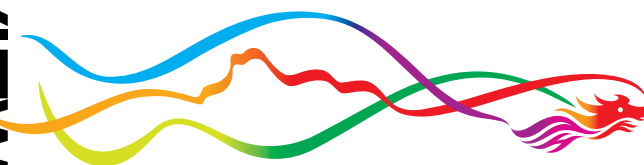


HONG KONG REVIEW



Hong Kong's full potential "unleashed"



In his second Policy Address, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, C Y Leung, said the government would focus on promoting economic development as a foundation for overcoming challenges in society and unleashing Hong Kong's full potential.

The Policy Address, delivered in January and titled "Support the Needy, Let Youth Flourish, Unleash Hong Kong's Potential", contains more than 160 new initiatives.

Mr Leung said his government was committed to alleviating poverty, caring for the elderly, supporting the disadvantaged, and enhancing the quality of public

healthcare. He stressed the importance of delivering economic growth at the same time as improving people's livelihoods.

"We should capitalise on, consolidate and enhance our existing advantages, strengthen co-operation with Mainland China and overseas economies in every aspect, and foster diversity and robust growth in our industries," he said.

Free trade

Early in the year Hong Kong will start formal negotiations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on a Free Trade Agreement, said Mr Leung. The Hong Kong Government will also

Above: Mr Leung delivers his second Policy Address to the Hong Kong Legislative Council in January.

support the establishment of a free trade zone in Guangdong, he added.

Highlighting the need for Hong Kong to develop further its position as an international financial centre including for business in Renminbi, the currency of Mainland China, he commented that the Financial Services Development Council had already submitted its first set of reports outlining how this could be achieved.

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Financial Secretary, John C Tsang, visits London (Page 2)



Hong Kong voted the Best City for Business Events (Page 3)

Major consultation on voting reform underway



The Hong Kong Government has published the "Consultation Document on the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive (CE) in 2017 and for Forming the Legislative Council (LegCo) in 2016" to consult the public on the two electoral methods.

Since 2004, there have been extensive and specific discussions in the community of Hong Kong on how to amend the methods for selecting the CE and for forming the LegCo, and on issues relating to universal suffrage.

In December 2007, the Central Government adopted a decision that clearly provides a timetable for universal suffrage in Hong Kong,

i.e., the election of the CE in the year 2017 may be implemented by the method of universal suffrage; and after the CE is selected by universal suffrage, the election of the LegCo may be implemented by the method of electing all the Members by universal suffrage.

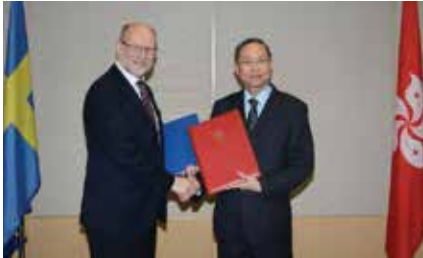
"We do not underestimate the challenges in forging a consensus and understand the complexity of constitutional development issues and the divergent views held by different sectors of the community on many of them," said Carrie Lam, Chief Secretary for Administration. "Yet, I am hopeful that with the concerted efforts and collective wisdom by all concerned, we will be able to find common ground."

For a copy of the consultation document, including details of where to send responses, please visit www.2017.gov.hk.

Above: From left to right: Rimsky Yuen, Secretary for Justice, Carrie Lam, Chief Secretary for Administration and Raymond Tam, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, hold copies of the consultation document at a press conference to mark the opening of the public consultation.

●●● International relations

Sweden and Hong Kong develop closer ties



Above: Mr Lai (right) and Stefan Attefall, Minister for Public Administration and Housing of the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden, at the signing of the MLA.

Hong Kong and Sweden have signed an agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLA) in November 2013.

“The signing of the agreement marks a further step by both governments to strengthen co-operation on criminal matters,” said Secretary for Security, Lai Tung-kuok, speaking at the signing ceremony. “It also demonstrates our shared commitment to the international effort in fighting crimes.”

This is the 30th agreement of its kind between Hong Kong and other governments.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 2 February 2014
Chinese New Year celebrations in Trafalgar Square and Chinatown, London, UK

Thursday, 6 February 2014
Chinese New Year reception in London, UK

Thursday, 13 February 2014
Chinese New Year reception in Moscow, Russia

Friday, 14 February 2014
Chinese New Year reception in St Petersburg, Russia

Tuesday, 18 February 2014
Chinese New Year celebration in Birmingham, UK

Thursday, 6 March 2014
Chinese New Year reception in Copenhagen, Denmark

King of Sweden visits Hong Kong

King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden (left) visited Hong Kong in November 2013 in his capacity as Honorary Chairman of the World Scout Foundation.

Welcoming the King of Sweden, Chief Executive C Y Leung (right) said that the Scout Association of Hong Kong is the largest youth uniformed group in Hong Kong and has helped nurture many outstanding youngsters throughout the years.

Mr Leung also said that Hong Kong has been maintaining close ties with Sweden, and hoped that with more exchanges on all fronts, the bilateral relations between the two places will scale new heights.



Business of Design Week 2014

Sweden is the partner country of the Business of Design Week (BODW) to be held in December 2014 in Hong Kong. BODW is the annual flagship event organised by Hong Kong Design Centre. It is Asia's leading event for design, innovation and brands. In 2012, Denmark was the partner country of the BODW.

Customs agreement

Hong Kong and Russia have agreed to collaborate more closely to tackle transnational customs offences.

The new Memorandum of Understanding is a milestone in co-operation between the two customs administrations, said Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Clement Cheung.

Universities sign research agreement

Universities in Hong Kong and Scotland are set to work more closely on joint research projects following the signing of agreement between the Scottish Funding Council and Hong Kong's Research Grants Council.

The agreement will see researchers at leading institutions co-operating on a range of projects in areas such as energy and life sciences. Under the Joint Research Scheme established by the Research Grants Council, currently a total of nine joint research schemes with partnership involving Mainland

China, the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States are implemented. Over 850 research projects have been supported by these schemes to date.

Witnessing the signing, Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond said the agreement was part of Scotland's strategy to “widen and deepen our links, share our expertise and develop new partnerships with Hong Kong as we both seek to promote sustainable economic growth.”

