are also suffering. In general, that has knocked off some of the economic growth we enjoyed in the last couple of years. 2017 and 2018 were exceptionally good years, with 3.83 per cent growth (in GDP). We are back to almost the same level in the earlier part of this year. The second hit was of course Hong Kong's own situation, the social unrest. Therefore we suffer from technically a recession where the first quarter suffered from a -2.9 per cent (GDP growth) compared with last year.

When we look at this, the former (hit), the external relation, the impact of the US-China trade war on Hong Kong will very much depend on whether there will be an agreement between the US and China. So, with the position of the tariff, I think no one has any doubt that Malaysia or ASEAN as a whole also suffers. Looking ahead, since that has been dragging on for quite a while and there are some indications of continued talking, I believe that at least we see some light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak. As for the latter, the situation in Hong Kong, we hope that law and order could be restored, and therefore businesses would come back to normal. That would be a matter for Hong Kong, Hong Kong Government, Hong Kong community and our whole society to handle. We have seen the success in a very smooth, peaceful conduct of a major district level election, with a very phenomenal turnout. But the most important of all, it was done in a peaceful manner. So we hope that with the successful election and the restoration of law and order, that would gradually bring back the economy.

So two things together, I think the projection is we might still suffer from a bit of setback in the remaining time of this year and early next year, but let's be hopeful that with the easing of the overall, global or bilateral trade relation with a breakthrough, and hopefully with the coming back of our economy through the restoration of law and order, we hope things will bottom out, and we should see some light again at the end of the tunnel. Thank you.

Reporter: In your speech you said that in 2018, the bilateral trade between Hong Kong and Malaysia grew by 56 per cent. With this unrest, do you think there will be any impact on growth this year?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I think the trade between Hong Kong and ASEAN by and large is very robust and also keeps on growing. This is partly because of the complementary role that Hong Kong and ASEAN as a whole are playing, and also partly because of the strong growth in a country like yours, Malaysia. 2018 was an exceptionally good year but I think

it's also because of the lower base that we started with. With the signing of the free trade agreement between Hong Kong and ASEAN, which Malaysia has taken full effect since the middle of this year, we are seeing further easing of market access. That means goods can be traded and services can be exchanged at lower costs. And the interests that have been shown by the delegation that come today are evidence that we have every confidence that Hong Kong people are interested in this market.

And likewise, with our common goal in seizing opportunities on the Belt and Road Initiative, we can actually go out together. On the inward side, I also see a lot of interests, not just in Hong Kong, but also in adjacent cities, the nine cities that situated around Hong Kong, what we call the Greater Bay Area. Altogether they have a population of 17 million, double the size of Malaysia, and have an aggregate GDP of US\$1.5 trillion, roughly the size of the economy of Australia. So that would provide a huge market for Malaysia. We are in the middle and we have this advantage of being a two-way street, between Greater Bay Area, ASEAN and in particular Malaysia. I remain confident that the overall trend for the mutual trade will be on the rise in the immediate and long-term future.

Reporter: What are the opportunities that Malaysian businessmen can actually have with Hong Kong? Maybe offering of incentives, lower tax, lower cost?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I think Hong Kong is always a very welcoming destination for business around the world. Even before the free trade agreement, we imposed zero tariff on any import and trade. Hong Kong is an attraction to a lot of investments. They take advantage of Hong Kong as a financial centre. For instance, for projects that you are contemplating, you might need some syndicated loan and corporate finance, (this is) where Hong Kong's financial services, legal services, risk management and insurance can offer help in enhancing trade and investment deals. That's trade in services.

In addition, what Hong Kong can offer is also a window and a gateway into the fast-growing middle-income, high-spending market in the Mainland. Within the big population of the Mainland, at least 400 million of them are in the middle-income range, where they spend a lot and go out a lot. They are the main source of tourists. Very often they come through Hong Kong in both directions. A lot of services and commodities would likely take advantage of Hong Kong. This advantage is not just on paper, but it is also enshrined in the trade agreement between Hong Kong and the Mainland, what we call the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). This CEPA is a very special free trade agreement. It's one of the most alive and kicking FTAs (free trade agreements) because not only was it signed almost two decades ago, but we keep on updating it. Last week, we had a supplementary agreement opening up further on services sector, where Hong Kong companies can go into the Mainland. By way of Hong Kong companies, we mean those companies found in Hong Kong, and that include overseas companies operating in Hong Kong. So in a way we offer a special avenue for Malaysian companies to come through Hong Kong into the Mainland. That's rather typical. The latest count of overseas companies using Hong Kong as regional

headquarters has surged to over 9 000. In fact, many of them are new start-up companies. We see a trend that within Asia, Hong Kong can be the hub for companies in this part of the region going to the Mainland. And as I mentioned, it is a two-way street. A lot of Mainland companies, including those state-owned enterprises or private companies listed in Hong Kong, would use Hong Kong to go out. The example I cited earlier this morning in my remarks is that I discovered by accident that even in the Kuantan Industrial Park, the Chinese company, as a partner to the Malaysia-China joint venture, was premised on a company they listed in Hong Kong, so that they are served by Hong Kong professional services as well.

Reporter: Likewise maybe you can also share with us is there any indication, like how do you expect the investment from Hong Kong companies to invest in Malaysia?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I believe there is a lot of optimism with your new government and support of the Belt and Road Initiative. This morning we had a briefing on the industrial park, where we saw a lot of opportunities. First, because of the changing global trade scene, protectionism and trade tension have in fact posed certain changes on the location of industries. There are a lot of searchers for alternative production places. Industrial parks like the Kuantan Industrial Park, and other areas within this part of the region, are attractive to some of the traditional manufacturers. But (what's) more important is the bigger pie that we are all building. ASEAN has grown in size and capacity. In this regard, certain better-developed economies like the Malaysian one, would naturally require a lot of professional services, which you might not so imminently need in the past. Major projects, be they railways, ports or airports, would usually require a lot of professional support from financing to risk management. Those services are easily available in Hong Kong as an international centre where international trade practices and high standards are maintained, not to mention the special knowledge and experience we have. For instance, I mentioned about the Islamic bond and the green bond that we are embarking on. Those are common visions that would be pointers where Malaysian investment or Malaysian businesses would be interested in. Thank you.

SCED encourages Malaysian companies to leverage Hong Kong's advantages in business collaborations (with photos)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, attended and delivered the keynote speech at a business seminar cum networking luncheon in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, today (November 26). He

encouraged Malaysian enterprises to leverage the various advantages of Hong Kong and partner with Hong Kong's enterprises and professional services sector to jointly explore the wealth of opportunities under the Belt and Road Initiative. He is currently leading a delegation comprising business people, professionals and start-up representatives to visit the country.

Jointly organised by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the business seminar cum networking luncheon was one of the highlights of Mr Yau's visit in Kuala Lumpur. It was attended by more than 300 local business leaders.

Mr Yau highlighted the unique advantages of Hong Kong in his address, saying that "one country, two systems", the city's strategic geographical location and its sophisticated infrastructure make it stand out in the region to be an international trading and logistics hub. These factors enable Hong Kong to serve more than just itself but the wider global market, in particular Malaysia's continuous economic development, and help Malaysia seize the immense opportunities brought about by the development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

On Hong Kong as an international financial hub, Mr Yau pointed out that the city, as the home for a vibrant asset and wealth management sector and the world's top offshore Renminbi centre, is also determined to work on green financing and financial innovation. He invited Malaysian companies to come and explore development opportunities with Hong Kong's financial industry.

Mr Yau stressed that Hong Kong's professional services sector, with legal, accounting, insurance, business consultancy, risk assessment and management, mediation and dispute resolution, project financing and funding, bond issuing and construction-related services and others, has a wealth of experience and can partner with Malaysian companies in various ways to embark on the different large-scale projects of the country.

On the social disruption that Hong Kong is facing at the moment, Mr Yau stressed that Hong Kong's fundamental setup including those core strengths mentioned above has not undergone any changes. Essentially, Hong Kong is still a free, open and dynamic city, and its economic and financial systems remain intact and healthy.

Prior to the business seminar, Mr Yau and the delegation met with representatives of the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park (MCKIP) to learn about the park's latest developments. The MCKIP, the first industrial park in Malaysia jointly developed by Malaysia and the Mainland, and accorded National Park status in Malaysia, has all along been determined to offer incentives to attract foreign investment. A one-on-one business matching session was also staged for Hong Kong start-up representatives in the delegation to explore co-operation opportunities with local companies in Malaysia.

In the afternoon, Mr Yau toured Cyberjaya, Malaysia's technology hub near Kuala Lumpur. With a view to attracting interested foreign companies to

set up a presence therein, Cyberjaya is committed to providing a collaborative environment and incentives.

Mr Yau also met with the Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia, Dr Ong Kian Ming, to introduce the latest developments of Hong Kong as well as to learn about the investment and trade policies of Malaysia.

Mr Yau will join a networking dinner with local business leaders from various Malaysian chambers of commerce and industries this evening. He will proceed to Bangkok, Thailand, for the second leg of his visit programme tomorrow (November 27).



CHP investigates measles infection case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (November 26) investigating a case of measles infection.

The case involves a 38-year-old woman with good past health, who has developed fever since November 19 and rash on November 20. She sought medical advice from general practitioners on November 19 and 21 and attended the

Accident and Emergency Department at Queen Mary Hospital on November 22 for medical attention and was admitted for treatment on the next day.

A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. She is in a stable condition and her measles vaccination history is unknown. She travelled to the Philippines during the incubation period but had no travel history during the communicable period.

According to the patient, she did not have contact with measles patients during the incubation period. Her home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance.

Upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Investigations are ongoing. The public places the patient visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

A spokesman for the DH said, "Those who might have had contact with the patient during the period of communicability are urged to observe if they have developed measles-related symptoms, and to seek medical treatment immediately if such symptoms appear. If they need to visit any health care facilities during the period of medical surveillance, they should also report whether they have symptoms and prior measles exposure history to the healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at the healthcare facilities concerned to prevent any potential spread."

The spokesman explained that measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of a skin rash.

"The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Symptoms of measles include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes. If symptoms arise, members of the public should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women and children aged below 1. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals," the spokesman advised.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received a measles vaccination during childhood. The history of measles vaccinations in Hong Kong is available in the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles, are urged to consult

their doctor for advice on vaccinations at least two weeks before departure," the spokesman said.

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of a rash to prevent the spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, the public may call the 24-hour health education hotline 2833 0111 or visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of the DH's [Travel Health Service](#).

TCU's third quarterly report of 2019 released

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Complaints Unit (TCU) of the Transport Advisory Committee received 7 314 complaints and suggestions in the third quarter of 2019, with 45 pure suggestions. The total number of cases represents a decrease of 18 per cent as compared with 8 916 cases in the previous quarter and a decrease of 1.1 per cent when compared with 7 394 cases in the same quarter of 2018.

The complaints and suggestions received during the quarter were mostly related to public transport services (88 per cent), enforcement matters (9 per cent) and traffic conditions (1 per cent).

The number of cases on public transport services decreased by 20 per cent from 8 086 in the previous quarter to 6 471 this quarter, while complaints and suggestions on traffic conditions decreased from 164 to 132. Cases about road maintenance decreased from 21 to 19 and the number of complaints about illegal parking and other enforcement matters increased from 614 to 667.

All the complaints and suggestions received by the TCU in the quarter were referred to the relevant government departments and public transport operators for follow-up action.

During the period under review, investigations into 8 489 cases were completed. Of these, 6 675 cases (78 per cent) were found to be substantiated, 35 cases (1 per cent) were unsubstantiated, and the remaining 1 779 cases (21 per cent) could not be pursued due to lack of evidence.

For the substantiated cases, the relevant government departments and public transport operators have either taken steps to rectify the situation or are considering possible solutions to the problems identified. Among these cases, 68 drivers were summonsed by the Police.

During the quarter, the relevant government departments and public transport operators took on board 12 suggestions made by the public to enhance public transport services and improve traffic conditions. A summary of the cases is in the Appendix.

Members of the public may make their suggestions or complaints to the TCU by dialling the hotline 2889 9999 (voice mail service is available outside office hours), by fax to 2577 1858, by email to info@tcu.gov.hk or by filling in a form on the TCU website (www.info.gov.hk/tcu).

15th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature showcases outstanding works (with photos)

Organised by the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the 15th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature prize presentation ceremony was held today (November 26) at the Hong Kong Central Library. Nominations were received for 216 books. After stringent selections by the adjudicators, five Biennial Awards and six Recommended Prizes were presented. The outstanding winning works demonstrate the vitality of the local literary community.

Officiating at the ceremony, the Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Libraries and Development), Miss Rochelle Lau, said the Biennial Awards, which have been held for many years, aim at recognising the excellence of Hong Kong literary writers and encourage the publication of local literature.

The 15th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature were given to exemplary Chinese literary books written by local writers and first published in Hong Kong in 2017 and 2018. The awards consist of five categories: poetry,

essay, fiction, literary criticism and children and youth literature. The list of winners is as follows:

Prize	Title	Author
Poetry Category		
Biennial Award	"Life as a Bystander"	Yip Ying-kit
Recommended Prize	"Cherry and King Kong: Poem Selections 2013 – 2016"	Liu Wai-tong
Essay Category		
Biennial Award	"Memories Unburdened by Sorrow"	Hung Wai-yee
Recommended Prize	"Evanescence"	Pun Kwok-ling
Fiction Category		
Biennial Award	"My Hong Kong Stories"	Hui Wing-fai
Recommended Prize	"The Daily of Dusts"	Cheung Yuen-man
Literary Criticism Category		
Biennial Award	"Sentiments of a Turbulent Era: Hong Kong and its Literature during the Sino-Japanese War"	Chan Chi-tak
Recommended Prize	"Hong Kong Dark Cinema: Film Noir, Re-conceptions and Reflexivity"	Chan Kim-mui
Recommended Prize	"Translator and Scholar: Hong Kong and the Accumulation of China-related Knowledge in Great Britain"	Kwan Sze-pui
Children and Youth Literature Category		
Biennial Award	"The Green Hell"	Chiu Ka-man
Recommended Prize	"The King's Little Secret"	Carrie Huang

The above titles and the award-winning books in previous years have already been included in the HKPL's collection. Roving exhibitions introducing this year's winning entries and prize-winning books from past years will be held from December 1 to May next year at various public libraries for readers to appreciate the works of the awarded authors. Admission is free and all are welcome.

For details of the awards, please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/biennialaward.

