

First batch of Hong Kong civil servants completes three-month exchange in Shenzhen (with photos)

The review meeting of the Civil Service Staff Exchange and Collaboration Programme, jointly organised by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the Mainland municipalities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), was held in Shenzhen today (March 8). The first batch of Hong Kong civil servants arranged by the HKSAR shared their experiences and insights gained from the three-month exchange in Shenzhen.

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung; the Director General of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the People's Government of Guangdong Province, Ms Chen Liwen; and member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Shenzhen Municipal Committee and Director General of the Organization Department of the CPC Shenzhen Municipal Committee, Mr Cheng Buyi, attended and addressed the review meeting. The Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Clement Leung; the Director General of the HKMAO of the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government, Mr Jiang Likun; and the Head of the Civil Service College, Mr Oscar Kwok, were also present.

At the review meeting, Mrs Yeung said that this year marks the fifth anniversary of the promulgation of the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The successful completion of the Civil Service Staff Exchange and Collaboration Programme with the Mainland municipalities in the GBA is of great significance and has laid a solid foundation for future exchanges and co-operation between civil servants from both sides.

Mrs Yeung said, "Hong Kong civil servants play a crucial role in promoting the high-quality development of the GBA. The Chief Executive has proposed in the 2023 Policy Address the introduction of an exchange programme with civil servants from GBA cities, enabling Hong Kong civil servants to gain a deeper understanding of the development of the GBA and the work of the host government agencies, thereby better complementing the GBA's development strategy." She expressed her gratitude to the HKMAO of the State Council, the HKMAO of the Guangdong Provincial Government and the HKMAO of the Shenzhen Municipal Government for their support for the programme.

The HKSAR Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government signed the Agreement on Civil Service Staff Exchange and Collaboration Programme with the Mainland Municipalities in the GBA in September last year. The first batch of participants began their exchange in Shenzhen in December last year. They were assigned to the Futian District People's Government, the Agency for the Construction and Development of Shenzhen Park of Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation Zone, the Authority of Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone of Shenzhen

Municipality (Qianhai Authority), the Ecology Environment Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality, and the Transport Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality, to engage in in-depth exchanges in areas such as district management, technology development, town planning, transportation and environmental protection. The 10 participating middle and senior-level civil servants came from eight departments and grades, including the Administrative Officer Grade, the Executive Officer Grade, the Environmental Protection Department, the Highways Department, the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, the Planning Department and the Transport Department.

Mrs Yeung said that the exchange period has been extended from four weeks to about three months. The participants this round were assigned to projects that promote Hong Kong-Shenzhen co-operation and the city's development, deepening their understanding of the operations of Mainland government authorities and the formulation and implementation of policies, while also establishing closer ties with their Shenzhen counterparts. The participants also visited major facilities and took part in cultural and sports activities in Shenzhen, experiencing first-hand the city's vibrancy and creativity.

Mr Cryus Chow from the Administrative Officer Grade was among the first batch of participants of the exchange programme. During his exchange, he served successively as the Special Assistant to both the Vice District Mayor of the Futian District People's Government and the Deputy Director of the Agency for the Construction and Development of Shenzhen Park of Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation Zone. Among his responsibilities was to promote the development and planning of the Hetao area. During the review meeting, he shared his reflections, "This exchange has been a learning process, allowing me the opportunity to participate in project meetings and visits with Shenzhen civil servants. I was deeply impressed by the boldness of my Shenzhen counterparts in proposing and discussing many innovative ideas."

Miss Chan Fei-fei from the Executive Officer Grade served as the Special Assistant to the Deputy Director-General of the Qianhai Authority during her exchange. She was involved in the day-to-day operations of the Hong Kong and Macao Service Office of the Qianhai Authority, serving Hong Kong residents and enterprises in Qianhai by understanding their needs and exploring suitable measures for their development. She considered the exchange an opportunity to enhance her understanding of national policies and the operations of Shenzhen's government authorities. Upon her return to Hong Kong, she hopes to apply the experience and insights gained to her work.

Mrs Yeung encouraged the participants to actively share their experiences with their colleagues after returning to Hong Kong, integrate their learning from the exchange with the situation in Hong Kong, and apply it to their future work, thereby playing an active role in future co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Under the co-ordination of the HKMAO of the State Council, the Civil

Service Bureau has organised the Civil Service Staff Exchange Programme jointly with a number of Mainland municipalities since 2002. Under the programme, officers from Hong Kong and the Mainland are attached to each other's side to share experience and expertise so as to better understand each other's structure, regulations, policy, operation, etc, to foster co-operation and communication and gain first-hand experience of the host city's latest developments.

