

# Cantonese opera performance to celebrate HKSAR 25th anniversary (with photos)

The Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (Toronto ETO), Ms Emily Mo, on July 24 (Toronto time) attended the Cantonese opera performance at Flato Markham Theatre, Markham, Canada. This Cantonese opera performance is part of the "Canada-Hong Kong Young Cantonese Opera Cultural Exchange" organised by Starlight Chinese Opera Performing Arts Centre (Starlight) to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

In delivering the opening remarks before the performance, Ms Mo is delighted to share with participants the beauty of this art form. "Cantonese opera was included in Hong Kong's first intangible cultural heritage list and the HKSAR Government continues to invest in the city's hardware and software to promote this cultural heritage," she said.

"The cultural industries in Hong Kong have been given a boost of confidence by the National 14th Five-Year Plan for its clear support towards Hong Kong developing into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. To realise our new cultural positioning, the HKSAR Government will work on five directions, including developing world-class cultural facilities and a pluralistic cultural environment; strengthening our connections with overseas arts and culture organisations; enhancing cultural exchange and co-operation with the Mainland; leveraging technology as well as nurturing talents," Ms Mo continued.

"The Cantonese Opera Development Fund helps to preserve, promote, and develop Cantonese opera in the city. Recently, the HKSAR Government injected HK\$100 million into the fund to nurture young Cantonese opera talents and appeal to a young audience," Ms Mo said.

In addition, the Xiqu Centre of the West Kowloon Cultural District and the East Kowloon Cultural Centre which is expected to be commissioned in phases next year provide more venues as nurturing ground and performing venues for arts performers.

Before closing, Ms Mo invited participants to join other events organised by Toronto ETO in the coming months to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland and the establishment of the HKSAR.

At the performance, more than a dozen starlets led by the Director of Starlight, Ms Alice Chan, staged six excerpts from popular Cantonese operas namely "Romance of the Phoenix Chamber", "Princess Chang Ping", "The Revenge Battle", "The Rescue of My Beauty", "King Chu Bidding Farewell to His Concubine", "Departure of Zhaojun" and a new "Love Story" composed by

Cantonese opera artist, Ms Yuen Mei. These excerpts not only showcase the beauty of Cantonese opera to the Canadian audience but also enhance the cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Canada.

