

Speech by CE at Memorandum of Understanding Signing Ceremony of Bangkok Art and Culture Centre and Zuni Icosahedron in Bangkok (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Signing Ceremony of Bangkok Art and Culture Centre and Zuni Icosahedron in Bangkok today (February 28):

Pawit (Director of Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Mr Pawit Mahasarinand), Danny (Creator and Curator of Tian Tian Xiang Shang and Co-Artistic Director of Zuni Icosahedron, Mr Danny Yung), ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It's a great pleasure to be here today to celebrate with you the launch of a year-long collaboration between Hong Kong's Zuni Icosahedron and the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC).

It is a remarkably good fit, connecting Zuni, one of Hong Kong's major performing arts groups since its founding in 1982, and the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Bangkok's stunning centre for contemporary arts and culture. I'm told that more than 1.7 million people visited the Centre in 2017 or an average of 5,000 a day.

Given the Centre's international renown and its growing role in Thai arts and culture, I'm confident that this inspired collaboration between Hong Kong and Thailand will be a memorable one – connecting artists and cultural communities, creating lasting bonds, and helping us all excel.

While it is our first collaboration between Zuni and the BACC, Zuni has a long and successful history of international cultural exchange and co-operation. Its Tian Tian Xiang Shang exhibition has been showcased at cultural festivals and public spaces around the world, from Singapore, Shanghai, Toronto to Tokyo, Mexico City, Milan, Washington D.C. and many other global cities. Indeed, more than two million people have enjoyed Tian Tian exhibitions and the multicultural dialogue they stimulate.

The Bangkok Tian Tian exhibition will begin outside at the expansive piazza, with the inclusion there of two Tian Tian sculptures, each six metres high. Inside, you'll find 100 Tian Tian figurines created by artists from Hong Kong and Thailand. And I'm told that many of these will be created during the exhibition period by the visiting members of the public, children included. I am sure our Thai friends will enjoy this exhibition.

In the coming year, this welcome co-operation will feature the

performing arts programme "One Table Two Chairs" and the visual arts exhibition "Stage is Cage/Cage is Stage," as well as a Belt and Road Cultural Forum and an ASEAN Cultural Think Tank research programme. Performing arts' workshops and artist talks will also be featured.

Cultural cooperation, of course, has long been a hallmark of Hong Kong-Thai relations. Indeed, Hong Kong artists participated in the inaugural Thailand Biennale, a four-month international showcase of contemporary art set outdoors amid the sublime scenery of Krabi province. That exhibition ends today.

And it was one year ago today that Thailand and Hong Kong inked a MoU on Cultural Co-operation. The agreement was signed by Thailand's Minister of Culture and our Secretary for Home Affairs here in Thailand. On that occasion, our team brought nine talented young Hong Kong musicians, who staged a well-attended concert at the Chinese Culture Centre.

A year earlier, in March 2017, the Thai Minister of Culture visited Hong Kong, touring some of our cultural facilities, including the West Kowloon Cultural District, one of the world's biggest cultural projects. I'm pleased to say that, since the Minister's visit, the Cultural District has come a long good way. In January this year, the Xiqu Centre was officially opened. Dedicated to Chinese opera, it's the first major performing arts centre to open in West Kowloon. It will be followed, later this year, by Art Park and the Freespace outdoor performance venue. In 2020, West Kowloon's M+ Museum, with its spotlight on visual arts of all kinds, is scheduled to open. And in 2022, the Hong Kong Palace Museum will open its doors, bring to its visitors artefacts of Chinese art and culture from the imperial collection of the Palace Museum in Beijing.

In short, ladies and gentlemen, Hong Kong's art and cultural scene is blooming. There is a lot of potential for Hong Kong and Thailand to strengthen our close ties in art and culture, and I am sure that is exactly what we are going to do with your support.

I'm grateful to the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre and Zuni for this inspired collaboration, for helping Thailand and Hong Kong find creative new ways to come together, to connect and excel. I look forward to many more pleasant surprises from our collaboration with Thailand. I wish this collaboration every success. Thank you very much.

[CHP investigates case of invasive](#)

meningococcal infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 28) investigating a case of invasive meningococcal infection, a communicable disease transmitted by direct contact with droplets from carriers or infected persons.

The case involves a 90-year-old woman with underlying illnesses, who had presented with fever and confusion since February 26. She attended Hong Kong Sanatorium Hospital on February 26 for medical attention and was admitted on the same day. Her clinical diagnosis was meningococcaemia. The patient is now in a stable condition.

Her blood specimen tested positive for *Neisseria meningitidis* upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. Her home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. The CHP's investigation is continuing.

"Meningococcal infection is caused by a bacterium known as meningococcus. It is mainly transmitted by direct contact through respiratory secretions, including droplets from the nose and throat, from infected persons. The incubation period varies from two to 10 days, and is commonly three or four days," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The clinical picture may vary. Severe illness may result when the bacteria invade the bloodstream (meningococcaemia) or the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis).

Meningococcaemia is characterised by sudden onset of fever, intense headache, purpura, shock and even death in severe cases. Meningococcal meningitis is characterised by high fever, severe headache and stiff neck followed by drowsiness, vomiting, fear of bright light, or a rash. It can cause brain damage or even death. The brain damage may lead to intellectual impairment, mental retardation, hearing loss and electrolyte imbalance. Invasive meningococcal infections can be complicated by arthritis, inflammation of the heart muscle, inflammation of the posterior chamber of the eye or chest infection.

Meningococcal infection is a serious illness. Patients should be treated promptly with antibiotics.

To prevent meningococcal infection, members of the public are advised to take heed of the following measures:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing, and clean hands with alcohol-based handrub when they are not visibly soiled;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, hold the spit with

tissue, dispose of nasal and mouth discharge in a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands immediately;

- Avoid crowded places;
- Avoid close contact with patients who have fever or severe headache;
- Travellers to high-risk areas may consult doctors for meningococcal vaccination; and
- Travellers returning from high-risk areas should seek medical advice if they become ill and should discuss their recent travel history with their doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [website](#) for more information on meningococcal infection.

[DH investigates information system incident](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (February 28) is investigating an information system incident involving the influenza and pneumococcal vaccination records in its Clinical Information Management System. Due to a computer programme problem in transmitting vaccination records, such records of some vaccine recipients could not be displayed. The DH has immediately suspended the operation of the affected vaccination record system to rectify the problem.

Launched in August last year, the vaccination record system was developed to facilitate access to the influenza and pneumococcal vaccination records of members of the public among DH, Hospital Authority (HA) and private doctors enrolled in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS). The DH received a notification by HA on February 26 concerning an inconsistency of vaccination status shown in the vaccination record system. Upon investigation by the DH, a computer programme problem has been identified and the influenza and pneumococcal vaccination records of the public at some DH's clinics could not be shown to HA and private doctors enrolled in the VSS.

After reviewing all the information in the vaccination record system by DH and HA, records of 47 persons show that they have received two doses of the same vaccine in the 2018/19 season. Among them, 21 were patients at HA and 26 were members of the public using the VSS. The DH has immediately contacted the 47 affected persons on the incident.

The DH attaches great concern to this incident and apologises to those affected persons. The DH emphasizes that the incident did not pose risk of leakage of personal information or downloading of personal data by unauthorised persons, and that services of sharing vaccination records with the Electronic Health Record Sharing System have not been affected. The DH

and HA have checked all the records in the system and the computer programme has already been fixed. Transmission of vaccination records has resumed normal from 3pm today. The DH will continue to closely monitor the operation of the system to avoid the recurrence of similar incidents in future.

If members of the public wish to enquire about further details of the incident, they may contact the Vaccination Office of the Centre for Health Protection of the DH at 2125 2125 during office hours.

[Speech by CE at opening ceremony of Bangkok ETO \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok today (February 28):

Deputy Prime Minister Somkid (Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Dr Somkid Jatusripitak), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It has been such a pleasure coming back to Thailand a third time since I took office some 20 months ago, and this time, welcoming you all to a Hong Kong home, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, here in this great global city of Bangkok.

Today's memorable occasion would not be possible without the staunch support of the Thai Government, particularly Prime Minister Mr Prayut who first raised the idea of a Hong Kong office in Thailand during my visit in August 2017. And I have to thank the Deputy Prime Minister Dr Somkid for his personal attention on this matter which is instrumental in enabling us to establish this office within just 17 months, from the day I announced our intention to do so in October 2017. I also have to put on record my deepest gratitude to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)– Minister Wang Yi, Commissioner Xie Feng of the Office of the MFA in Hong Kong and Ambassador Lyu and his predecessor for their support and encouragement. I must also thank my own colleagues – the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Edward Yau and his team for their diligence in taking forward all the preparatory work.

Our Bangkok Economic and Trade Office (ETO) is Hong Kong's 13th overseas ETO and our third in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Indeed, our second ETO in the ASEAN, the Jakarta Office was only opened less than three years ago, while the Singapore Office had been Hong Kong Government's only official presence in the ASEAN until 2016. The establishment of the Bangkok Office is a clear and compelling statement of the importance of ASEAN to Hong Kong. Last year, trade between Hong Kong and ASEAN reached US\$136.5 billion,

up more than 14 per cent over 2017. Indeed, ASEAN is our second largest trading partner – and has been occupying that position since 2010.

Thailand and Hong Kong have long been close partners. Thailand is Hong Kong's ninth-largest merchandise trading partner, third among ASEAN member states. Thailand was also among the first ASEAN member states to complete all procedures required to bring the ASEAN-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Investment Agreement into force. The agreements were signed in November 2017. Since then, Thailand has encouraged other ASEAN member states to expedite their FTA ratification process, for which I am very grateful.

Looking ahead, I expect the Bangkok ETO to play the role of facilitator, connecting businesses and organisations between Hong Kong and Thailand, serving as a catalyst to take our cooperation to new heights and fresh directions. On our side, that means expanding our presence in Thailand, exploring, in particular, the 10 targeted industries under the Thailand 4.0 economic model. For Thai companies, Hong Kong is a global leader in financial and professional services. And I look forward to seeing more Thai businesses setting up branches in Hong Kong.

My Government will participate in the Techsauce Global Summit, here in June. Among other things, we'll promote Hong Kong's advantages as a tech start-up hub, especially within the context of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We'll also organise a business seminar in Bangkok in the second half of this year. It will put a spotlight on Hong Kong opportunities, including those arising from our commitment to innovation and technology development, as well as to the promise of the Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Relationship between Hong Kong and Thailand is not confined to business. For the past two years, Hong Kong has been offering Belt and Road Scholarships to outstanding Thai students wishing to study in Hong Kong. The programme can only encourage more academic and youth exchanges between us. The people of Hong Kong are certainly enthusiastic about taking in the manifold delights of Thailand. Last year, more than one million Hong Kong tourists visited the Land of Smiles. It helps that there are over 24 direct passenger flights each day between Bangkok and Hong Kong.

With the new ETO now in place here, I am confident that connections between the people of Hong Kong and Thailand will continue to expand and excel – in business, in culture, travel, education and so much more.

Before I close, allow me to thank Deputy Prime Minister Somkid again and all the other officials involved for their unfailing commitment to the opening of the Hong Kong ETO here in Bangkok. Without counting today's events, Dr Somkid and I have already met four times in the past two years, twice in Hong Kong and twice in Bangkok, which is more than any other foreign senior officials. Without these fruitful meetings, and Dr Somkid's unfailing and enthusiastic support, this office would still be a work in progress. So thank you very much, Dr Somkid.

Ladies and gentlemen, please enjoy this very special afternoon. And, in this promising Chinese New Year of the Pig, I wish you all good health, happiness and plenty of prosperity. Thank you very much.

[Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok commences operation \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok (Bangkok ETO) commenced operation today (February 28). The opening of the third Economic and Trade Office established by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region is set to further strengthen Hong Kong's economic and trade relations with the region for more new business opportunities.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam; the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Dr Somkid Jatusripitak; the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Thailand, Mr Lyu Jian; and the Convenor of the Non-official Members of the Executive Council, Mr Bernard Chan, officiated at the opening ceremony of the Bangkok ETO in Bangkok, Thailand today.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Mrs Lam, said that the establishment of the Bangkok Office is a clear and compelling statement of the importance of ASEAN to Hong Kong, noting that ASEAN is Hong Kong's second largest trading partner since 2010.

Looking ahead, Mrs Lam expected the Bangkok ETO to play the role of facilitator to connect businesses and organisations between Hong Kong and Thailand, and serve as a catalyst to take the cooperation of both sides to new heights and fresh directions.

Thailand is Hong Kong's ninth largest merchandise trading partner and one of the closest partners among the ASEAN members, with potentials in various target areas for Hong Kong, including information and communications technology industry, consumer products and logistics industry. Thai enterprises in these industries will proactively expand their international business under the Belt and Road Initiative. They thus see enormous potentials in making investment or increasing investment in Hong Kong.

The geographical coverage of the Bangkok ETO includes Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and Bangladesh, which is another country with great development potentials. The ETOs in Singapore and Jakarta will continue to cover other countries in the ASEAN region.

The location and contact details of the Bangkok ETO are as follows:

Address: Sathorn Square, 21st Floor, Office Number 2107-2110, 98 North Sathorn Road, Silom, Bangrak, Bangkok, 10500 Thailand

Tel: +66 (0) 2105 6309

Fax: +66 (0) 2105 6301

Email: general@hketobangkok.gov.hk

Apart from the three ETOs in the ASEAN region, Hong Kong has currently set up 10 overseas ETOs which are responsible for maintaining close contact with local government officials, trade unions and media organisations etc. They arrange or co-organise promotional events with other overseas Hong Kong organisations to promote Hong Kong's advantages and latest developments.

