

# LegCo to consider Travel Industry Bill

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

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on Wednesday (November 28) at 11 am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, the Second Reading debate on the Travel Industry Bill will resume. If the Bill is supported by Members and receives its Second Reading, it will stand committed to the committee of the whole Council. After the committee of the whole Council has completed consideration of the Bill and its report is adopted by the Council, the Bill will be set down for the Third Reading.

The Second Reading debate on the Companies (Amendment) Bill 2018 and the Supplementary Appropriation (2017-2018) Bill will also resume. If the Bills are supported by Members and receive their Second Reading, they will stand committed to the committee of the whole Council. After the committee of the whole Council has completed consideration of the Bills and their reports are adopted by the Council, the Bills will be set down for the Third Reading.

During the meeting, Ms Chan Hoi-yan returned at the Legislative Council by-election held on November 25, 2018 will take the Legislative Council Oath.

On Members' motions, Mr James To will move two separate proposed resolutions under section 34(2) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance to repeal the Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income) (Republic of India) Order and the Inland Revenue (Double Taxation Relief with respect to Taxes on Income and Prevention of Tax Evasion and Avoidance) (Republic of Finland) Order laid on the table of the Legislative Council on October 10, 2018.

Mrs Regina Ip will move a motion on studying the enactment of an ordinance on regulating subdivided units. The motion states: "That at present, there are in Hong Kong over 150 000 families and elderly singletons waiting for public rental housing, with an average waiting time of 5.3 years, and quite a number of applicants live in units of flats subdivided into separate units (commonly known as 'subdivided units'); according to the estimate of the Government in 2017, there were about 91 800 households living in subdivided units across the territory; the Chief Executive has undertaken in the newly released Policy Address that the Government will actively facilitate various short-term community initiatives to increase the supply of transitional housing and allow wholesale conversion of industrial buildings for transitional housing; in the light of these new initiatives, it is believed that quite a number of transitional housing units leased out in the form of subdivided units will emerge in Hong Kong, but the existing Buildings Ordinance cannot comprehensively regulate the safety of flat subdivision works; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to study the enactment of an ordinance on regulating subdivided units, the contents of which include:

(1) by drawing reference from the Housing Act 2004 of the United Kingdom, establishing a licensing system for regulating the operation of subdivided units, and setting standards for the facilities, number of occupants and area of units, so as to ensure a comfortable and safe living environment for households;

(2) requiring the installation of separate water and electricity meters for each subdivided unit to prevent overcharging of water and electricity tariffs by landlords; and

(3) regulating the rate of rental increase for subdivided units to prevent the households from being heavily burdened by rental."

Ms Alice Mak, Mr Vincent Cheng, Mr Leung Yiu-chung and Mr Andrew Wan will move separate amendments to Mrs Regina Ip's motion.

Mr Jeremy Tam will move a motion on legislating for the protection of whistle-blowers. The motion states: "That, unless insiders of business organisations or government agencies ('whistle-blowers') divulge that acts endangering public interests have occurred in their organisations or agencies, it is invariably difficult for the public or the media to verify the occurrence of such incidents; many past incidents involving significant public interests in Hong Kong, such as the unlawful sewage discharge by the sewage treatment contractor of Tuen Mun Pillar Point Valley Landfill in contravention of the standard requirements of the Environmental Protection Department, the frequent glitches in the new Air Traffic Control System of the Civil Aviation Department after its launch, and the shortened steel bars of the diaphragm walls at Hung Hom Station of the Shatin to Central Link of the MTR Corporation Limited, would have gone unnoticed if no one had blown the whistle, and the public would not have known the truth; since there is no dedicated legislation in Hong Kong for protecting whistle-blowers and those who stand up for justice are often subjected to reprisals, including various retributive acts such as harassment, discriminatory actions, dismissal and litigation, many insiders are afraid to blow the whistle; since many countries in the world, including the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan, have already enacted dedicated legislation to protect whistle-blowers, this Council urges the SAR Government to expeditiously enact a whistle-blowing protection law to protect whistle-blowers and safeguard public interests; the areas of legislation should cover:

(1) providing statutory protection to whistle-blowers if the incidents disclosed involve criminal offences, breach of legal obligation, miscarriage of justice, threat to public safety or health, environmental damage, abuse of powers, waste of public money, etc., so as to guard them against any unfair treatment, such as punitive actions like dismissal, pay reduction, demotion, transfer, suspension, financial penalty and denial of learning opportunities;

(2) requiring all business organisations and government agencies to formulate their own internal measures on protecting whistle-blowers, including the setting up of a well-defined mechanism respectively for reporting incidents and protecting whistle-blowers, so as to stamp out any possible retributive

acts;

(3) allowing whistle-blowers to disclose to the public incidents endangering public interests in ways they deem fit, including using the media or the Legislative Council as the channels, in addition to the internal reporting mechanism mentioned above;

(4) requiring any persons or organisations responsible for handling the secrets divulged by a whistle-blower to maintain the strictest confidentiality of the whistle-blower's personal information; and

(5) allowing whistle-blowers to apply for personal protection measures from the judicial authorities when they or their families feel their personal safety or freedom under threat."

Ms Claudia Mo, Mr Kenneth Leung and Mr Chan Hak-kan will move separate amendments to Mr Jeremy Tam's motion.

Meanwhile, Mr Chung Kwok-pan will move a motion for the adjournment of the Council under Rule 16(4) of the Rules of Procedure. The motion states: "That this Council do now adjourn for the purpose of debating the following issue: the impact of the recent China-United States relations on Hong Kong's economy."

During the meeting, Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)). Please note that the agenda is subject to change, and the latest information about the agenda could be found on the LegCo Website.

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. They may reserve seats by calling 3919 3399 during office hours. Members of the public can also watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website.

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## **[Hong Kong's higher education landscape featured at student fair in Munich \(with photos\)](#)**

For the second time, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Berlin (HKETO Berlin) has hosted a booth at the Einstieg education fair in Munich, Germany, to promote studying in Hong Kong and the various talent admission

schemes as well as the Talent List of Hong Kong. The fair was held under the patronage of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Employment Agency and the Bavarian State Ministry for Education from November 23 to 24 (Munich time).

On November 24, the Deputy Director of HKETO Berlin, Ms Alison Lo, gave a presentation introducing Hong Kong's world-leading universities as well as scholarship opportunities and other benefits such as the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme that facilitates immigration to Hong Kong for young talents. She also highlighted the excellent research opportunities in Hong Kong supported by the HK\$23 billion Research Endowment Fund and emphasised the value of academic freedom in the city.

"Hong Kong is an international, modern and dynamic city with a thriving economy right in the heart of Asia where the East meets the West," Ms Lo said when presenting Hong Kong's advantages. "Hong Kong is home to some of the world's top 50 universities. We welcome young talents from around the world to study and work in our city," she added, making reference to the recently published Talent List of Hong Kong. The List currently comprises 11 professions and has been drawn up with a view to attracting outstanding talents from all over the world to take advantage of the abundant opportunities in the city.

Hong Kong's high-quality study programmes are taught in English, and the universities have adopted international standards in curriculum design as well as quality assurance. Of the 21 local degree-awarding higher education institutions, three are ranked in the world's top 50 by the Quacquarelli Symonds University Rankings 2019 and three are ranked in Asia's top 10 by the Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2018. To attract outstanding non-local students to study in Hong Kong, the Government offers several scholarship opportunities, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government Scholarship Fund and the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme.

To experience Hong Kong first-hand, young people from Germany can also make use of the Working Holiday Scheme. Under the Scheme, young people from Germany between the ages of 18 and 30 can stay up to 12 months in Hong Kong and are allowed to take up short-term employment as well as enrol in study or training courses as an incidental part of their stay so as to acquire a better understanding of the cultural, economic and social developments. For more details about studying and living in Hong Kong, please visit [studyinhongkong.edu.hk](http://studyinhongkong.edu.hk).

About HKETO Berlin

HKETO Berlin is the official Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government representative in commercial relations and other economic and trade matters in Germany as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland.



## [Speech by CE at ICCHK 20th Anniversary Reception \(English only\) \(with photos/video\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the 20th Anniversary Reception of the International Chamber of Commerce – Hong Kong today (November 26):

Commissioner Xie Feng (Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), J P (Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce – Hong Kong, Mr Lee Jark-pui), ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. I am pleased to join you tonight in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the International Chamber of Commerce – Hong Kong.

From its very beginnings in December 1998, the Hong Kong representative body of the International Chamber of Commerce has played an instrumental role in promoting Hong Kong's advantages to the world. It has, as well, assisted the Hong Kong business community in expanding our presence in international commerce, while boosting our singular place as the business bridge between the Mainland of China and a world of opportunities.

The results are certainly encouraging. At last count, more than 8 700 overseas and Mainland companies maintain an office in Hong Kong. Among them, 1 530 have chosen to set up regional headquarters here, representing an increase of 8 per cent over a year ago. Meanwhile, Hong Kong's ranking in World Bank's latest Doing Business Report has risen from the fifth to the fourth. That is testimony to Hong Kong's business-friendly environment, from our simple and competitive tax regime to the level playing field we offer all business, whatever they do and wherever they come from.

No less important, business works best when government is small and the environment encouraging. Hong Kong, built on free enterprise, inspires business confidence. As J P has just noted, the Washington-based Heritage Foundation has named Hong Kong the freest economy in the world for the past 24 years in its annual Index of Economic Freedom report. In explaining our top ranking, the Heritage Foundation said of Hong Kong, and I quote, "an exceptionally competitive financial and business hub" with "little tolerance for corruption", adding that "a high degree of transparency enhances government integrity". I do like those words, and what they say about Hong Kong. And I'm determined that my Government will continue to live up to them.

What makes Hong Kong unique is more than our business environment, as enabling as it may be. Our singular strength is the "one country, two systems" framework Hong Kong enjoys under the Basic Law. We will continue to take full advantage of this fundamental strength while at the same time play a more proactive role in functioning as a "facilitator" and a "promoter" and striving to expand our connections with the world.

A little over a week ago, I attended this year's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders' Meeting in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and met with a number of leaders. It was my 11th overseas trip and the 12th country visited since I took office last July. All these trips have been fruitful, allowing us to tell the world about the successful implementation of "one country, two systems", to explore new markets and to raise Hong Kong's profile in the world.

Less than two weeks ago, we concluded negotiations on a free trade agreement and a related investment agreement with Australia. That agreement and another with the Maldives which has also been concluded bring the number of free trade agreements we've signed or are about to sign to nine, involving 21 global economies. And in January next year, our free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, signed last November, will begin to take effect.

Opportunities brought by "one country" are all but boundless, thanks to the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. This Greater Bay Area, encompassing Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong Province, will create an enormous regional economy, one boasting nearly 70 million people and a GDP worth US\$1.5 trillion. The infrastructure connecting Hong Kong to the Greater Bay Area is world-class, with the opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge last month and the commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link in September.

The Belt and Road Initiative, designed to boost connectivity between the Mainland of China and countries spanning three continents, also offers unparalleled opportunities for Hong Kong business. Our financial and professional services sector, in particular, stands to gain, given the overwhelming need for investment capital that big-ticket infrastructure development demands.

We are also committed to promoting Hong Kong as an international dispute resolution centre for the Belt and Road, as I noted in my Policy Address in October. Our plans include developing a Belt and Road Dispute Resolution Centre, providing a wide range of services to resolve cross-border disputes. With that in mind, I wish to commend J P and his office for organising the first Asian ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition – Hong Kong, and doing so on the 10th anniversary of the ICC International Court of Arbitration – Asia Office, based right here in Hong Kong.

The Competition, which involved university student teams from all over Asia, was organised in co-operation with our Department of Justice. Its youth focus will surely spotlight the promise of career opportunities in dispute resolution here. And I was delighted to know that the winning team came from our City University of Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is through such innovative connections that Hong Kong will succeed and excel in this 21st century of opportunities. So once again, my congratulations to the International Chamber of Commerce – Hong Kong on its 20th anniversary. I wish the Chamber and its members the best of business in the next 20 years.

Thank you very much.



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## [LegCo Public Works Subcommittee visits facilities of District Cooling System at Kai Tak Development \(with photos\)](#)

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

Further to endorsing a funding proposal earlier this month for implementing the remaining works under Phase III of the District Cooling System (DCS) at the Kai Tak Development, the Legislative Council (LegCo)

Public Works Subcommittee visited the facilities of DCS today (November 26) to observe its operation.

Members first visited the North DCS Plant to receive a briefing on the operation of DCS and the latest progress of the remaining works. Accompanied by representatives of the Environment Bureau and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, members then visited the control room, chillers and the associated equipment at the basement of the plant. Members also went to SKH Holy Cross Primary School at the Kai Tak Development to visit the school's DCS substation.

Members participating in the visit included the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Dr Lo Wai-kwok; and members Mr Chu Hoi-dick, Mr Ho Kai-ming and Mr Gary Fan.



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## [FS to attend G20 Leaders' Summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina](#)

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will depart for Buenos Aires, Argentina, at around midnight on November 28 (Wednesday) to attend the Group of Twenty (G20) Leaders' Summit, which will be held on November 30 and December 1, as part of the delegation of the People's Republic of China.



The Leaders' Summit is the most important annual event of the G20, the leading international forum for economic, financial and political co-operation. The Summit provides a forum for leaders of the world's major economies to discuss areas for co-operation. On the margins of the Summit, Mr Chan will take the opportunity to meet with other attendees of the meeting.

Mr Chan will return to Hong Kong in the afternoon on December 3. In his absence, the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, will act as the Financial Secretary.