

Applications open for 2019 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp

The 2019 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp, organised by the Music Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, will be held in July and August. Highly acclaimed international musicians will be invited to give orchestral, band and choral training for about 400 young musicians, exploring the wonderful world of music.

Applications are now open for qualified young musicians aged 10 to 29. To encourage international music exchanges, Parsons Music Foundation, the event sponsor, will offer scholarships to cover the camp fees for non-local musicians with excellent musical standards.

Camp A will be in-camp residential training at Tso Kung Tam Outdoor Recreation Centre for music groups of Chinese Orchestra, Junior Chinese Orchestra and Symphonic Band from July 22 to 27. The fee is \$1,688 for local campers and \$2,438 for non-local campers.

A Day Camp entitled "Day Trip to Music La La Land" will also be held at Tso Kung Tam Outdoor Recreation Centre from July 23 to 27. Schools, organisations, families and individual groups are welcome to visit rehearsals, attend mini-concerts and take part in music games. Day Camp participants will also be able to use various recreational facilities at the camp. The fee will be \$92 per person per day. A concessionary rate of \$68 will apply to children, full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 and above, people with disabilities and minders and participants from subvented organisations registered with the Social Welfare Department.

Camp B will be non-residential daytime training at designated music centres of the Music Office for groups of Youth Choir, Senior Strings and Junior Symphony Orchestra from July 29 to August 3. The fee is \$800 for both local and non-local campers.

Camp conductors include the Resident Conductor of the China Broadcasting Chinese Orchestra and National Class One Conductor, Zhang Lie; Conductor of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music Affiliated Secondary School Youth Chinese Orchestra, Liu Jie; former Associate Professor of Conducting and Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, Dr Peter Ettrup Larsen; Professor of Conducting, Yale School of Music, the US, and Artistic Director to the Yale International Choral Festival, the US, Dr Jeffrey Douma; Associate Professor of Violin, University of Iowa School of Music, the US, and featured artist at the conferences of the Music Teachers National Association and the Suzuki Association of the Americas, Dr Scott Conklin; and Professor of Violin, Whitworth University, the US, and Conductor of the Whitworth Orchestra, the US, Dr Philip Baldwin.

In addition, masterclasses and workshops will be arranged for campers to hone their musical skills. Campers will participate in two public concerts to

be held at the Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall on July 28 and August 4 respectively to showcase their achievements. Tickets will be available for sale at URBIX from May 10.

Online applications are now available at www.lcsd.gov.hk/musicoffice. Application forms are also available at the website and the Music Office music centres. The application deadlines are April 1 for the Music Camp (A and B) and May 24 for the Day Camp.

For enquiries, please call 2582 5334 (Music Camp) and 2796 7523 (Day Camp).

CFS announces food safety report for January

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 28) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 15 800 food samples tested were satisfactory except for three samples which were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.9 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1,800 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, some 4 800 samples were taken for chemical tests and the remaining 9 200 (including about 8 900 taken from food imported from Japan) were collected to test radiation levels.

The microbiological tests covered pathogens and hygienic indicators, while the chemical tests included pesticides, preservatives, metallic contaminants, colouring matters, veterinary drug residues and others.

The samples comprised about 4 500 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; 800 samples of meat and poultry and their products; 1 700 samples of aquatic and related products; 1 000 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; 900 samples of cereals, grains and their products; and 6 900 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The three unsatisfactory samples comprised a vegetable sample detected with pesticide residue exceeding the legal limit, a raw milk sample detected with coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit and a milk sample detected with a total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit.

The CFS has taken follow-up action on the unsatisfactory samples, including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected food items and tracing the sources of the food items in question.

Since the Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap 132CM) came into effect on August 1, 2014, as of January 31 this year, the CFS has taken over 167 500 food samples at the import, wholesale and retail levels for testing for pesticide residues. The overall unsatisfactory rate is less than 0.2 per cent.

The spokesman added that excessive pesticide residues in food may arise from the trade not observing Good Agricultural Practice, e.g. using excessive pesticides and/or not allowing sufficient time for pesticides to decompose before harvesting. The maximum residue limits (MRLs) of pesticide residues in food set in the Regulation are not safety indicators. They are the maximum concentrations of pesticide residues to be permitted in a food commodity under Good Agricultural Practice when applying pesticides. In this connection, consumption of food with pesticide residues higher than the MRLs will not necessarily lead to any adverse health effects.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to ensure that food for sale is fit for human consumption and meets legal requirements. Consumers should patronise reliable shops when buying food and maintain a balanced diet to minimise food risks.

[Annual Survey of Economic Activities for 2018 starts](#)

The Census and Statistics Department announced today (February 28) the commencement of the Annual Survey of Economic Activities for the reference year of 2018. The survey aims to collect up-to-date statistical data on business performance and operating characteristics of various economic sectors for evaluating their contribution to Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product. The survey results are useful to both the Government and the private sector in formulating policies and making decisions.

About 20 000 establishments in various economic sectors are selected to participate in the survey. Questionnaires have been sent to selected establishments individually together with the notification letters. To assist the selected establishments in providing the required information, electronic templates of the questionnaires will also be available upon request.

The statistical survey is a mandatory one conducted under Part III of the Census and Statistics Ordinance (Chapter 316). According to section 13(1) of the Ordinance, any person to whom a questionnaire relating to a statistical survey is delivered shall complete the questionnaire or cause it to be completed by other persons to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, and in the manner specified in the questionnaire, and then return the questionnaire on or before the specified date. The Ordinance also stipulates

that all collected information which may enable identification of individual establishments should be kept in strict confidence. Only aggregate information, which does not reveal details of individual establishments, will be released.

The Department would like to thank those establishments which had participated in previous rounds of the survey; and appeal to the management of all establishments which have been selected in the current survey round for their co-operation in the survey by returning the completed questionnaires to the Department on or before May 31, 2019.

The information to be sought in the survey mainly includes type of ownership, origin of investment, number of persons engaged, compensation of employees (including wages, salaries and other employee benefits), operating expenses, business receipts, capital expenditure and other information related to the business operation of the establishments.

If necessary, census officers of the Department may phone or visit individual establishments to offer assistance in completing the questionnaires. These officers will each carry a Government/Enumerator Identity Card and a certificate for conducting the survey, which are available for inspection.

Enquiries regarding the survey may be directed to the Economic Surveys Section (1) (Tel: 3903 7131, fax: 2123 1429, email: econq1@censtatd.gov.hk) or Economic Surveys Section (2) (Tel: 3903 7168, fax: 2805 6105, email: econq2@censtatd.gov.hk) of the Department.

[Lifeguard services to commence at nine gazetted beaches in March](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (February 28) that lifeguard services will be provided at nine gazetted beaches from 8am to 5pm daily between March 1 and 31. The nine beaches are as follows:

Hong Kong Island:

<u>District</u>	<u>Gazetted Beach</u>
Southern	Big Wave Bay Beach
	Deep Water Bay Beach
	Middle Bay Beach
	Repulse Bay Beach
	Stanley Main Beach

New Territories:

<u>District</u>	<u>Gazetted Beach</u>
Sai Kung	Clear Water Bay Second Beach Silverstrand Beach
Tuen Mun	Golden Beach
Islands	Silver Mine Bay Beach

The LCSD calls on members of the public to observe water safety while swimming. People should swim at the beaches only when lifeguard services are available. Please do not enter the water when the red flag is hoisted.

[Speech by CE at business seminar on Thailand-Hong Kong Strategic Partnership \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the business seminar on Thailand-Hong Kong Strategic Partnership in Bangkok today (February 28):

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

Good morning. I am delighted to be here once again in Thailand, and its capital Bangkok, a global city steeped in business and finance, in culture, bright lights and the world's friendliest people. It's no wonder that the City of Angels has been named the top international travel destination for the past three years in the annual Global Destination Cities Index. And the people of Hong Kong certainly think likewise with over 1 million visits made to Thailand last year via the 256 passenger flights every week to seven destinations here.

I'm pleased to say this is my third visit to Bangkok since becoming the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR in July 2017. During my previous visits, I had the opportunities to meet with Prime Minister Prayut and Deputy Prime Minister Somkid. On top of those meetings, I also met with the Prime Minister during the APEC meetings in Vietnam in 2017 and in Papua New Guinea in 2018, and the Deputy Prime Minister in June 2018 when he visited Hong Kong. On all those occasions, we exchanged views on how Hong Kong and Thailand could build on the strong ties between our two economies and our two peoples.

It gives me great pleasure to say that our talks were fruitful. My

presence here today underlines that. I have long held the belief that in building connections, whether between economies, companies or individuals, you create opportunities – the critical means to mutual success, to excelling.

Hong Kong and Thailand have been connecting and excelling for many years now. You can see the results in our trade numbers. Last year, our bilateral merchandise trade rose to US\$19.6 billion. That was up 6.3 per cent over 2017. Last year, we were each other's ninth-largest trading partner. Thailand, I might add, was our third-largest trading partner in goods among ASEAN member states.

Hong Kong also plays a notable role as the business bridge between Mainland China and Thailand. In 2018, US\$13 billion worth of trade between Thailand and Mainland China was routed through Hong Kong. That represented 14 per cent of the total trade between Thailand and the Mainland last year. That's a significant total, particularly given that China is Thailand's largest trading partner, and Thailand is the Mainland's third largest trading partner in ASEAN.

Despite protectionism, trade conflicts and regional instability continuing to disrupt the global economy, I remain optimistic and very confident that our collaboration with ASEAN, and with Thailand in trade, investment and other aspects, will continue to expand. My confidence stems not only from the fundamental strengths that Hong Kong and Thailand share, but also because of opportunities created by the signing of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and related Investment Agreement between Hong Kong and ASEAN, as well as our respective exciting national strategies. I'm speaking here about the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development on our side and Thailand's ambitious Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC).

Regarding the ASEAN-Hong Kong FTA, which was signed in November 2017, I'm pleased to note that Thailand and Singapore have deposited their rectification instruments earlier this year. The majority of the remaining member states are expected to complete their internal procedures over the next few months. With the FTA in place, I expect to see more bilateral trade and more investment flow between Hong Kong and Thailand.

As for the Belt and Road Initiative, Hong Kong is a key link in the visionary international co-operation initiative. That's thanks to the manifold advantages we offer, including our strategic location at the centre of Asia and our deep and ever-growing economic connections with both the Mainland and the rest of the world. That's only half of it – Hong Kong is also blessed with superlative infrastructure, well-connected communications and transport networks as well as world-class financial and professional services expertise. Our services sector brings expertise to bear in everything from project design and planning to construction, operation and management. It includes bankers and lawyers, accountants, risk managers, marketing and communications specialists and many more. No less important, they are well versed in cross-border business, experienced in both Mainland

and international transactions.

With our clear strengths, we are well positioned to partner with Thai companies, whether on Belt and Road projects or in helping Thai companies access the China market or in creating connections with other economies, in Asia and around the world.

The relationship between Hong Kong and Thailand goes beyond business. We are, for example, expanding academic and youth exchanges, as well as offering Belt and Road Scholarships to outstanding Thai students wishing to study in Hong Kong universities. Such people-to-people bonds will, I'm confident, create further collaboration between us in the years to come.

Then there's the Greater Bay Area, another far-reaching Mainland development, one that will serve as a powerful connection point for the Belt and Road. As you may know, the Outline Development Plan for the Greater Bay Area was announced just 10 days ago. It brings together Hong Kong, Macao and nine flourishing cities in Guangdong Province. Collectively, they represent a population of nearly 70 million people, which is about the same as Thailand, and a combined GDP of some US\$1.5 trillion. That's roughly equivalent to the combined GDP of Thailand and Indonesia, the two largest economies in ASEAN.

Each of the Bay Area cities offers distinct and complementary advantages. Hong Kong's strengths are clear and compelling. We will bring to the Bay Area our international expertise in finance and trade, as well as our global aviation leadership. We will also contribute to the Bay Area's rise as an international innovation and technology hub.

Innovation and technology development is a policy priority of my Government. And I look forward, later this morning, to witnessing Hong Kong's Cyberport, as well as our Trade Development Council and Ho & Partners Architects Engineers & Development Consultants, as they sign four MOUs with the Office of the Board of Investment and Innospace Thailand. These MOUs will set in motion a Thai-Hong Kong community of entrepreneurs and start-ups, as well as incubation services. They will also accelerate the growth of high-potential start-ups through investment and venture capital injection.

Since becoming the Chief Executive, I have committed some US\$10 billion towards a wide spectrum of innovation and technology initiatives, from expanding our infrastructure, to pooling technology talent and boosting R&D funding. The latter includes a new super-tax deduction of up to 300 per cent on the R&D expenditure of private enterprises. Through the concerted efforts of my Government and other partners such as Cyberport and Hong Kong Trade Development Council, a vivid atmosphere and a healthy ecosystem for innovation and technology development in Hong Kong have been taking shape. We are ready to go hand-in-hand with Thailand to spur innovations, and nurture start-ups to turn ideas and research into results in both places. By the way, the US\$10 billion commitment I have just mentioned has not included the additional funding announced by my Financial Secretary yesterday. For example, Cyberport will get an extra HK\$5.5 billion for its phase 5 development.

As for Thailand's EEC, I am sure our Thai business friends are very familiar with it and will welcome collaboration with Hong Kong investors and entrepreneurs.

In order to take full advantage of these exciting developments between the two places, it is necessary for Hong Kong to further enhance her presence in Thailand. In that regard, I am delighted that, later today, Hong Kong will officially open her Economic and Trade Office (ETO) right here in Bangkok. The new office, our 13th overseas Economic and Trade Office globally and third in ASEAN, is the first ETO to open in my term of Government. I hope that reflects the importance I attach to our relationship with Thailand. If I may add, that also reflects my personal friendship with DPM Somkid. This office will work to expand economic and trade ties and beyond economic and trade ties between us. It will also help boost the flourishing business between Hong Kong and ASEAN, creating opportunities for all concerned.

I'm grateful to Deputy Prime Minister Somkid and his colleagues for their concerted efforts in bringing the Bangkok Economic and Trade Office to life. The new office is a timely and visible symbol of our commitment to work, to connect and to excel together. I look forward to building even stronger ties with you in business and trade, in culture, in innovation and technology, education, travel and so much more. I look forward to coming back to Bangkok in my capacity as the Chief Executive a fourth time, a fifth time and so on.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a very rewarding seminar, and health, happiness and continuing success in this promising new Year of the Pig. Thank you very much.