

CE meets Mayor of Chongqing and Governor of Hubei Province (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met with the Mayor of Chongqing, Mr Tang Liangzhi, and the Governor of Hubei Province, Mr Wang Xiaodong, at Government House today (September 3).

At her meeting with Mr Tang in the afternoon, Mrs Lam welcomed Mr Tang and his delegation for visiting Hong Kong for the first time after his assumption of office as Mayor of Chongqing to attend the Chongqing Hong Kong Symposium earlier in the morning. She said that Hong Kong and Chongqing have always been close and she was pleased to note that some Memorandums of Understanding and project agreements were signed between the relevant parties of Hong Kong and Chongqing during Mr Tang's stay in Hong Kong to further enhance co-operation between the two places.

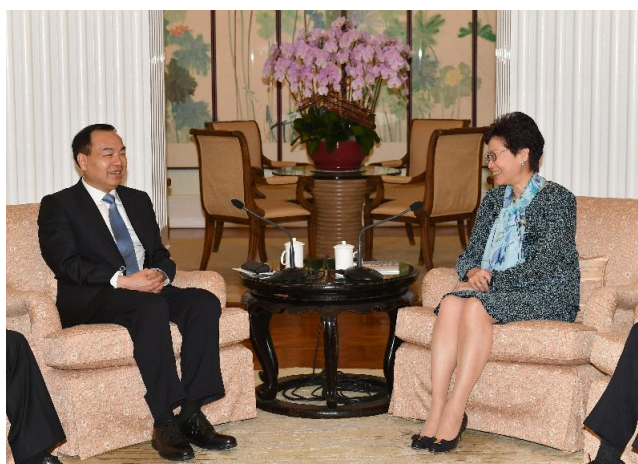
Mrs Lam said that the National 13th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong to consolidate and enhance its status as an international financial, transportation and trade centre, and develop the innovation and technology (I&T) industry and establish itself as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region. She invited enterprises from Chongqing to "go global" by leveraging Hong Kong's core advantages in fields including finance, commerce and trade, logistics, management, and legal and professional services to jointly explore the international market. She said Hong Kong has devoted more resources to scientific research and expressed the hope that Hong Kong and Chongqing will further explore co-operation in I&T. Expressing great interest in the development of the southern transport corridor and sea-rail intermodal transportation by Chongqing, she said she hopes the port and logistics sector in Hong Kong would be able to take part in it.

In the evening, Mrs Lam met with the Governor of Hubei Province, Mr Wang Xiaodong. She welcomed Mr Wang for visiting Hong Kong again to attend an event promoting Hubei-Hong Kong economic and trade co-operation today, following his first visit to Hong Kong and their meeting last year. She noted that the event has been held in Hong Kong for 17 years consecutively, indicating the close relationship between the two places.

Mrs Lam said that the Economic and Trade Office of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Wuhan (WHETO) was set up in 2014. She thanked the Hubei Government for its staunch support for WHETO's work, enabling it to fully discharge its duties to promote co-operation between Hubei and Hong Kong. She said that with the commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link in about three weeks, Hong Kong people will be able to reach 44 destinations in the Mainland, including Wuhan, in direct trains. The journey between Hong Kong

and Wuhan will only take about four hours, enhancing ties between the two places and bringing greater convenience to those who do business and study and even retirees. She added that Hong Kong is committed to advancing I&T development and that with Wuhan's I&T talents, the two places can strengthen co-operation and exchanges in the area.

Mrs Lam said at both meetings that the relevant Central ministries are rolling out measures to facilitate Hong Kong residents to live, work and study in the Mainland, and they announced last month that Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland who meet the relevant criteria can apply for residence permits. She expressed the hope that Chongqing and Hubei would continue their support in the implementation of the relevant measures.



[Speech by SCED at World Travel Awards Asia & Australasia Gala Ceremony 2018 \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, at the World Travel Awards Asia & Australasia Gala Ceremony 2018 today (September 3):

Mr Cooke (President and Founder of World Travel Awards, Mr Graham Cooke), Paddy (Executive Director of K Wah International Holding Limited, Ms Paddy Lui), Mr Wassermann (General Manager of InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong, Mr Alexander Wassermann), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It is my great pleasure to join you all tonight on this

very special occasion celebrating the World Travel Awards' Silver Jubilee Anniversary. I am particularly pleased that Hong Kong is once again chosen to be the host of this prestigious event this year.

Over the past years, the Awards has gained a notable reputation for providing a benchmark for excellence across different sectors of the tourism industry. Indeed, Hong Kong shares the same values with the Awards in driving for excellence in the provision of the warmest hospitality and highest level of service to our visitors. With the concerted efforts of our industry members, Hong Kong has become one of the world's favourite tourist destinations. We are proud that our city is ranked by the Euromonitor International as number one among the top 100 city destinations in the world.

While a lot of people would use tourist numbers as an easy indicator of the popularity of a city's tourism attractions, I must reiterate that Hong Kong's success has not and should not be measured by tourist figures alone. I would say, total experience among tourists counts better. Even if we look at figures, let us look at a bucket of them. If we look at retail figures (total retail sales value increased by 7.8 per cent year on year in July 2018), hotel occupancy (rates were nearly 90 per cent in 2017), visits to attractions, MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) activities, diversity of tourists among origins and balance between long and short-haul travels, 2017 and 2018 have been quite rewarding years for Hong Kong. But we can do better.

We can do better by broadening and deepening the scope of entertainment, enjoyment and experience of tourists in Hong Kong. This involves constant upgrading and improvement of services, the creation of and reinvesting in new attractions, and re-discovering hidden treasures in our tourism resources. The rejuvenation of history and heritage content together with arts and culture in our Central District is a recent example. The recent completion of the renovated Tai Kwun, the restoration and rebirth of the three historical monument buildings of the Central Police Station, Central Magistracy and Victoria Prison have now become an exciting landmark among our tourist attractions. Together with the Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail and PMQ, which has become home to over 100 design galleries and shops, Central district offers a totally new and dramatic experience to our visitors.

We will continue to do more in enriching what a tourist, new or repeat, in getting a totally new experience in discovering Hong Kong. Following the success of Central Old Town, our next project is to "experience every local bit" of two other districts namely Sham Shui Po and Wan Chai Districts where typical Hong Kong style of local living and livelihood could be of interest to tourists too. I am sure these are interesting and rewarding experiences for getting to know more about the local character of Hong Kong as a city where the East meets the West; and tradition crosses over with modern metropolitan life.

Creating new attractions alone cannot satisfy a sustainable tourism trade. City management, municipal services and quality assurance are all important. Safety, comfort and trust cannot be taken for granted. And any

city that is safe and easy to travel in will be greatly welcomed by visitors.

In this regard, I am proud to say that Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world, and a city that is easy for any tourists to get around with its efficient transport and tourist-friendly facilities. These are important pillars that support our industry. And we must continue to make the best endeavour to do more and do better in receiving visitors from all over the world and to ensure that they have enjoyed their stay.

The tourism industry is not a single or stand-alone trade. Increasingly, tourism works in tandem with related businesses like conferences and MICE, and business travellers' experience in particular, is often important in facilitating their repeated visits and furthering their goal in coming to a city for purposes other than sightseeing.

Hong Kong prides itself as an international business and financial centre, and we will continue to provide the best venue for all these commercial activities and play a good host to events like the one here this evening.

In the coming few weeks, we will see the commissioning of two major cross-boundary modern transport links, connecting Hong Kong much closer, easier and more comfortably to our immediate hinterland, the Bay Area (the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area), as well as the entire country of the Mainland of China. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao-Bridge and the high speed railway (Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link) will be our new connections to the wider region and the world. It is also high time for Hong Kong to do better in seizing the opportunity to position ourselves as the most favourite destination as well as a prime landing place for multi-destination travelling in this region.

With all these new and exciting things happening, I stand ready to welcome all of you to come to Hong Kong more frequently.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the creator and organiser of the World Travel Awards, and to all those involved in making the Awards a guiding light over the past 25 years. I must also extend my warmest congratulations to this year's award winners, who well deserve our big applause. Well done!

I wish you all a great evening. Thank you.

Welcome home ceremony for Hong Kong,

China Delegation to 18th Asian Games (with photos)

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government hosted a welcome home ceremony at Hong Kong International Airport today (September 3) to greet the Hong Kong, China Delegation to the 18th Asian Games on their triumphant return from the Games.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, praised the Hong Kong athletes for their exceptional achievements at the Games. The Hong Kong delegation won a total of 46 medals, comprising eight gold, 18 silver and 20 bronze. Describing the results as most encouraging, Mr Lau said that Hong Kong citizens were impressed by and proud of these athletes, who had demonstrated strong determination and great perseverance in striving for the best.

Mr Lau added, "The Government has all along been boosting the development of sports and supporting the athletes at full steam. In the coming years, we will allocate \$60 billion towards sport projects, including the construction of the Kai Tak Sports Park as well as 26 sports and recreation facilities in the community. The Government will also continue to devote resources in support of elite athletes and National Sports Associations in organising more high-level and large-scale sports events in Hong Kong."

The 18th Asian Games was held between August 18 and September 2 in Jakarta and Palembang in Indonesia. Hong Kong sent a record-breaking delegation of some 580 athletes to the Games, which took part in 36 events.

Other guests attending the ceremony today included the President of the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, Mr Timothy Fok; the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Cherry Tse; the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Ms Michelle Li; and the Chef de Mission of the Delegation, Mr Herman Hu.





Speech by FS at Hong Kong Business Luncheon jointly organised by HKSARG and HKTDC in Israel (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Hong Kong Business Luncheon jointly organised by the HKSAR Government and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Tel Aviv during his visit to Israel today (September 3, Israel time).

Dr Appelbaum (Dr Ami Appelbaum, Chairman of the Israel Innovation Authority and the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Economy and Industry), Mr Baruch (Mr Adiv Baruch, Chairman of Israel Export and International Cooperation Institute) , Ambassador Ravia-Zadok (Ambassador Yael Ravia-Zadok, Deputy Director-General, Head of Economic Affairs Division, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Raymond (Mr Raymond Yip Deputy Executive Director, Hong Kong Trade Development Council) , distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. Shalom!

I am delighted to be here in the ingenious and spectacular city of Tel Aviv, and to have this opportunity to break bread with our friends here in Israel.

This is my first official visit to Israel and the first high-level official visit to this country by the current-term Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). So we are not only breaking bread, we are breaking new fertile ground for relations between Israel and Hong Kong.

First of all, I thank our Israeli friends for the warm welcome extended to us. I also thank the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for co-

organising this luncheon with the HKSAR Government.

We are delighted to lead a delegation to Israel, comprising established business leaders as well as burgeoning startups in Hong Kong. They include venture capitals and corporate investors, as well as companies focusing on financial services, Fintech, smart city development, biotech and biomedicine. We also have representatives from the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park and Cyberport, the two flagship institutions championing innovation and technology development in Hong Kong. Also here today are my colleagues from Invest Hong Kong, whose mission is to attract and facilitate Israeli companies to set foot in Hong Kong.

I hope you will agree that, when it comes to breaking new ground for business opportunities, we have all the key players around the table. And thanks to Dr Appelbaum's insightful briefing earlier today, bringing us up-to-speed on the latest development in Israel, we are now very aware of the opportunities ahead.

While Hong Kong and Israel are miles apart geographically, we share much in our change-embracing can-do entrepreneurial spirit. In this ever-evolving global economic landscape, Hong Kong and Israel can be each other's trusted partner in seizing the opportunities ahead. We are therefore here today to explore new avenues for collaboration with Tel Aviv and with Israel to help create a brighter and, of course, smarter future.

Hong Kong is on the doorstep of the most prosperous region of Asia. From Hong Kong, you can reach half the world's population within a five-hour flight. With our long-standing position as a pivotal gateway connecting Mainland China and the rest of the world, Hong Kong is certainly an ideal springboard for Israeli companies looking to develop and strengthen their presence in our region, and especially in the Mainland of China.

Hong Kong also enjoys unique advantages under the "one country, two systems" arrangement, which allows us to maintain our own economic and legal system while being an integral and closely connected part of China. Flying the flag of free trade and upholding a level-playing field, Hong Kong has been widely recognised as one of the best places in the world to do business and we have been ranked as the world's freest economy for each of the past 24 years, according to the US-based Heritage Foundation.

On top of our free and open economy, we offer an internationally competitive tax regime, with companies paying no more than 16.5 per cent profits tax. In fact, this year we introduced a new two-tier tax system, by which the tax on the first HK\$2 million (US\$255,000) of profits is taxed at just 8.25 per cent. There is also no inheritance tax, no capital gains tax and no sales tax in Hong Kong. All this adds up to more money and more time for companies to invest in growing their business.

Regarding our legal system, Hong Kong's mature common law system and fine tradition of rule of law mean that entrepreneurs can rest assured that contracts will be honoured, intellectual property is well-protected and

disputes are settled fairly. Arbitral awards made in Hong Kong are enforceable in over 150 Contracting States to the New York Convention. This is complemented by reciprocal arrangements with Mainland China.

As one of the world's leading financial centres and China's international financial capital, Hong Kong is the ideal platform for fund raising. In terms of IPOs, Hong Kong has been ranked number one globally for five years in the past nine years. Our deep liquidity, premier financial infrastructure, and comprehensive options for raising capital can meet the varying financial needs of different types of businesses, tech companies included of course, whatever their size and whatever their stage of development.

Hong Kong also enjoys first-mover advantages available to no one else, in leveraging Mainland China's continued economic development. We are now the global offshore Renminbi (RMB) business hub with the world's largest offshore pool of RMB funds. Through Hong Kong, international investors enjoy access to a wide variety of RMB products, including bond issuance, trade settlement and RMB denominated banking. With the launch of Bond Connect, Stock Connect schemes, and mutual recognition of funds arrangements between Hong Kong and the Mainland, Hong Kong serves as the unique two-way portal connecting international and Mainland investors to each other's vast market.

Apart from financial services, Hong Kong is the platform for high-end professional services. Our world-class professionals in engineering, architecture, urban planning, surveying and consulting have the experience and knowledge to lead and implement world class infrastructure projects.

As a real testimony to our position as an international financial, transportation and trade centre, more than 8 200 major Mainland China and overseas companies are now operating in Hong Kong. I am delighted that with the support from Invest Hong Kong, a number of promising Israeli businesses have also established their presence in our city recently.

Indeed, the expansion of Israel-Hong Kong co-operation cannot be more relevant at this juncture, as Hong Kong is actively embracing innovation and technology as the new impetus for economic growth. In fact, I also see much potential for our two economies to join forces in harnessing the mighty power of innovation and technology in 21st century.

Advanced I&T in all its forms is required in order to succeed in the future world economy. With our collective entrepreneurial spirit, business acumen, and shared commitment to scientific research and development, Israel and Hong Kong can forge new synergies in this field.

Following the establishment of the Innovation and Technology Bureau some two years ago, we have allocated more than US\$10 billion to upgrade our technological infrastructure, build a vibrant ecosystem for startups, and pool and nurture more technology talent in Hong Kong. We will be focusing on four areas, namely, biotech, smart city, Fintech and artificial intelligence and big data analytics.

It helps that Hong Kong boasts a number of top-notch universities with strong research capabilities, as well as world-class information and communication technology infrastructure and the largest data centre cluster in the Asia-Pacific region. Our internet connection speed is among the world's fastest, and our mobile penetration rate, at 247 per cent, is among the highest anywhere – certainly on this planet.

Among the many ongoing initiatives, we are establishing two research clusters in Hong Kong, one focusing on healthcare technologies and the other on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies. By developing these clusters, we aim to attract world-class scientific research institutions and technology enterprises to join forces with our local universities and scientific research institutions in conducting more midstream and downstream R&D projects.

I am confident in this respect, let me add, because of our encouraging track record in this regard. For example, in late 2016, the celebrated Karolinska Institutet of Sweden opened its first overseas research facility for Reparative Medicine at our Science Park. Then, last September, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology opened its first overseas Innovation Node, providing entrepreneurial education and training for students and researchers from MIT and from Hong Kong as well. In addition, our country is very supportive of Hong Kong. Researchers in Hong Kong can have access to research funding available on the Mainland and renowned Mainland universities and research institutes have and will continue to set up laboratories in Hong Kong.

Naturally, we welcome Israeli tech entrepreneurs, and talent to partner with Hong Kong in creating high-tech solutions for a smarter future, we also welcome Israeli innovative companies to make use of our world-class financial platform to raise fund.

Our strong financial market will certainly play its part in promoting innovation and technology. For example, we understand that biotech companies face financial challenges, due to the long and costly journey inherent in turning biotech research into effective products and applications. We are keenly aware that biotech companies with promising developments in the works require substantial cashflow to get through the arduous, but necessary, approval process demanded by relevant authorities.

With biotech and other sectors of the new economy in mind, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange introduced in April this year a new listing regime which allows pre-revenue biotech companies and companies with weighted voting right structures to list on the Main Board. The new listing regime also provides a route for issuers seeking a secondary listing in Hong Kong.

We are developing Hong Kong into the preferred listing platform for emerging and innovative enterprises.

We are also working relentlessly with industry stakeholders to further

enhance Hong Kong's ecosystem for start-ups. Today, a new generation of disruptors is taking advantage of Hong Kong's favourable economic and cultural environment to create, innovate and enable tomorrow's economy. In recent years, our start-up scene has also taken off – not surprisingly, of course. According to San Francisco-based research firm Compass, Hong Kong is among the world's five fastest-growing start-up centres. With a growing number of private venture capital funds attracted by Hong Kong's start-ups, as well as incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces now operating in Hong Kong, I am confident that the start-ups scene in Hong Kong will continue to flourish.

Before I conclude, I also wish to highlight the exciting prospects for Hong Kong in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development, a national development strategy of China.

Linking Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong, including Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Zhuhai, the Greater Bay Area counts a combined population of 69 million and a collective GDP worth US\$1.5 trillion, which is comparable to that of Korea. Working together, the synergies to be brought about by these cities are obvious and tremendous. The world class financial services of Hong Kong, the vibrant tech sector in Shenzhen and the advanced manufacturing bases in the other cities in the area, enable the Greater Bay Area to have the combined advantages of the New York Bay Area and the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Greater Bay Area has all it takes to become the international innovation and technology hub of China.

In the coming quarter, two major mega cross-border infrastructure projects, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Guangdong-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, will be operational, further enhancing Hong Kong's connectivity with the Greater Bay Area and beyond.

With the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge the travelling time from Hong Kong to Macao, Zhuhai and Shenzhen will be cut down substantially to less than an hour. A one-hour living circle will be created. And most of the cities in the Pearl River Delta Area are within three hours' drive. Cities in Indochina, such as Hanoi in Vietnam, can be reached in about one day. And with the Express Rail Link, the journey time between Guangzhou and Hong Kong will be reduced to 48 minutes, and passengers from Hong Kong can easily access the over-20,000 km national high speed rail network connecting all major cities in the Mainland.

Ladies and gentlemen, although this visit is a "first" in many ways, Israel and Hong Kong have established a firm foundation for collaboration over many years: the value of our bilateral goods trade exceeds US\$4 billion annually; more than 30 Israeli companies operate in Hong Kong in a wide range of sectors; and last year, nearly 75,000 Israelis visited Hong Kong, up more than 16 per cent, year-on-year.

Looking ahead, I am excited to learn more about Tel Aviv and Israel, in

particular the vibrant innovation and technology scene.

I also hope that you will come and visit us in Hong Kong very soon, to see the opportunities awaiting you, the opportunities for closer ties between Israel and Hong Kong.

Thank you very much. Todá!



Popsicle sample detected with coliform bacteria exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (September 3) announced that a honeydew berry sorbet popsicle sample was found to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit. Follow-up is in progress.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: HONEYDEW BERRY SORBET
Product brand: NICE POPS HONG KONG
Manufacturer/ Packer: Nice Company HK, Limited
Net volume: 82 millilitres
Use by date: December 28, 2018

A spokesman for the CFS said, "Subsequent to announcing earlier that a honeydew berry sorbet popsicle sample taken from the premises of a frozen confection factory in Ap Lei Chau found to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit, the CFS has enhanced surveillance on the products of the premises and has detected from the above-mentioned sample coliform bacteria of 300 per gram, exceeding the legal limit, the result for pathogens test was satisfactory."

Under the Frozen Confections Regulation (Cap 132AC), frozen confection for sale should not contain more than 100 coliform bacteria per gram. The

maximum penalty for offenders is a fine of \$10,000 and three months' imprisonment upon conviction. The fact that the coliform bacteria exceeded the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but did not mean that consumption would lead to food poisoning.

"The CFS has informed the premises concerned of the irregularity and advised it to immediately stop production and sale of the affected product. The CFS has provided health education on food safety and hygiene for the person-in-charge and staff concerned again, and has requested them to carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection. The CFS has enhanced surveillance of related products," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.