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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) (HKETO) wishes you and your loved ones a happy, prosperous and successful Year of 2025!

UPCOMING EVENTS

11th Transpacific Entrepreneurial Conference

Presented jointly by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA), the 11th Transpacific Entrepreneurial Conference will be held on January 15 (HKT) in hybrid in-person and virtual mode. Themed “the Pursuit of the Next Decade: TransPacific Collaboration - Hong Kong SuperConnecting Asia and Canada”, the conference will center on new growth strategies in various industries including Sustainability, Renewable Energy, Transition, Infrastructure and Finance, Health Care, Wealth management and Clean Tech. It will also feature success stories of innovative solutions, best practices, and support for businesses, focusing on advanced technology, new investment, wealth planning, and healthy living in Hong Kong. The HKETO is a sponsor of the event. For further details, please visit:

<https://canchamhk.glueup.com/event/11th-transpacific-entrepreneurial-conference-117468/>

HKCBA Annual Lunar New Year Galas 2025

The HKCBA (Toronto Section) will organize the 2025 annual Lunar New Year Gala on February 15. Activities include traditional Chinese games, lion dance, band performance, silent auction, etc. Grand prize draw is two round trip premium economy tickets between Toronto and Hong Kong donated by Cathay Pacific Airways. The HKETO is a sponsor of the event. For details, please visit:

<https://toronto.hkcba.com/cpages/home>

In addition, the HKCBA’s Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary Sections will also host the 2025 annual Lunar New Year galas from February 5 to 7 respectively. Participants can enjoy a festive meal and be dazzled by performances and guest speakers. The event in Calgary will also host an award ceremony honouring HKCBA Calgary Scholarship winners. The HKETO is a major sponsor of the galas. For details, please visit:

https://www.hkcba.com/event_list?current_page=1&sort_type=upcoming&filter%5Bperiod%5D=all&display_type=default

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RECENT ACTIVITY

HKETO celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of Macao Special Administrative Region

The HKETO participated in the Macao Club Toronto charity dinner on December 20 to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR).

In delivering a speech on behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, the Director of the HKETO, Ms Emily Mo, said that Hong Kong and Macao share a deep-rooted connection.

Ms Mo remarked that the two SARs share an inseparable bond with our Motherland under the unique advantages of the “one country, two systems” framework. In recent years, this bond was further strengthened through the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development. The increasing usage of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is one of the examples of the enhanced connectivity between the two cities.

In closing, she said that Hong Kong will continue to stand with Macao in facilitating opportunities for Canadian businesses and individuals to access Asia, fostering mutual growth and collaboration.

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.hketotoronto.gov.hk/newsroom/hketo-celebrates-the-25th-anniversary-of-the-establishment-of-macao-special-administrative-region.html>

HONG KONG NEWS

Government releases Development Blueprint for Hong Kong’s Tourism Industry 2.0

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism of the HKSAR Government, Miss Rosanna Law, promulgated the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong’s Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0) on December 30.

Miss Law noted that Blueprint 2.0 has three key messages. The first is that Hong Kong is an international tourist city with the advantage of being backed by the motherland. Second, everyone can contribute to the development of tourism in Hong Kong. Third, Hong Kong has obvious traditional tourism advantages, including world-class tourist attractions, cuisine, urban management and transport systems.

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Blueprint 2.0 proposes a forward-looking and pragmatic vision and mission for Hong Kong's tourism industry, proposing four positions, four development strategies and 133 measures.

The four positions of Hong Kong's tourism industry include:

- (i) reinforcing the role of an international tourism hub and a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism;
- (ii) highlighting the unique elements of Hong Kong's local cultural characteristics that are irreplaceable and unrepeatable and making good use of its positioning as the East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange;
- (iii) upholding Hong Kong's positioning as a city with high-quality tourism experiences; and
- (iv) stressing the importance of quality over quantity in development to build Hong Kong into a demonstration point for sustainable tourism.

The four strategies are:

- (i) Nurture and develop tourism products
- (ii) Visitors from all parts of the world gather in Hong Kong
- (iii) Intelligent and convenient travel to Hong Kong
- (iv) Quality services for visitors

The full text of Blueprint 2.0 has been uploaded to the website of the CSTB (www.cstb.gov.hk/en/).

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202412/30/P2024123000536.htm>

Latest information on visitor arrivals to Hong Kong during New Year's Eve and New Year holidays

On New Year's Eve (December 31), the Immigration Department of the HKSAR Government recorded a total of around 156 000 visitors arriving Hong Kong through various sea, land and air control points. Among them, Mainland visitors accounted for 77 per cent of the total arrivals.

Regarding large-scale events, the countdown fireworks display held on New Year's Eve at Victoria Harbour attracting over 400 000 spectators. The event was well-received by local residents and visitors.

A large number of visitors also went to various major tourist attractions in Hong Kong during the New Year's Eve and New Year holidays, including Hong Kong Disneyland,

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Ocean Park, Ngong Ping 360, the Peak Tram and the West Kowloon Cultural District, etc. All major tourist spots were operating with high patronage and in good order.

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202501/01/P2025010100321.htm>

HKMA announces inaugural cohort of GenA.I. Sandbox

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), in collaboration with the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited (Cyberport), announced on December 19 the first cohort of the Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenA.I.) Sandbox. A total of 15 use cases, 10 banks and four technology partners, have been selected as the inaugural participants in the GenA.I. Sandbox from over 40 proposals received.

The proposed use cases mainly revolve around enhancing risk management, anti-fraud measures and customer experience. Through the GenA.I. Sandbox, banks will explore GenA.I.'s unique capabilities in processing vast amounts of documents and unstructured data, as well as its ability to handle cross-media inputs and outputs. Notable examples include augmenting credit assessment and fraud detection by automated processing of unstructured data, and enhancing customer service to handle more personalised and complex enquiries, as an improvement over typical pre-defined chatbots.

The selected participants will be gradually onboarded to a dedicated platform of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre operated by Cyberport, with technical trials expected to commence in early 2025 and continue through mid-2025.

The HKMA plans to announce the application process for the second cohort of the GenA.I. Sandbox by the end of the first quarter of 2025.

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202412/19/P2024121900284.htm>

CE congratulates Sam Hou-fai on assuming office as sixth-term Chief Executive of Macao SAR and inauguration of sixth-term Government of Macao SAR

The Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr John Lee, on December 20 led a HKSAR Government delegation to attend the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Macao's Return to the Motherland and the Inauguration Ceremony of the Sixth-term Government of the Macao SAR. Mr Lee congratulated Mr Sam Hou-fai on assuming office as the sixth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR and the inauguration of the sixth-term Government of the Macao SAR.

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Mr Lee remarked that he will work with Mr Sam to further enhance exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and Macao.

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202412/20/P2024122000187.htm>

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Canada suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department of the HKSAR Government announced on December 27 that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health about outbreaks of the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Middlesex County in the province of Ontario and Greater Vancouver in the province of British Columbia in Canada, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

According to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 370 tonnes of frozen poultry meat from Canada in the first nine months of this year.

Click the following link for details:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202412/27/P2024122700416.htm>

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HKETO Toronto X Page <https://x.com/TorontoHKETO>

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