

Red flags hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach and Silverstrand Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (March 12) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; and Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Speech by FS at IATA World Cargo Symposium (English only)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the IATA World Cargo Symposium today (March 12):

Mr Walsh (Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Mr Willie Walsh), Mr Sullivan (Global Head of Cargo of the IATA, Mr Brendan Sullivan), Jack (Chairman of the Airport Authority Hong Kong, Mr Jack So), Ronald (Chief Executive Officer of Cathay Group, Mr Ronald Lam), distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and a warm welcome to this year's IATA World Cargo Symposium Asia, right here in Hong Kong.

Today marks a milestone – the first time that Hong Kong has hosted this event.

I'm delighted to welcome you – some 1 900 high-flying industry leaders and professionals covering the entire cargo-supply chain, as well as academics, media and so many others – to Hong Kong for this three-day, mega-gathering.

Long renowned for its strategic location, world-class infrastructure and logistics network, we are a global nexus for the international trade and cargo business.

In 2023, Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) handled around 4.3 million tonnes of cargo, and that would likely place us as the world's busiest cargo airport again.

The picture behind this magnificent volume is Hong Kong's strong infrastructure and extensive air network. Just before the pandemic, HKIA connected to over 220 destinations with more than 1 100 flights per day. And we are recovering. At the end of last year, passenger throughput recovered to 80 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. This year, we will see full recovery. And we're just getting going.

Our infrastructure is expanding. This, of course, includes the commissioning of our Airport's Three-Runway System before the end of this year. The System will boost our capacity to handle 120 million passengers and more than 10 million tonnes of cargo per year by 2035.

For cargo processing, last year, HKIA also hosted the expansion of DHL's Central Asia Hub, as well as the completion of the Cainiao Smart Gateway. They were followed by UPS which will develop a new hub facility at the Airport.

Meanwhile, we are also working closely with our sister cities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) so that our airport will better serve as GBA's logistics gateway, and the premier air cargo hub in the region. To this end, we are rapidly developing intermodal cargo transshipment mode in collaboration with other GBA cities such as Dongguan. For goods from the GBA using the HKIA for export, security screening and customs clearance will just get faster and more efficient. Likewise, we are working with Zhuhai to develop international cargo business together.

Ladies and gentlemen, for all the edges and development plans of the HKIA, our vision is just getting bigger. Let me highlight two development directions, which I have set out in this year's Budget.

The first concerns air connectivity. Leveraging the Three-Runway System and our country's support of the "Air Silk Road", Hong Kong is keen on expanding our aviation network, particularly with countries along the Belt and Road. At the same time, we will seek to further enhance our air connections with the Mainland, and strengthen the airport's connectivity with the GBA so that it will open up a larger hinterland and serve more passengers and cargo. By enhancing connectivity, we will help bolster trade in goods, enhance two-way flow of tourists and strengthen people-to-people bonds with the regions concerned.

The second is green transition. For the aviation sector, "sustainability" has become the name of the game. The theme of this year's Symposium – "Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth" – rightly says it all. For Hong Kong, we are pressing ahead with green aviation. Of course, our Airport has pledged net zero by 2050. And we will promote the wider use of sustainable aviation fuel, or SAF, in Hong Kong. In addition to streamlining procedures for transportation and storage of SAF, we are studying various facilitation measures and the necessary infrastructure.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we all gather here for this three-day symposium and discuss a wide range of issues, from digitalisation to sustainability, e-commerce, and more, I have no doubt that this will be a platform where new

ideas are bred, and new business opportunities are created.

On that note, may I express heartfelt thanks to the IATA for choosing Hong Kong as the host city for this year's Symposium. Full of business opportunities aside, I am sure you will see for yourselves the openness, vibrancy and diversity that the city continues to uphold.

I wish you all a rewarding Symposium, and a memorable stay in Hong Kong, the world's East-meets-West cultural capital. I also wish you the best of business in this Year of the Dragon – a year for global cargo, for all of us, to take flight.

Thank you.

[New York ETO organises themed luncheon on women professionals \(with photos\)](#)

Coinciding with the 68th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York (HKETONY) co-organised a luncheon event themed "Navigating Cultural and Professional Challenges: Insights from Chinese Women Professionals in the East and West" on March 11 (New York time) with the China General Chamber of Commerce – USA (CGCC).

The event attracted more than 60 attendees from think tanks, the business community and finance sector in New York. The Commissioner for Women Affairs (designate) of Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, Ms Joyce Chan, joined the luncheon and introduced the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government's policies and efforts in promoting the well-being of women in Hong Kong.

In delivering her opening remarks, the HKETONY Director, Ms Maisie Ho, said that the Government attaches great importance to promoting women's development.

"Women make up 54 per cent of Hong Kong's population and is one of the world's best-performing cities in achieving gender parity. In the United Nations' 'Human Development Report', Hong Kong women ranked fourth worldwide in the Human Development Index. Women are well accomplished, and well empowered, in various areas," she added.

The luncheon featured a sharing about how women navigate cultural and professional challenges with Vice Chairpersons and Honorary Presidents of Hong Kong Federation of Women, Mrs Yu-San Kan Leong and Ms Stephanie Hung; the Director of Corporate Communication and Research of CGCC, Ms Abby Li, and Managing Director of Corporate and Investment Bank of J.P. Morgan, Ms Lu Cao.

The Chairman of the CGCC cum President and Chief Executive Officer of Bank of China, USA, Mr Hu Wei, also spoke at the event.



[HKETO, Brussels promotes Hong Kong cinema in Netherlands](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels), together with CreateHK, supported the screening of four Hong Kong films at the CinemAsia Film Festival in Amsterdam, the Netherlands from March 5 to 10, 2024 (Amsterdam time).

The HKETO, Brussels hosted a reception at the Hong Kong Film Night on

March 9 with the screening of Patrick Tam's "Nomad" (4K restored director's cut) starring Hong Kong icon Leslie Cheung. Speaking to a full house of Hong Kong and Asian cinema lovers, Deputy Representative of the HKETO Brussels, Miss Fiona Li, highlighted the popularity of Hong Kong's films worldwide and the efforts of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in supporting the film industry to strengthen its international visibility.

Miss Li said that the HKSAR Government is committed to promoting international cultural exchange and enhancing Hong Kong as an international arts and cultural centre. For film industry, EUR 165 million will be injected into the Film Development Fund (FDF) as announced in the Budget 2024-25 just released in late February. Aimed at further facilitating international collaboration and elevating Hong Kong cinema on the global stage, the FDF has recently launched a Hong Kong-Europe-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme to provide funding support to eligible film projects co-produced by filmmakers between Hong Kong and European/Asian countries.

Earlier at the Festival on March 6, Hong Kong young talent Mo Lai Yan Chi presented her film "Band of Four" to the audience in person and exchanged with the guests during a Q&A session. The CinemAsia Film Festival also screened Lawrence Kan's "In Broad Daylight"; and Nate Ki's "Back Home".

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the CinemAsia Film Festival is one of the major Asian film festivals in Europe.

[HKETO, Brussels supports Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's Concert Tour in Europe \(with photo\)](#)

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) gained big rounds of applause for its splendid performance in Brussels, Belgium on March 8, marking the successful finale of its 50th Anniversary tour.

As one of Asia's foremost classical orchestras, the HK Phil celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a major tour led and conducted by its Music Director Jaap van Zweden to Singapore and eight cultural cities across six European countries in February and March 2024, highlighting acclaimed pianist Alexandre Kantorow and a new work of Hong Kong composer Daniel Lo.

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) was one of the sponsors of the tour to present Hong Kong music talents to the European audience as part of the efforts of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in developing Hong Kong as an international

arts and cultural hub. The HKETO, Brussels also promoted the tour, including Toulouse (February 28) and Aix-En-Provence (February 29) in France, Rotterdam in the Netherlands (March 2), Rome in Italy (March 5) and the final one in Brussels in Belgium (March 8) to its contacts in government, business, media and cultural sectors by inviting them to the concerts.

At the networking session organised by the HKETO, Brussels during the concert in Brussels, the Special Representative for Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs to the European Union, Ms Shirley Yung, exchanged with the attending guests and members of the HK Phil and said that there was no better way in bringing audiences worldwide and forging people-to-people bonds across cultures than sharing music. “The international tour of HK Phil is emblematic of Hong Kong’s openness to cultures and talents of diverse backgrounds. Hong Kong is not only a breeding ground for nurturing local artists, but also an attractive city for international talents to pursue their dreams,” Ms Yung said.

The concert of HK Phil in Brussels was the opening concert of Klarafestival, the biggest classical music festival in Belgium.

