

LCSD launches online programme "1357" by Théâtre de la Feuille

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has launched the free online programme "1357" by Théâtre de la Feuille.

"1357" focuses on the symmetric and the unbalanced in life. Making use of four creative elements in the daily training routine and artistic creation of physical theatre, including "mask", "body", "object" and "wire work", this programme consists of four short video clips created with snapshots which aim to explore the virtually infinite possibilities between theatre and movie making.

Each video covers a performance clip and a behind-the-scenes featurette. The first episode is now available for viewing online; the remaining three episodes will be launched later. Details are as follows:

Episode 1 Flying Bird

Episode 2 The Tempest

Episode 3 Bubbles

Episode 4 Feet in the Air and Head on the Ground

Founded in 2010 in Paris by Wong Chun-tat, Théâtre de la Feuille is currently based in Hong Kong. Wong was one of very few graduates of Chinese descent to have completed a two-year introductory course and the laboratory of movement study at École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. In addition, Wong further attained the Jacques Lecoq teaching certification in 2018 after completion of the school's three-year teaching course.

Théâtre de la Feuille is made up of performers from different countries and backgrounds who diligently polish their craft by receiving regular training devised by the company in order to grow as a team that is collectively fluent in self-expression and abundant in creative energy. The artistic approach of the company blends elements of East and West, where the Western pedagogy of Jacques Lecoq interweaves with the traditional arts of the East. Not only does Théâtre de la Feuille produce high-quality theatre that experiments with a diverse range of genres and topics, it also aims to glean as much overseas touring experience as possible. It has undertaken some 180 overseas tours, performing in over 80 locations in the United States, France, Italy, Croatia, Japan, Korea and the Mainland.

To view the online programme "1357", please visit the LCSD's Edutainment Channel at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/edutainment-channel.html. For programme enquiries or more information, please call 2268 7323 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/multi_arts/programs_1080.html

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Speech by CE at 14th Asian Financial Forum (English only) (with photo/video)

Following is the video speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the 14th Asian Financial Forum held online this morning (January 18):

Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the 14th Asian Financial Forum. For the first time, this signature event in the financial sector will take place virtually. But if the distressing realities of COVID-19 have separated us this year, they are also bringing so many more of us together online, and are giving us so much more reason to gather intelligence and insight, to deliberate, debate and network, and to weigh business and investment options. This reminds me of a Chinese saying that when there are risks, there are opportunities. I hope we can look forward to a year of opportunities that will bring us prosperity.

By the organiser's count, more than 5 000 participants from some 70 countries and regions are expected to watch and listen in these two days. You'll be hearing from over 160 high-profile speakers from all over the world. In one way or another, each will be addressing this year's essential theme: "Reshaping World Economic Landscape". The speaker line-up includes, I'm pleased to say, the 2018 Nobel Laureate for Economic Sciences, Professor Paul Romer, who will address you later today. Dr Luc Julia, co-creator of the

Apple Voice Assistant Siri, and Alexis Ohanian, co-founder of Reddit, our other keynote speakers, are part of tomorrow's packed agenda.

Allow me, for a moment, to look back at 2020, a year we want to forget and know we will never forget. Mask wearing, social distancing, COVID-19 testing have become our daily routine and as a result, most of the business sectors are hard hit. The global economy last year plunged roughly 4.4 per cent. And Hong Kong's GDP in 2020 is expected to decline by 6.1 per cent. That said, vaccinations have begun in some nations and economies, and will soon spread across the world, Hong Kong included. They will offer hope for us all. Indeed, if the vaccines are as successful as we expect, there will be real momentum for recovery in the second half of this year.

Amidst the challenges, Hong Kong's financial system has demonstrated its strengths and resilience. Our financial markets continue to operate orderly, and that includes the Linked Exchange Rate System. The Hong Kong dollar to the US dollar exchange rate has stayed on the strong side, reflecting investors' continuing confidence in our financial markets.

We continue to see enormous opportunities when the pandemic is over, thanks to our strong fundamentals and unique advantages as the international financial centre of China and one of the world's major financial cities. In particular, with remarkable efforts in controlling the pandemic, the Mainland has regained economic growth, being the only major economy to show real growth in 2020. There will be plenty of opportunities there, and Hong Kong can offer a range of services for you to capture them.

That's thanks to our "One Country, Two Systems" framework and longstanding advantages, including an internationally aligned regulatory regime, the rule of law, a simple and low tax system and the free flow of information and capital. We continue to be an ideal gateway between the Mainland and the rest of the world. That very much includes our role as both a conduit for foreign capital investing in the Mainland and the springboard for Mainland companies looking to international markets.

Our city is regularly among the world's top performers in raising initial public offering (IPO) funds. Since 2009, we have been ranked number one for IPO funds raised seven times. We are, as well, the world's largest offshore Renminbi business hub. In 2019, about 75 per cent of the global offshore Renminbi payments were processed through Hong Kong. And total Renminbi deposits at the end of October 2020 exceeded RMB721 billion.

We are not complacent, and always look to improve our regime to make it easier to invest in Hong Kong. Since the implementation of a new listing regime in 2018, nearly 40 companies with a weighted voting rights structure, pre-revenue or pre-profit biotechnology companies and secondary listed companies, have listed in Hong Kong. They have taken up about 40 per cent of IPO funds raised during the same period, realising a current market capitalisation of more than US\$1.4 trillion.

The liquidity in our capital markets is remarkable, with an average daily turnover reaching US\$16.7 billion in December. That's up 49 per cent

over the same period in 2019, while market capitalisation is over 16 times of our GDP.

With the Central Government's support, and in recognition of Hong Kong now being the second-largest listing platform for biotechnology companies in the world, we recently accelerated the inclusion of pre-revenue or pre-profit biotechnology companies listed in Hong Kong as eligible stocks under the Stock Connect scheme. That has strengthened collaboration between the capital markets of Hong Kong and the Mainland, while deepening the liquidity of biotechnology companies listed in Hong Kong.

Our collaboration with the Mainland goes well beyond listings. The Greater Bay Area, comprising Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in the Guangdong Province, is an emerging cluster-city development integrating more than 72 million people and a combined GDP of US\$1.7 trillion. And we are working to expand the flow of capital and people, to create new markets and business opportunities in the Greater Bay Area.

Among the latest offerings is Wealth Management Connect, which will allow Greater Bay Area residents to carry out cross-boundary investment in wealth-management products distributed by banks in the area. Given the huge potential investor base in the Greater Bay Area, I have no doubt that Wealth Management Connect will attract a wealth of international financial institutions.

The initiative will further strengthen Hong Kong's asset and wealth management sector. At the end of 2019, assets under management in Hong Kong totalled US\$3.7 trillion, 64 per cent of that sourced from non-local investors. That, ladies and gentlemen, showcases Hong Kong's high degree of internationalisation as a leading asset and wealth management hub.

To maintain momentum, we are promoting the development of real estate investment trusts, private equity funds and family office business. To that end, we have relaxed investment restrictions for real estate investment trusts and broadened investor base. And we are facilitating the market operation of real estate investment trusts through regulatory enhancements.

As for family office business, we will set up a dedicated team to promote Hong Kong's advantages, offering a full range of support services to family offices interested in establishing a presence in Hong Kong. For private equity funds, we plan to provide tax concessions for carried interest.

We see opportunity, as well, in boosting Hong Kong's status as an international risk management centre. Accordingly, we have reduced the profits tax rate by half, to 8.25 per cent, for specified insurance businesses, including those related to marine and specialty insurance. We have also made it easier for special-purpose companies in Hong Kong to issue insurance-linked securities, and expanded the scope of insurable risks by captive insurers set up in Hong Kong. In addition, we have enhanced the regulatory framework for multinational insurance groups. In short, we are well-placed to serve as the risk-management centre for countries and

companies along the Belt and Road.

Innovation and technological advancement are priorities of my Government, and they will power the future of our financial services sector. Hong Kong is home to more than 600 fintech companies and start-ups. They include a herd of unicorns, globally respected research centres, innovation laboratories and more. Eight virtual banks and four virtual insurers have been granted licences, offering a wide variety of financial services for business and the public. A virtual asset trading platform has also been authorised. And our Faster Payment System connects banks and e-wallets, enabling 24-hour instant transfer in Hong Kong dollars and Renminbi, not to mention payment of government fees and charges.

In addition, our new Fintech Proof-of-Concept Subsidy Scheme provides incentives for financial institutions to partner with fintech companies on proof-of-concept projects. I welcome fintech companies in the region and around the world to join us in building the banking and financial services future for Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area and the world.

Last but not least, sustainable development is also central to our future. In my 2020 Policy Address, I committed Hong Kong to carbon neutrality by 2050. To help realise that ambitious goal, we recently launched a strategic plan to support a greener and more sustainable future, to boost investment conducive to Hong Kong's low-carbon transformation. I welcome you to take advantage of Hong Kong's capital markets, and our financial and professional services, for green and sustainable investment, financing and certification.

Ladies and gentlemen, many of the topics and initiatives I've touched on will be discussed in greater detail through this year's Forum and its panel discussions and workshops. Alongside the panel discussions, policy dialogues and special addresses, this year's Asian Financial Forum features Fintech Showcase, a Deal Flow Matchmaking Session and a Global Investment Zone, connecting global investors, project owners and start-ups. They will offer all the investment and financial help you need to guide you through this year of challenge and opportunity.

My thanks to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council for putting together another remarkable programme, and doing so under the most daunting of conditions. I thank you once again for your participation, and wish you the best of business over these two days and a healthy and rewarding New Year. I look forward to seeing you all, in person, right here in Hong Kong, at next year's Asian Financial Forum. Thank you.



Employers and employees should take precautions during cold weather

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Cold Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Cold Weather Warning is in force, they should take appropriate precautions such as reminding employees who have to work outdoors or in remote areas to wear appropriately warm clothing, and make arrangements for employees to rotate from outdoor to indoor or sheltered work sites as far as possible. Employees should take note of the weather report, wear appropriately warm clothing and be mindful of their health conditions. They should notify their supervisors and seek medical help immediately if feeling unwell, such as having cold limbs and body shivering.

CHP reminds public on precautions against cold weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 18) reminded the public, particularly the elderly and people with chronic illnesses, to adopt appropriate measures to protect their health in view of the cold weather.

A spokesman for the CHP said that cold weather can easily trigger or exacerbate diseases, especially among the elderly and persons suffering from

heart disease, respiratory illness or other chronic illnesses.

"Elderly people have less insulating fat beneath their skin to keep them warm and their body temperature control mechanism may be weaker. Their body may not be able to appropriately respond to the cold weather," the spokesman said.

Some senior persons may have decreased mobility, which can in turn slow down their ability to generate and conserve body heat. Chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes and endocrine disorders, may undermine the health of elderly people and lower their metabolic rate, subsequently causing their body to generate less heat.

The CHP reminded the public, in particular the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses, to adopt the following preventive measures:

- Take note of the weather forecast. Wear warm clothing, including hats, scarves, gloves and socks accordingly;
- Consume sufficient food to ensure adequate calorie intake;
- Perform regular exercise to facilitate blood circulation and heat production;
- Stay in a warm environment and avoid prolonged outdoor exposure;
- Use heaters with care and maintain adequate indoor ventilation; and
- Seek medical advice if feeling unwell.

In addition, the public should avoid alcoholic beverages.

"Drinking alcohol cannot keep you warm. Alcohol accelerates the loss of body heat through dilated blood vessels, resulting in chilling instead," the spokesman said.

"Parents should ensure that babies are sufficiently warm, but it is also important to keep babies lightly clothed to avoid overheating them," the spokesman added.

Parents should observe the following safety measures when putting their children to bed:

- Keep the room well ventilated and with a comfortable temperature;
- Always place babies on their back to sleep. Babies usually sleep well without a pillow;
- Place babies on a firm and well-fitted mattress to sleep. Avoid soft objects and loose bedding;
- Leave their head, face and arms uncovered during sleep; and
- Let babies sleep in a cot placed in the parents' room and near their bed.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They should adhere to the following advice:

- A surgical mask can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination, which is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications; and
- Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination early. Please see details of the vaccination programmes and scheme on the CHP's website.

Food-borne diseases, particularly those linked to hot pot cuisine, are also common in cold weather. The following preventive measures should be taken:

- Wash hands before handling and consuming food;
- Do not patronise unlicensed vendors or those with poor hygienic standards while selecting food;
- Wash and cook all food thoroughly;
- Vegetables should be washed thoroughly in clean running water before cooking and consumption. When appropriate, scrub vegetables with hard surfaces with a clean brush to remove dirt and substances, including pesticide residues and contaminants, from the surface and crevices;
- Shrimps should be fully cooked by cooking them until the shells turn red and the flesh turns white and opaque;
- For shellfish like scallops and geoduck, scrub the shells thoroughly and remove internal organs;
- Most hot pot ingredients should be stored in a refrigerator at 4 degrees Celsius or below, while frozen food should be stored in a freezer at -18 degrees C or below;

- Never use raw eggs as a dipping sauce for hot pot; and
- Use different sets of chopsticks to handle raw and cooked food to avoid cross-contamination.

In addition, the public should not use charcoal as a cooking fuel in poorly ventilated areas, especially indoors, to avoid harmful exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) and prevent CO poisoning. While using other kinds of fuel, the public should also ensure adequate ventilation.

For more health information, the public may call the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) or visit the [CHP's website](#) and [Facebook Fanpage](#).

The public may also call Dial-a-Weather (1878 200) or visit the website of the [Hong Kong Observatory](#) for the latest weather information and forecast, or its page on [Weather Information for Senior Citizens](#).