

Inaugural GBA Legal Professional Examination to be held next January

The Department of Justice (DoJ) welcomed the notice recently issued by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on the details of the 2021 GBA Legal Professional Examination. A briefing, co-hosted by the DoJ, the Bureau of Lawyers' Work of the MoJ, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the MoJ, the Department of Justice of Guangdong Province and the Legal Affairs Bureau of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government, was held yesterday (November 19) for the legal sector to have a better understanding of the relevant policies as well as, the current position and development opportunities for legal services in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The briefing attracted enthusiastic responses with over 700 online participants.

Pursuant to the decision adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on authorising the State Council to implement the pilot programme regarding the GBA Legal Examination, as well as the pilot measures released by the General Office of the State Council on Hong Kong and Macao legal practitioners to obtain Mainland practice qualifications and to practise as lawyers in the nine Pearl River Delta municipalities in the GBA, the MoJ issued the notice recently on the details of the examination.

Hong Kong legal practitioners, including young solicitors and barristers with accumulated legal practice experience of five years or above, are allowed to provide legal services in the nine Pearl River Delta municipalities in the GBA on specified civil and commercial matters (including litigation and non-litigation matters) to which the Mainland laws apply after passing the examination and obtaining a lawyer's practice certificate (Greater Bay Area). The GBA Legal Professional Examination offers significant opportunities for the Hong Kong legal services sector to provide Mainland legal services in the GBA, as well as provide diversified legal services and safeguards to clients in the GBA, including wholly-owned Hong Kong enterprises.

The Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, said, "I am truly grateful to the MoJ for its staunch support all along. This examination is a measure which has responded to the suggestions and aspirations of the Hong Kong legal sector by lowering the threshold for Hong Kong legal practitioners to practise Mainland law in the GBA. It will no doubt provide a huge stage for the sector's development in the Mainland."

The examination will be held on January 30, 2021. Eligible applicants can apply through the website of the MoJ on or before November 26. For more details, please visit: gba.examos.cn/lawyertop/login.html.