

## [Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected Guatemalan rosewood \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (November 2) seized about 83 000 kilograms of suspected Guatemalan rosewood from three containers at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound. The estimated market value of the seizure was about \$3.3 million.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers inspected three containers arriving in Hong Kong from Panama. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the suspected Guatemalan rosewood in the containers.

The case was handed over to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for follow-up investigation.

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting an endangered species without a licence is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



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## [Territory-wide flag day today](#)

Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (November 3), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team at 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website ([www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_whatsnew](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew)). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website ([www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_pubsvc/page\\_controlofc/sub\\_recentlyap](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap)). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website ([www.gov.hk/fundraising](http://www.gov.hk/fundraising)).

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

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## **CE expresses sorrow over passing of Mr Raymond Chow**

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (November 2) expressed deep sorrow over the passing of renowned film producer, Mr Raymond Chow.

"Held in high regard in the film sector, Mr Chow founded Golden Harvest in the 1970s. He created a variety of film styles, produced a number of popular movies and groomed many top directors and actors, making enormous contributions to the development of the glory days of the movie industry in Hong Kong in the 1980s. He was awarded the Gold Bauhinia Star in 1998 for his contribution to the development of the Hong Kong film industry.

"I was grieved to learn of Mr Chow's passing. On behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to his family," Mrs Lam said.

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## **SCED expresses deep sorrow over passing away of Mr Raymond Chow**

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau,

today (November 2) expressed deep sorrow over the passing away of renowned film producer, Mr Raymond Chow, and extended his heartfelt condolences to his family.

Mr Yau said, "Mr Chow set up the Golden Harvest in the 1970s. The company has since produced a good number of movie classics, helped nurture a pool of Hong Kong talents and brought them to the international stage. We are most grateful for his great contribution to the development of the Hong Kong film industry."

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## [Speech by Acting CE at Austrian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong: 15th Anniversary Heurigen \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Acting Chief Executive, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at Austrian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong: 15th Anniversary Heurigen today (November 2):

Wilhelm (Chairman of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong, Mr Wilhelm Brauner), Monika (Consul General of Austria in Hong Kong, Mrs Monika Müller-Fembeck), Mr Roessler (Austrian Trade Commissioner for Hong Kong, Mr Franz Roessler), ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It gives me much pleasure to join you all this evening to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce (AustroCham). Indeed, it was only a week ago that I addressed the Austrian community in honour of its national day and the 100th Anniversary of the Republic of Austria.

Established in December 2003, AustroCham has been playing a significant role in fostering closer ties between Austria and Hong Kong. Apart from bolstering business exchanges, AustroCham has been enriching our cosmopolitan city life by bringing us Austrian wine, cuisine and music, and like tonight, the fabulous live performance by the Vienna Boys Choir Academy Concert Choir.

On the business front, Austria is one of our valuable trading partners in Europe. Hong Kong also serves as a window to facilitate trading between Austria and Mainland China, around 7.8 per cent of the total trade between Austria and Mainland China last year was routed through Hong Kong.

Our good and close trade and economic relationship is certainly reflected in the visit of many senior Austrian officials to Hong Kong lately. We are particularly pleased to have received Mr Sabastian Kurz, the Federal

Chancellor, and his delegation, comprising three Federal Ministers, in Hong Kong in August 2018.

We are deeply impressed by Vienna's development as a smart city. As you know, Hong Kong is now actively pressing ahead with the development of innovation and technology, as well as smart city projects. We can certainly learn a lot from Vienna's experience.

We do not just settle with being an international trade and financial centre. Capitalising on the advantages of "One Country, Two Systems", our strategic location at China's doorstep, rule of law, level-playing field for all business, simple and low tax system, superb infrastructure and free flow of capital and information, intellectual property, research and development capability, we have huge potential to become an international innovation and technology hub as well.

Hong Kong has also been ranked first in economic freedom by the US-based Heritage Foundation for 24 consecutive years and the Fraser Institute of Canada since 1996. We are also named the second most competitive economy in the world by Swiss-based International Institute for Management Development this year. Hong Kong ranked fifth for ease of doing business out of nearly 200 economies in the World Bank's "Doing Business 2018" report.

Hong Kong is the most ideal gateway for Austrian business to tap the Asian market. Riding on the memorandum of understanding on co-operation in technology start-up ecosystems signed between Hong Kong and Austria in 2016, I am confident that businesses of the two places, in particular innovation and technology companies and start-ups, could join hands on even closer collaboration.

The Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) further offers Austrian companies set up in Hong Kong, preferential treatment to access the Mainland market. In addition, we forged with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) last November a free trade agreement and an investment agreement. Expected to enter into force in January 2019, the two agreements will create new opportunities for business and bolster trade and investment flows between Hong Kong and ASEAN.

With two mega national initiatives, that is the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, being actively pursued by the Central People's Government, Hong Kong's active participation and strategic location will serve as the most ideal springboard for overseas companies, including Austrian companies, to tap the resources and markets in the Belt and Road countries as well as Mainland cities in the Bay Area. And on the Greater Bay Area development, Hong Kong's connectivity to the Mainland is further strengthened since the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge came on stream. The two important infrastructure will bolster the synergistic effect and create more business and development opportunities for Hong Kong, the Asia region and beyond.

On this note, my warmest congratulations to AustroCham on its 15th Anniversary. I also wish the Chamber's every success in the years ahead.

I wish you all a very enjoyable evening. Thank you.