

# Speech by SITI at Thematic Forum on Maritime Cooperation of third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Thematic Forum on Maritime Cooperation of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing today (October 18):

Thank you, Professor Lin (Member of the Academia Europaea and Chair Professor of Southern University of Science and Technology, China, Professor Lin Jian). In response to the questions raised by Professor Lin just now, I would like to share with you all how Hong Kong contributes to promote innovation in marine science and technology for the benefit of the mankind and how the application of innovation and technology (I&T) can champion the development of blue economy in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Our country clearly indicates the importance of promoting marine economy development and marine ecosystem protection in order to strike a balance between economic development and ocean protection, for the sustainable development of mankind.

Being one of the most important international cities in China facing the South China Sea, Hong Kong is a key node city of the Belt and Road. Apart from strengthening our position as an international financial, trade and logistics centre, Hong Kong is working in full steam towards the vision of becoming an international innovation and technology centre. Let me share with you two points on how Hong Kong's I&T community promotes innovation in marine technology.

First, exploring marine resources to facilitate the development of life and health science and technology.

Oceans are rich in biological resources with great potential for application in biomedicine, environmental protection and many other fields. Marine resource development technology can unleash the application potential of biological resources and create new industries. Our scientific research teams in Hong Kong have conducted R&D (research and development) work on marine biological resources through various scientific means, and succeeded in tapping active lead compounds of medical value from these resources, which are helpful to the R&D of new medicines.

Second, using AI (artificial intelligence) and big data to protect the

marine environment in a precise and efficient way.

Maintaining biodiversity is crucial to the balance of the marine ecosystem. The State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution in Hong Kong has been working for many years to address the ecological imbalance caused by marine pollution. In addition, a Hong Kong start-up has developed a solar-powered marine cleaning robot that uses AI technology to identify ocean garbage and determine shipping routes to facilitate marine clean-up.

In conclusion, innovation in marine science and technology not only opens up new areas for the blue economy development, but also brings new opportunity for the sustainable development of humanity. Hong Kong stands ready to work with the world and contribute our blue power in promoting innovation in marine science and technology for the betterment of the world. Thank you very much.



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## [Government refuses application for renewal of registration of contractor involved in fatal incident at construction site in Yau Tong late last year](#)

A spokesman for the Development Bureau said today (October 18) that the Buildings Department (BD) has refused the application for renewal of registration by a registered general building contractor, Aggressive

Construction Engineering Limited, which was involved in a fatal incident caused by the collapse of a steel beam at a construction site in Yau Tong in December 2022.

"The registration of the contractor expired in December 2022. In view of the above-mentioned fatal incident at a construction site in Yau Tong, the BD referred the contractor's application for renewal of registration to the Contractors Registration Committee (CRC) for interview and assessment. The CRC is formed under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) and the majority of its members are nominated by the relevant building professional registration boards and the construction industry. After several rounds of interviews, the CRC was not satisfied that the authorised signatories of the contractor were suitable to act on behalf of the contractor for the purposes of the BO in respect of their abilities and competence in site supervision and safety management matters. Having considered carefully the recommendation of the CRC, the BD decided to refuse its application for renewal of registration. The BD has issued a letter to the contractor, informing it that its name will be removed from the Register of General Building Contractors on November 16, and that it cannot carry out any building works from that date onwards," the spokesman said.

The BD has also requested the contractor to, in accordance with the law, inform the authorised persons (APs) responsible for the relevant construction sites, including delivering to the APs a notice of cessation of its appointment, certifying that the building works carried out are in accordance with the provisions of the BO and its regulations, and demarcating clearly the extent of the completed building works. At the same time, the BD has also issued letters to the APs responsible for the relevant construction sites, informing them that the contractor's application for renewal of registration has been refused and reminding the APs that they should make arrangements for the remaining works as soon as possible, including advising the developers to appoint another registered contractor to follow up on the remaining building works and ensuring that the building works comply with the provisions under the BO and its regulations. The letters were copied to the developers of the projects concerned. It is believed that the developers will properly handle and hand over matters regarding the remaining building works with the original contractor and appoint as soon as possible another suitable registered contractor to continue carrying out the relevant works.

The spokesman continued, "According to information in hand, as at October 16, Aggressive Construction Engineering Limited was carrying out building works for five private residential and residential/commercial development projects (see Annex) involving about 4 900 domestic units, amongst which about 1 700 units of three projects had been pre-sold. The decision to refuse the application for renewal of registration may cause inconvenience to the ongoing works, but the Government must strike a balance between ensuring construction site safety and facilitating the carrying out of works, as well as to allow the renewal system to act as a gatekeeper to ensure that only contractors that are competent and comply with the regulations will be allowed to renew registration. In fact, with reference to past experience, as long as the project developers and APs make good use of

the coming one month or so to appoint as soon as possible another registered contractor to take over the remaining works, the impact of changing contractor on the project progress should be manageable. Regarding cases of pre-sold units, noting that there is still some time before the dates of delivery of possession set by the developers, we believe the developers and APs will be able to make suitable arrangements and to report progress according to the contracts signed with the purchasers."

In addition, it is roughly estimated that currently around 900 site staff are involved in the five projects of the contractor. The spokesman said that the current regulatory action is only targeted at the main contractor involved. As the development projects will continue to be taken forward, it is possible that the contractor to be appointed by the developer may continue to engage the same project sub-contractors and construction workers. In addition, given the current labour shortage in the construction industry, it is believed that there will not be a significant impact on the employment of the workers at the construction sites concerned. If affected workers need assistance or have enquiries in respect of matters of employment or employees' rights, they may call the Construction Industry Recruitment Centre (tel: 3428 3303) or the Labour Relations Division (tel: 2927 6080) of the Labour Department during office hours.

The spokesman added, "Refusing the application for renewal of registration of Aggressive Construction Engineering Limited is only one of the follow-up actions taken by the Government regarding the fatal incident at the construction site in Yau Tong last year. The Labour Department had instigated prosecution against the contractor and the relevant subcontractors. The investigation by the BD on whether the contractor had contravened the provisions of the BO is still ongoing."

The contractor being refused renewal of registration is not the one involved in the fatal incident at the construction site on Anderson Road last year and the fatal incident at the construction site in Yau Ma Tei last week. The contractor involved in those two incidents is Aggressive Construction Company Limited, which is a different registered contractor from Aggressive Construction Engineering Limited (although they are both under the same holding company). The registration of Aggressive Construction Company Limited expired in April this year and the BD is processing its application for renewal of registration as soon as possible in accordance with the established mechanism, including collating information of the two fatal construction site incidents. An assessment will then be conducted by the CRC. After taking into account the CRC's recommendation, the BD will make a decision in a prudent manner on whether to renew the registration.

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## 27 nomination forms for District Council Ordinary Election received today (with photos)

A total of 27 nomination forms for the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election were received by the Returning Officers for the 18 District Committees constituencies (DCCs) and 44 District Council geographical constituencies (DCGCs) today (October 18).

This brings to 115 the total number of nomination forms received since the start of the nomination period on October 17. The nomination period will continue until October 30.

The number of nomination forms received for each District Council is as follows:

	DCCs		DCGCs	
District Council	No. of nomination forms received today	Cumulative total	No. of nomination forms received today	Cumulative total
Central and Western District Council	0	3	1	4
Eastern District Council	1	2	3	7
Kowloon City District Council	0	0	0	6
Kwun Tong District Council	0	0	0	9
Sham Shui Po District Council	0	0	0	1
Southern District Council	0	0	0	2
Wan Chai District Council	0	3	0	1
Wong Tai Sin District Council	0	4	0	8

Yau Tsim Mong District Council	1	1	2	7
Islands District Council	1	1	0	1
Kwai Tsing District Council	1	2	3	6
North District Council	2	2	0	0
Sai Kung District Council	0	0	0	6
Sha Tin District Council	0	3	0	0
Tai Po District Council	1	9	0	2
Tsuen Wan District Council	5	5	0	5
Tuen Mun District Council	1	3	1	4
Yuen Long District Council	4	6	0	2
Total	17	44	10	71

The Registration and Electoral Office reminds nominees that due to limited space in the Returning Officer's office, each nominee shall be accompanied by only one companion during submission of the nomination form. Please refer to the "Points to Note for Submission of Nomination Forms" on the election website ([www.eac.hk/pdf/distco/2023dce/Points\\_to\\_Note\\_for\\_Submission\\_of\\_Nomination\\_Forms\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.eac.hk/pdf/distco/2023dce/Points_to_Note_for_Submission_of_Nomination_Forms(Eng).pdf)).

Particulars of the nominees received today will be available on the election website ([www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/eng/nomination2.html](http://www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/eng/nomination2.html)).



## [CE's speech at Thematic Forum on Sub-national Cooperation of third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing \(with video\)](#)

Following is the speech (English translation) by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at the Thematic Forum on Sub-national Cooperation of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing today (October 18):

The Honourable Deputy Director Wang Lingui (Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council), Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am pleased to lead a high-level delegation of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China to participate in this year's Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation here in Beijing. Our 70-strong delegation comprises leaders from political and business sectors, and we are glad to discuss regional co-operation with you at this thematic forum.

Let me first express my gratitude to the forum's organising committee for being supportive and arranging the Hong Kong session at this thematic forum. Our delegation looks forward to exchanging views and co-operating with other forum participants to enhance the connectivity between regions, cities and people.

Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong has the distinctive advantages of enjoying the Mainland's strong support and being closely connected to the world. We strive to make the best use of our status as an international financial, shipping and trade centre to take forward regional co-operation in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative in four aspects, thereby achieving mutual benefit.



First, actively integrating into the country's overall development. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) is formed by the two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao as well as nine cities in Guangdong Province. The GBA has a total population of over 86 million and a combined gross domestic product of more than US\$1.9 trillion, which is equivalent to that of the 10th largest economy in the world. Hong Kong has been actively promoting in-depth integration of the GBA and the Belt and Road Initiative. We join hands with other GBA cities in pursuing high-level regional co-operation and complementing each other for high-quality development along the Belt and Road.

Second, going all out to promote unimpeded external trade. This year, I have led high-level HKSAR delegations to visit countries in the Middle East and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We have signed some 50 co-operation agreements with local enterprises and organisations in a bid to boost exchange and co-operation.

Hong Kong has always championed free trade. We have already signed free trade agreements with 20 economies, and investment agreements with 31 economies around the world. We are striving for early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the world's largest free trade agreement, to deepen regional economic collaboration.

Third, enhancing mutual learning and people-to-people bonds. As an international metropolis where East meets West, Hong Kong has signed memoranda of understanding on cultural co-operation with more than 10 Belt and Road partner countries to enhance cultural and arts exchanges. Hong Kong's cultural and creative talent travel around the globe every year for performances and exchanges, promoting the inheritance of traditional culture and establishing friendships with people all over the world.

This month, Hong Kong is hosting the Asia+ Festival for the first time. The festival has attracted over 20 Belt and Road countries to showcase their arts, thereby strengthening inclusiveness among peoples of different places and promoting the spirit of friendly co-operation among regions.

Fourth, deepening the exchange of young professionals. The HKSAR Government launched the Belt and Road Scholarship and the Scheme for Subsidy on Exchange to Belt and Road Regions for Post-secondary Students in 2016 to encourage co-operation in education and training. So far, we have supported more than 3 000 Hong Kong tertiary students to go on exchange to Belt and Road countries, and supported students from about 40 Belt and Road countries to study in Hong Kong.

We have also introduced the Funding Scheme for International Youth Exchange, which has funded nearly 50 youth exchange programmes, covering different Belt and Road countries. We will continue to provide exchange and internship opportunities in regions along the Belt and Road, so that Hong Kong's young people will be able to take part in Belt and Road regional co-operation.



What's more, Hong Kong has been actively mobilising its professional forces to collaborate with our Belt and Road counterparts in training, seeking in-depth co-operation in such areas as railway technology and operation, management of cargo and passenger transportation, electrical engineering, corruption prevention and preventive education and so on, with a view to facilitating regional development.

Ladies and gentlemen, regional co-operation is an integral part of the concerted effort to develop the Belt and Road. Hong Kong will work hand in hand with you to further achieve win-win results at different levels.

I look forward to the further advancements of Belt and Road regional co-operation, and I wish this thematic forum a resounding success. Thank you.

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## **Alert to public on suspicious Facebook page named WH Cheuk Fanpage**

A spokesman for the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration's Office today (October 18) alerted members of the public to a suspicious Facebook page named "åø“æ°,è^WH Cheuk Fanpage".

The spokesman solemnly clarified that the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration has no connection with the above suspicious Facebook page. The case has been reported to the Police for handling.