

Performances by China National Peking Opera Company and Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company to open Chinese Opera Festival

The 10th Chinese Opera Festival will commence in June with performances by the China National Peking Opera Company and the Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company. The opening programme "Peking Opera Masters North and South" will be staged at the newly opened Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District.

Yu Kuizhi, Peking Opera's foremost living master, will be joined by Li Shengsu, bearer of the tradition handed down by Mei Lanfang, in leading the China National Peking Opera Company for three evenings. Special guest artist Yang Chi, Director of the Dalian Peking Opera Company and a disciple of Yuan Shihai, will join the cast in "The Boar Forest", an iconic masterpiece of Li Shaochun. The next evening, the 1923 classic "The Great Beauty Xi Shi", which is widely celebrated as an exemplar of Mei Lanfang's contributions to the genre in the last century, will be staged. The third evening will feature "Mu Guiying Taking Command", which has been heralded as Mei's final masterpiece, the epitome of four decades of his extraordinary artistry.

The Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company will follow closely with three evenings of distinctive programmes. Wang Peiyu, a renowned female artist in the Yu (Shuyan) tradition of "laosheng" (old male) roles, will perform "Vermilion Birthmark". Two other classic excerpts: "Water Nymph of Sizhou City", highlighting a female warrior, and "Chisang Town", pitching painted-face performance against old female roles, will also be staged. The second evening will present two scenes from "Yu Tang Chun" with Shi Yihong, a renowned "qingyi" (virtuous female) in the Mei tradition, as Su San, a destitute woman whose love remains steadfast in the face of death. The first half of this double bill will feature Gai Jiaotian's popular martial arts work "Wu Song Fighting in the Tavern". The final evening will offer quintessential Shanghai-style Peking opera in "Seven Heroes and Five Gallants", a "tour de force" of expert singing and martial arts skills, in which each role enjoys a moment in the limelight, capped with a breathtaking display of "liantan", an extended vocal passage shared by seven actors on stage. This lineup provides a panorama of the outstanding artistry of northern and southern masters of China's national art form.

The performances will have Chinese and English surtitles. The detailed schedule is as follows:

June 13 (Thursday), 7.30pm

"The Boar Forest" by China National Peking Opera Company

June 14 (Friday), 7.30pm

"The Great Beauty Xi Shi" by China National Peking Opera Company

June 15 (Saturday), 7.30pm

"Mu Guiying Taking Command" by China National Peking Opera Company

June 17 (Monday), 7.30pm

"Water Nymph of Sizhou City", "Chisang Town" and "Vermilion Birthmark" by Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company

June 18 (Tuesday) 7.30pm

"Wu Song Fighting in the Tavern" plus "Su San Escorted to Trial" and "Trial by Three Magistrates" from "Yu Tang Chun" by Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company

June 19 (Wednesday) 7.30pm

"Seven Heroes and Five Gallants" by Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company

All performances will be staged at the Grand Theatre of the Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District. Tickets priced at \$180, \$280, \$380 and \$480 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk) and the Xiqu Centre Ticket Office. For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit www.cof.gov.hk/2019/en/peking.html.

There will be two meet-the-artists sessions to be held at AC2, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, with free admission. Limited seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Details are as follows:

June 12 (Wednesday), 7.30pm

Topic: An analysis of Peking opera repertoires "The Boar Forest", "The Great Beauty Xi Shi" and "Mu Guiying Taking Command"

Speaker: Sun Guiyuan (National Class One Director), Yu Kuizhi, Li Shengsu, Yang Chi and Du Zhe

Moderator: Chan Chun-miu (Chinese opera researcher)

June 16 (Sunday), 7.30pm

Topic: Classic acts – Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company's interpretations of Peking opera classics

Speaker: Shi Yihong, Wang Peiyu and Fu Xiru

Moderator: Chan Chun-miu

External merchandise trade statistics for March 2019

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (April 29)

the external merchandise trade statistics for March 2019. In March 2019, the values of Hong Kong's total exports and imports of goods both recorded year-on-year decreases, at 1.2% and 0.1% respectively.

In March 2019, the value of total exports of goods decreased by 1.2% over a year earlier to \$343.6 billion, after a year-on-year decrease of 6.9% in February 2019. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods decreased by 0.1% over a year earlier to \$402.9 billion in March 2019, after a year-on-year decrease of 3.8% in February 2019. A visible trade deficit of \$59.2 billion, equivalent to 14.7% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in March 2019.

For the first quarter of 2019 as a whole, the value of total exports of goods decreased by 2.4% over the same period in 2018. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods decreased by 3.2%. A visible trade deficit of \$118.7 billion, equivalent to 11.4% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in the first quarter of 2019.

Comparing the first quarter of 2019 with the preceding quarter on a seasonally adjusted basis, the value of total exports of goods decreased by 2.1%. Meanwhile, the value of imports of goods decreased by 2.4%.

Analysis by country/territory

Comparing March 2019 with March 2018, total exports to Asia as a whole went down by 6.0%. In this region, decreases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations, in particular India (-11.2%) and the mainland of China (the Mainland) (-10.1%). On the other hand, increases were recorded in the values of total exports to the Philippines (+45.6%), Singapore (+23.8%), Taiwan (+14.6%) and Malaysia (+12.7%).

Apart from destinations in Asia, increases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations in other regions, in particular the United Kingdom (+29.4%) and Germany (+15.9%). Concurrently, a decrease was registered in the value of total exports to the USA (-0.3%).

Over the same period of comparison, decreases were registered in the values of imports from some major suppliers, in particular Taiwan (-25.5%), Thailand (-20.7%), India (-14.4%) and Korea (-11.4%). Concurrently, increases were recorded in the values of imports from Switzerland (+22.6%), the USA (+12.4%) and the Mainland (+7.4%).

For the first quarter of 2019 as a whole, year-on-year decreases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations, in particular India (-28.4%), Taiwan (-11.3%), the USA (-8.5%), the Mainland (-6.6%) and Japan (-3.2%). However, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports to Singapore (+17.7%) and the Netherlands (+11.8%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year decreases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular

Korea (-23.4%), Taiwan (-16.9%), India (-14.7%), Thailand (-13.6%) and Malaysia (-8.2%). The value of imports from the Mainland also went down by 0.4%. On the other hand, a year-on-year increase was registered in the value of imports from the USA (+5.4%).

Analysis by major commodity

Comparing March 2019 with March 2018, decreases were registered in the values of total exports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$9.2 billion or -6.6%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$5.3 billion or -13.8%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$1.1 billion or -5.6%). However, an increase was registered in the value of total exports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$6.1 billion or 10.6%).

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For the first quarter of 2019 as a whole, year-on-year decreases were registered in the values of total exports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$14.6 billion or -4.1%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$12.1 billion or -11.6%) and "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$2.2 billion or -4.7%). However, a year-on-year increase was registered in the value of total exports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$9.4 billion or 5.8%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year decreases were registered in the values of imports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$31.1 billion or -7.7%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$6.7 billion or -7.4%) and "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$1.9 billion or -3.5%). However, a year-on-year increase was registered in the value of imports of "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$3.4 billion or 5.7%).

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that merchandise exports remained subdued in recent months, as the adverse external environment continued to dampen

manufacturing and trading activities in the region. The value of merchandise exports fell by 1.2% from a year earlier in March, and by 2.4% for the first quarter as a whole.

The external trading environment will remain challenging in the near term. While reportedly the US-Mainland trade talks have made progress, the global economy, being overshadowed by various uncertainties, has lost some momentum. The Government will remain vigilant.

Further information

Table 1 at the annex presents the analysis of external merchandise trade statistics for March 2019. Table 2 presents the original monthly trade statistics from January 2016 to March 2019, and Table 3 gives the seasonally adjusted series for the same period.

The values of total exports of goods to 10 main destinations for March 2019 are shown in Table 4, whereas the values of imports of goods from 10 main suppliers are given in Table 5.

Tables 6 and 7 show the values of total exports and imports of 10 principal commodity divisions for March 2019.

All the merchandise trade statistics described here are measured at current prices and no account has been taken of changes in prices between the periods of comparison. A separate analysis of the volume and price movements of external merchandise trade for March 2019 will be released in mid-May 2019.

The March 2019 issue of "Hong Kong External Merchandise Trade" contains detailed analysis on the performance of Hong Kong's external merchandise trade in March 2019 and will be available in mid-May 2019. Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp).

Enquiries on merchandise trade statistics may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section (2) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 5042).

[Implementation of toll-free policy for small passenger vehicles using Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Main Bridge](#)

during Labour Day holidays

The Transport Department (TD) announced today (April 29) that according to a notification from the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Authority, the toll-free policy for small passenger vehicles will be implemented on the HZMB for four consecutive days from 0.00am on May 1 to midnight on May 4. During the period, small passenger vehicles travelling to the Zhuhai or Macao Ports via the Toll Plaza of the HZMB will not be required to pay the toll of RMB150, while the arrangements for small passenger vehicles to pass through the electronic toll lanes (i.e. non-stop) and manual toll lanes (i.e. stop to pay) will remain unchanged. Small passenger vehicles are passenger carrying vehicles with seven seats and less (including the driver's seat), i.e. private cars and hire cars.

The HZMB Main Bridge is located within Mainland waters and the Toll Plaza is also situated in the Mainland. According to the territoriality principle, the HZMB Authority, which is responsible for the operation of the Main Bridge, will implement the Mainland's nationwide toll-free policy on small passenger vehicles during the Labour Day holidays (from May 1 to 4).

The TD spokesman reminded members of the public that if they wish to drive their private cars going to or returning from Zhuhai or Macao, the private car must possess a valid HZMB private car regular quota permit and licences and permits issued by the three governments, or have completed registration for the HZMB Macao Port Park-and-Ride Scheme and obtained a valid permit, including reserving a parking space for the East Car Park of the HZMB Frontier Post at Macao Port.

Hong Kong Customs steps up consumer protection work during Labour Day Golden Week period (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs launched an operation codenamed "Bullet" today (April 29) to step up patrols during the Labour Day Golden Week period at popular shopping spots in various districts and to remind traders to comply with the requirements of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), with a view to enhancing consumer protection.

Customs officers starting from today will step up patrols at dried seafood shops, pharmacies and jewellery shops in different tourist shopping areas such as Yau Ma Tei, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mong Kok, Hung Hom, To Kwa Wan, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay. Retailers and staff of the tourist industry will be reminded to comply with the requirements of the TDO.

Customs also reminds consumers that they should have a good understanding of a product's specifications before purchase. They should do price comparisons and purchase products from reputable shops. They are also reminded to check carefully the price and unit of measurement before making payment and to retain the receipt after purchase.

Under the TD0, any trader who adopts unfair trade practices, including making false trade descriptions in relation to goods, misleading omissions, aggressive commercial practices as well as "bait and switch", commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report suspected violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Phishing email related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation](#)

Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing email, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the email concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the email should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.