



HONG KONG SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: March 01, 2026 - March 08, 2026

This report was produced using automated open-source intelligence analysis. The assessment is grounded in publicly available reporting and should be cross-referenced with primary sources. RSS feed articles are listed in the annex for reference.

Comprehensive Security Analysis Report: Hong Kong (March 01, 2026 - March 08, 2026)

Executive Summary

During the period of March 1 to March 8, 2026, Hong Kong's security landscape was primarily shaped by Beijing's continued efforts to integrate the Special Administrative Region (SAR) into national development plans and reinforce national security. China's top legislature reiterated its commitment to introduce beneficial policies for Hong Kong under the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030), emphasizing the city's role in the country's overall development. Concurrently, the impact of the National Security Law (NSL) and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) remained a central theme, highlighted by the decision of pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai not to appeal his national security conviction. Cybersecurity emerged as a significant area of focus with the recent implementation of the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance and upcoming industry events. International diplomatic concerns, particularly from the UK and US, persisted regarding human rights, freedoms, and the broader implications of Hong Kong's evolving legal framework.

Key Security Developments

- **Integration into China's 15th Five-Year Plan:** China's top legislature, ahead of the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, pledged on March 3, 2026, to introduce more policies and measures benefiting the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. These measures aim to enable Hong Kong to leverage its unique advantages and align its strengths with national needs, with further arrangements expected in the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30). This signifies a deepening of Hong Kong's integration into mainland China's economic and strategic development.
- **Continued Enforcement of National Security Laws:** The impact of Beijing's imposed National Security Law and the locally enacted Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) remained prominent. On March 6, 2026, it was reported that pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai would not appeal his national security conviction, which resulted in a 20-year prison sentence for

foreign collusion and seditious publication. This case continues to draw international condemnation from human rights groups, who view it as a symbol of shrinking press freedoms and a "full-scale assault on rights".

- **Cybersecurity Ordinance Implementation:** Hong Kong's first cybersecurity law, the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance, officially took effect on January 1, 2026. This legislation aims to enhance cybersecurity standards for providers of essential services across eight critical sectors, including energy, finance, and telecommunications, and mandates incident reporting. The period also saw several cybersecurity alerts issued by GovCERT.HK, including vulnerabilities in Google Chrome, Cisco Products, Android, and Trend Micro Products on March 2-6, 2026.
- **Upcoming Cybersecurity Events:** Further highlighting the focus on cybersecurity, the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) announced they would co-organize the AI Security and Cybersecurity Summit for Enterprises on March 31, 2026. Additionally, the "PolyU x NuttyShell Cybersecurity CTF 2026" competition was scheduled from March 6 to March 8, 2026, aimed at inspiring future cybersecurity talent.
- **UK's BNO Visa Policy Adjustments:** On March 6, 2026, the UK Home Secretary clarified that British National (Overseas) (BNO) visa holders would be exempt from a planned increase in the English language proficiency requirement for settlement, easing concerns for thousands of Hongkongers seeking permanent residence. This move, effective from April 8, 2026, also expands eligibility to adult children who were under 18 on July 1, 1997, addressing a long-standing family separation issue.
- **UK Concerns over Human Rights and Transnational Repression:** During a parliamentary debate on March 3, 2026, the UK government reiterated its deep concern over China's imposition of the national security law on Hong Kong, stating it has significantly eroded rights and freedoms. The UK also acknowledged evidence of transnational repression against Hong Kong nationals living overseas, including in the United Kingdom, and pledged to work across government departments to address this issue.
- **US Stance on Hong Kong Autonomy:** The US continues to monitor Hong Kong's autonomy. The Hong Kong Autonomy Act, which went into force in July 2020, provides for potential sanctions on individuals and financial institutions contributing to the failure of China to meet its obligations under the Joint Declaration or the Basic Law. While no new sanctions were announced during this specific week, the existing framework underscores ongoing US scrutiny of Hong Kong's political developments.

- **Protests by Hong Kong Activists Abroad:** On March 7, 2026, Hong Kong pro-democracy activists rallied in Reading, UK, holding a street exhibition and protest. The demonstration aimed to raise awareness among the British public, particularly following the sentencing of Jimmy Lai. This highlights continued international activism and dissent against Beijing's policies in Hong Kong.
- **Hong Kong's Economic Outlook:** Hong Kong's Financial Secretary, Paul Chan, announced on February 25, 2026, that the city's economy is forecast to grow between 2.5 percent and 3.5 percent in 2026, following a 3.5 percent growth in 2025. Chan emphasized that mainland China would serve as a key driver for regional and global economic momentum, providing firm support for Hong Kong's growth. He also noted that while the Middle East conflict might impact the trading sector, the financial market could benefit from its stability.

Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

Hong Kong's security developments during this period underscore the ongoing tension between Beijing's assertion of sovereignty and international concerns over the erosion of the "One Country, Two Systems" framework. China's explicit commitment to integrating Hong Kong into its 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) signals a strategic imperative to align the SAR's economic and developmental trajectory more closely with the mainland. This move, while framed as beneficial for Hong Kong's prosperity, is viewed by some international observers as a further step in diminishing the city's distinct autonomy. The emphasis on leveraging Hong Kong's unique advantages within the national plan suggests a pragmatic approach by Beijing to harness Hong Kong's financial and technological strengths for broader national goals, particularly in the context of global economic shifts and technological self-reliance.

The continued enforcement of national security legislation, exemplified by the Jimmy Lai case, remains a significant point of contention in Hong Kong's diplomatic relations with major Western powers. The UK, a signatory to the Sino-British Joint Declaration, reiterated its deep concerns about the erosion of rights and freedoms and the issue of transnational repression. Similarly, the US maintains its stance under the Hong Kong Autonomy Act, which allows for potential sanctions, reflecting a broader geopolitical competition where Hong Kong's autonomy is a key indicator of China's adherence to international agreements. These diplomatic pressures, however, appear to have limited impact on Beijing's internal policies regarding Hong Kong, as evidenced by the ongoing legal proceedings and the central government's firm support for the SAR's national security efforts.

Regional dynamics are also influenced by China's broader diplomatic engagements, particularly during the "Two Sessions" where Foreign Minister Wang Yi emphasized

China's commitment to an amicable and secure neighborhood and its role as an anchor for regional peace and development. While these statements are general, they provide context for Beijing's approach to its periphery, including Hong Kong. The economic forecasts for Hong Kong, heavily reliant on mainland China's growth and proactive macro policies, further solidify its economic integration and reduce its susceptibility to external economic pressures, thereby reinforcing Beijing's influence.

Military and Defense Analysis

Hong Kong's defense is the responsibility of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) garrison stationed in the SAR, as stipulated by the Basic Law. During the period of March 1 to March 8, 2026, there were no specific reports of military activities, exercises, or significant force posture changes by the PLA garrison in Hong Kong. This is consistent with the typical operational profile of the garrison, which generally maintains a low public profile unless in response to specific security situations or ceremonial duties.

From a broader security perspective, Hong Kong's defense policy is entirely integrated into China's national defense strategy. The ongoing emphasis from Beijing on safeguarding national security in Hong Kong, as articulated through the National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, serves as the primary strategic shift impacting the city's security posture. These legislative measures are designed to preempt and suppress any perceived threats to national sovereignty, security, and development interests within the SAR. While not military in nature, these laws represent a robust legal and enforcement framework that underpins Beijing's control over Hong Kong's internal security, effectively serving as a non-kinetic defense mechanism against political dissent and external interference. There were no reported defense acquisitions or arms deals relevant to Hong Kong during this period, as such matters fall under central government purview.

Outlook and Forecast

Short-term trends (1-3 months): In the immediate future, Hong Kong is expected to continue its trajectory of deeper integration with mainland China, guided by the directives emerging from the "Two Sessions" and the 15th Five-Year Plan. This will likely translate into further policy alignments aimed at enhancing Hong Kong's economic and technological contributions to national development. The enforcement of the National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance will remain robust, with ongoing legal proceedings against individuals deemed to be endangering national security. The cybersecurity landscape will see increased

activity, particularly with the full implementation of the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance and scheduled industry events in March. International scrutiny, especially from Western nations, will persist regarding human rights and political freedoms, potentially leading to further diplomatic statements or targeted measures, though these are unlikely to alter Beijing's fundamental approach.

Critical flashpoints and risk areas: A critical flashpoint remains the ongoing application of national security legislation, particularly its broad interpretation and extraterritorial reach, which could lead to further arrests or legal actions against individuals both within Hong Kong and abroad. Any significant public demonstrations or acts of dissent, however minor, could be met with swift and decisive action under these laws. The economic stability of Hong Kong, while projected to grow, could face risks from persistent global trade tensions and a slower-than-expected pace of US interest rate cuts, which could impact investor confidence despite Beijing's support. Furthermore, the potential for increased cyberattacks, as highlighted by the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team's report of a 27% increase in incidents in 2025, poses an ongoing risk to critical infrastructure and business operations.

Indicators to monitor: Key indicators to monitor include any new policy announcements from Beijing regarding Hong Kong's role in the 15th Five-Year Plan, particularly those affecting economic sectors and talent mobility. The number and nature of arrests or prosecutions under the national security laws will be crucial in assessing the intensity of enforcement. Developments in cybersecurity, including the effectiveness of the new ordinance and the frequency of reported incidents, should be closely watched. International reactions, such as further statements from the US, UK, or EU regarding Hong Kong's autonomy and human rights, will indicate the level of sustained diplomatic pressure. Finally, Hong Kong's economic performance, especially in relation to foreign investment and trade figures, will provide insights into the impact of the security environment on its status as an international financial hub.

Strategic recommendations: For businesses and international entities operating in Hong Kong, it is crucial to conduct thorough due diligence on the implications of the National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, particularly concerning data handling, intellectual property, and employee conduct. Strengthening cybersecurity defenses and compliance with the new Critical Infrastructures Ordinance is paramount given the rising threat landscape. Diplomatic engagement should continue to advocate for the preservation of Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and the protection of fundamental freedoms, while acknowledging the realities of Beijing's strengthened control. Monitoring economic indicators and policy shifts from Beijing will be essential for strategic planning and risk assessment in a rapidly evolving environment.

ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

Source: HK Free Press

- [‘A silent killer’ : How Hong Kong’ s elderly face deadly heat inside cramped cage homes](#) (2026-03-08 01:00)

After climbing three flights of stairs in a building in Hong Kong’ s bustling Mong Kok district, HKFP found an open metal gate and a wooden door adorned with Spring Festival decorations. The air was stale, thick with humidity from a shared bathroom and dust from the building’ s ongoing renovation. There was no breeze entering the [...]

- [Australia says Chinese military helicopter in ‘unsafe’ manoeuvres at sea](#) (2026-03-07 11:52)

Australia’ s military on Friday said a Chinese navy helicopter flew dangerously close to one of its aircraft during a routine passage through the Yellow Sea that Beijing criticised as a “provocation.” The defence ministry in Canberra said it has raised concerns with Beijing after the incident, which both governments said took place Wednesday over open [...]

- [Fat chance: The government’ s new weight loss campaign misses the mark](#) (2026-03-07 02:00)

Many years ago I read a short story about a man who successfully summoned a genie, and on being offered the traditional wish said he wished to lose weight. “Certainly,” said the genie, and in a matter of seconds the lucky fellow was glued to the ceiling, having become lighter than air. The point of [...]

- [‘Your inner self is red’ : UK border officer accused of ‘infiltrating’ Hong Kong pro-democracy group](#) (2026-03-06 13:53)

A man facing national security charges in the UK provided information on pro-democracy dissidents to former Hong Kong police officers, a London court has heard. Former UK border officer Peter Wai, 38, and Bill Yuen, 65, a manager at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in London, face charges of assisting a foreign intelligence [...]

- [China says ‘clearly aware’ of economic risks, vows to boost spending](#) (2026-03-06 11:21)

China’ s leaders are “clearly aware” of challenges facing growth, the head of the country’ s top economic planning body said on Friday, vowing to boost sluggish domestic consumption. The comments were made on the sidelines of the annual “Two Sessions” in Beijing, a closely watched political gathering at which the government unveiled on Thursday a growth [...]

- [HKFP Lens: Villain hitting at Hung Hom temple marks ‘awakening of insects’ festival](#) (2026-03-06 10:19)

Jingzhe, the “awakening of insects” festival that falls a few weeks after the start of the Lunar New Year, took place on Thursday – marking the third of the Chinese calendar’s 24 solar terms. The festival is named for the awakening of insects from hibernation as spring arrives. A common ritual during Jingzhe is “villain [...]”

- [Family of Hong Kong firefighter killed in Tai Po blaze to receive HK\\$6.15 million in gov’t financial aid](#) (2026-03-06 10:14)

The family of the Hong Kong firefighter who died battling November’s Wang Fuk Court fire in Tai Po will receive HK\$6.15 million in financial support, the government has announced. Ho Wai-ho, 37, was among the 168 lives lost in Hong Kong’s deadliest fire in almost eight decades. He died in the line of duty on [...]

- [UK MP quits parliament group as husband accused of spying for China](#) (2026-03-06 07:22)

A UK lawmaker said Thursday she was stepping out of the parliamentary group of the governing party after her husband was reportedly arrested on suspicion of spying for China. UK police on Thursday said they had released three people, reportedly including David Taylor, the husband of Labour member of parliament Joani Reid. “I am voluntarily [...]

- [Hong Kong court dismisses press group’s legal challenge to limits on access to vehicle registry](#) (2026-03-06 06:55)

The High Court has dismissed a Hong Kong press group’s legal challenge against government restrictions on media access to the vehicle registry. High Court Judge Russell Coleman handed down his judgment on Friday, rejecting the Hong Kong Journalists Association’s (HKJA) judicial review against the Transport Department. The HKJA argued that the new arrangement on media [...]

- [Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai will not appeal nat. security conviction, 20-year jail term, lawyer says](#) (2026-03-06 04:10)

Hong Kong pro-democracy tycoon Jimmy Lai will not appeal against his national security conviction and 20-year jail term, his lawyer has said. Lai, 78, was sentenced to 20 years behind bars on February 9 – the longest jail term handed down so far under the national security law that Beijing imposed following the 2019 protests [...]

- [Over 40% of Hong Kong’s ‘Gen Z’ suffer from moderate to severe depression, survey finds](#) (2026-03-05 23:30)

Over 40 per cent of Hong Kong’s “Generation Z” population, or those aged 18 to 24, suffer from moderate to severe depression, a survey has found, with researchers identifying excessive screen time as strongly linked with emotional distress. The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong (MHAHK) said on Thursday that Hong Kong residents had reported [...]

- [Hong Kong urged to provide ‘humane education’ after 14-year-old boy arrested over alleged animal abuse](#) (2026-03-05 10:53)

An animal rights NGO has urged the Hong Kong government to provide “humane education” and teach respect after a 14-year-old student was arrested on suspicion of animal abuse. PETA Asia said in a statement on Thursday that it was “rushing humane education materials” to the Education Bureau and urging the government to prevent violence by [...]

- [China boosts military spending with eyes on US, Taiwan](#) (2026-03-05 07:51)

China announced a seven percent boost to its defence budget for 2026 on Thursday as it steadily increases spending to counter the United States and enforce its claims over Taiwan and the South China Sea. The latest rise keeps China’s spending at a third of that of the United States, but the Asian power is [...]

- [Taiwan scholar barred from testifying in Tiananmen vigil trial over ‘irrelevant’ expertise, Hong Kong court says](#) (2026-03-05 06:48)

A Taiwanese academic was barred from testifying in Tiananmen vigil activist Chow Hang-tung’s national security trial as the evidence he planned to give was “irrelevant” to the case at hand, a Hong Kong court has said. Chow had initially applied to have Ho Ming-sho, a sociology professor at National Taiwan University, testify in her national [...]

- [Hongkongers stranded in Dubai return home on first Middle East flight since conflict began](#) (2026-03-05 04:39)

An Emirates flight from Dubai carrying stranded Hongkongers landed on Wednesday night, marking the first flight from the Middle East since the conflict began. Emirates flight EK 380 landed in Hong Kong at 9:50pm, according to the Hong Kong International Airport’s record of arrival flights. On the flight were Hongkongers and mainland Chinese residents who [...]

- [Hong Kong trade office employee, ex-British border officer accused of ‘shadow policing’ for China as UK trial begins](#) (2026-03-05 03:45)

By Martin Pollard A retired Hong Kong police officer and a British Border Force official engaged in “shadow policing” for China on UK soil, prosecutors said at the start of their London trial Wednesday. Peter Wai, 38, and Bill Yuen, 65, both dual British and Chinese nationals, face charges of assisting a foreign intelligence service [...]

- [Hong Kong launches first action plan to combat obesity](#) (2026-03-04 23:30)

The Hong Kong government has launched a three-year Action Plan on Weight Management – the first of its kind – to fight obesity. The government unveiled the action plan on Wednesday to mark World Obesity Day. The plan brings together different government bureaux and departments and aims to enhance collaboration between Chinese and Western medicine, [...]

- [Swedish businessman jailed for 7 years over rape of domestic worker appeals conviction at Hong Kong court](#) (2026-03-04 12:23)

A Swedish businessman jailed for seven years in 2024 after being found guilty of raping a domestic worker has appealed his conviction. Patrik Tobias Ekstrom appeared at the Court of Appeal on Wednesday. Ekstrom was found guilty of one count of rape and one count of non-consensual buggery in August 2024, after a seven-member jury returned a [...]

- [Wang Fuk Court residents to testify at probe hearings on deadly fire](#) (2026-03-04 11:43)

Wang Fuk Court residents will give evidence regarding the deadly fire that ravaged their housing estate, the committee investigating the disaster has said. The committee said in a statement on Tuesday that legal teams would give opening remarks on the first day of the evidential hearings on March 19. The process will take “a few [...]

- [China’ s shipping giant Cosco halts services to and from Gulf](#) (2026-03-04 11:42)

Chinese shipping giant Cosco, which operates one of the world’ s biggest oil tanker fleets, announced it was suspending services to and from Gulf countries from Wednesday, including the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait. The state-owned, Shanghai-based firm is among several major shipping groups that have halted vessel operations in the Strait [...]

- [Jailed ex-Hong Kong lawmaker released on HK\\$5 million bail pending appeal against fraud conviction](#) (2026-03-04 08:49)

A former Hong Kong lawmaker serving an almost three-year jail term for a fraud conviction has been released on HK\$5 million bail pending appeal. Chim Pui-chung, 79, appeared at the High Court’ s Court of Appeal on Wednesday for a second application for bail pending his appeal in a HK\$210 million fraud case, which occurred between [...]

- [Taiwan charges 62 linked to Cambodia’ s alleged scam operator Prince Group](#) (2026-03-04 05:40)

Taiwanese prosecutors charged 62 people and 13 companies on Wednesday in connection with a Cambodian conglomerate whose founder is accused of running forced labour camps. Prince Holding Group founder Chen Zhi has been indicted by the United States on fraud and money-laundering charges for allegedly running a multibillion-dollar cyberscam network from Cambodia. The Southeast Asian [...]

- [Hong Kong sees warmest winter on record, with only 5 cold days](#) (2026-03-04 04:56)

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has said the city experienced its warmest winter on record in recent months, with an average temperature reaching 19.3 degrees Celsius. “Together with the well-above-normal temperatures in December 2025 and warmer-than-usual weather in January 2026, Hong Kong experienced the warmest winter on record from December 2025 to February 2026 with [...]

- [British woman who reported rape in Hong Kong found guilty of blackmail, perverting justice](#) (2026-03-03 23:30)

A British woman who was travelling in Hong Kong has been found guilty of blackmail and perverting the course of justice, after initially reporting a man for alleged rape in 2024. Isabel Rose appeared at the District Court to receive the verdict on Tuesday. The 25-year-old was accused of demanding £100,000 (HK\$1,040,500) from a man [...]

- [UK national security trial involving Hong Kong trade office employee set to begin](#) (2026-03-03 12:26)

A UK national security trial tied to the Hong Kong government is set to begin this week in London, as jury selection is underway. The two defendants – Bill Yuen, a manager of Hong Kong’s trade office in London, and Peter Wai, a former UK border officer – previously pleaded not guilty to spying charges. [...]

- [Ex-Apple Daily editor files appeal for sentence cut in national security case](#) (2026-03-03 11:10)

A former Apple Daily editor who was sentenced to 10 years in prison last month in a national security trial alongside his former boss, Jimmy Lai, has filed an appeal seeking a shorter sentence. Fung Wai-kong, former editorial writer and editor-in-chief of Apple Daily’s English news section, filed his appeal on Monday, local media reported, [...]

- [China votes to oust 3 generals from political advisory body](#) (2026-03-03 08:04)

China’s top political advisory body has voted to remove three generals, state media said, a week after nine military officials were ousted from its legislature. The move comes as Beijing escalates a sweeping purge of military officials, days before thousands of delegates from across the country meet for the annual Two Sessions political conclave on [...]

- [Over 400 Hongkongers stranded in Middle East, reported safe amid conflict](#) (2026-03-03 07:21)

More than 400 Hong Kong residents were stranded in the Middle East as of Monday afternoon, according to the Immigration Department, amid the ongoing conflict triggered by US-Israel strikes on Iran. The Immigration Department said that as of 5pm Monday, it had been contacted by 432 Hong Kong residents in the Middle East, all of [...]

- [China backs Iran in ‘defending sovereignty,’ vows to push for peace](#) (2026-03-03 05:57)

China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Iranian counterpart on a call Monday that Beijing supports Tehran defending itself against US-Israeli strikes, as war spread across the Middle East. Hundreds have died in Iran since Saturday when the United States and Israel began striking dozens of targets in the country. Tehran responded by launching waves [...]

- [Hong Kong Arts Centre revives Asian film competition after 17-month hiatus, adds national security terms](#) (2026-03-03 05:04)

The Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC) has revived an Asian film competition after a 17-month hiatus, adding new terms requiring participants to ensure their work complies with the city's national security legislation. The HKAC's Incubator for Film and Visual Media in Asia (ifva) Awards opened for applications on Sunday. According to the awards' rules and [...]

- [Industry rep says landlords face high cost renovating subdivided units as new law takes effect](#) (2026-03-02 23:30)

An industry representative has said he is likely to spend some HK\$160,000 to refit doors in a single flat and pay inspection fees, as the registration scheme for subdivided units took effect on Sunday. Hayson Chan, chair of the Hong Kong Basic Housing Units Operators Association and business development director of rental company Rent to [...]

- [China's Cosco orders Gulf-bound ships to seek 'safe waters'](#) (2026-03-02 10:18)

Chinese shipping giant Cosco has ordered ships in or bound for the Gulf to seek "safe waters", as traffic in the vital waterway is impeded in the aftermath of US-Israeli strikes on Iran. The state-owned, Shanghai-based firm is the latest of several major shipping groups to announce suspended operations since Iran's Revolutionary Guards declared the [...]

- [6 people injured in Marine Department vessel engine blast](#) (2026-03-02 09:47)

Six people, aged between 23 and 66, have been injured after a Marine Department vessel's engine exploded at the Government Dockyard on Stonecutters Island in Kowloon. Police said they received a report of the explosion at 10.30am on Monday. The vessel was believed to be docked there for inspection. Among the six injured, three were [...]

- [Hong Kong gov't deploys 100-strong team to explain long-term resettlement policy to Tai Po fire victims](#) (2026-03-02 09:30)

The Hong Kong government has deployed a 100-strong team from multiple departments to explain the buyout plan and long-term resettlement offers to the fire-hit Wang Fuk Court flat owners. According to a government statement on Monday, a cross-departmental "engage team," led by the Housing Bureau, was established to help homeowners understand various resettlement options. The [...]

- [Hong Kong woman given suspended jail term for reposting calls to boycott legislative polls](#) (2026-03-02 05:11)

A Hong Kong woman was given a suspended jail sentence for sharing online posts calling for a boycott of December's "patriots only" legislative elections. Bonney Ma, 61, was sentenced on Wednesday to two months in prison, suspended for 18 months, after she pleaded guilty to one count of inciting others not to vote in the [...]

- [Cathay Pacific cancels all Dubai, Riyadh flights until Tuesday amid attacks in Middle East](#) (2026-03-02 04:51)

Cathay Pacific has cancelled all flights to and from Dubai in the UAE and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia until Tuesday, amid ongoing military conflict in the Middle East. “Customers booked to travel between Hong Kong” and the two cities “up to 7 March 2026 may rebook, reroute or refund their tickets without the usual fees,” [...]

- [China ‘strongly condemns’ US-Israel killing of Khamenei, calls for halt to military strikes](#) (2026-03-02 03:02)

China said Sunday it “strongly condemns” the United States and Israel’ s killing of Iran’ s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, calling again for a halt to military actions. The killing was “a serious violation of Iran’ s sovereignty and security, a trampling on the aims and principles of the UN Charter and the basic norms of international [...]

- [Hong Kong retiree jailed for 8 months over seditious Facebook posts](#) (2026-03-01 23:20)

A Hong Kong court has sentenced a 68-year-old retiree to eight months in jail for sedition under the city’ s homegrown security law, after the man published more than 100 Facebook posts criticising authorities and calling for a boycott of last year’ s legislative polls. Lam Chung-ming pleaded guilty on Friday to one count of “knowingly publishing [...]

- [Iran’ s Ayatollah Ali Khamenei killed in massive US and Israeli attack](#) (2026-03-01 04:29)

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’ s supreme leader since 1989 and sworn enemy of the West, was killed in the opening salvo of a massive US and Israeli attack that extended into a second day Sunday, as the two powers seek to topple the Islamic republic. Iranian state television confirmed Khamenei’ s death early Sunday, hours after President [...]

- [‘Unofficial’ talks on plastic pollution treaty to begin in Japan](#) (2026-03-01 01:32)

Delegates from around 20 countries will hold three days of “informal” talks in Japan from Sunday aimed at salvaging efforts towards a landmark global treaty on plastic pollution. Supposedly final talks in South Korea in 2024 towards an agreement failed, and a renewed effort in Geneva last August likewise collapsed in overtime. A Japanese environment ministry [...]

- [Tai Po fire: Some survivors wary over resettlement plan after ‘ignored’ calls to rebuild on site](#) (2026-03-01 01:00)

After Hong Kong authorities signalled that new legislation could be passed to forcibly acquire title deeds from homeowners at the fire-ravaged Wang Fuk Court, Jason Kong started to feel the squeeze. “It feels like we’ re being pressured,” Kong, who owns a flat on the estate, told HKFP on Tuesday, a day after deputy finance chief [...]

Source: RTHK English News

- ['Hetao Innovation Zone development accelerated'](#) (2026-03-08 04:28)

Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry Sun Dong on Sunday said construction for the remaining areas in the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation Zone had been accelerated. This came after the government proposed in its latest budget of earmarking HK\$10 billion as initial capital to further develop the zone. Speaking on a radio programme, Sun said development for the zone had entered its second phase and the HK\$10 billion would be used for public-private sector collaboration. Following the zone's launch at the end of last year, two wet laboratory buildings and one talent accommodation building under the first phase had been completed. Sun said construction of the remaining five buildings had been accelerated to get them completed ahead of the original schedule. "We launched the zone at the end of last year. We had previously proposed to finish the remaining five buildings in Phase 1 progressively from 2027. But now we changed our plan, and decided to complete them from the end of 2026," he said. He explained the latest Five-Year plan for both the country and Hong Kong was generating increased demand. "So now construction at the zone is happening 24 hours a day," he said. As the Hetao area is a "spade-ready site" and a key national project, Sun said the area possesses advantages for future land tenders. He also noted that authorities have received 27 letters of intent regarding the zone's Hong Kong Park section from local, mainland and overseas groups, reflecting a positive market response. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Taskforce set to help make supercomputing hub click](#) (2026-03-07 11:08)

Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry Sun Dong said on Saturday that a taskforce would be established to ensure that the development of a supercomputing hub at Sandy Ridge stayed on track. The move will come days after Hong Kong Range Intelligent Computing Technology won the tender with a HK\$581 million bid. Under the terms of the tender award, it has to complete its investments of more than HK\$23 billion over the first three years and begin operations within 42 months. The firm will lose its guarantee money of HK\$400 million, or two percent of the targeted investments, if it fails to meet specified targets. Speaking on a television programme, Sun noted that the sole bidder faces a significant challenge. He said the land development cost was extremely high at over HK\$1 billion and that the land premium only made up a small proportion of it. "The government will set up a dedicated task force internally to follow up on the project," Sun said. "It is not for monitoring but to mainly provide comprehensive support for the company so that it can fulfil its commitment as scheduled and in accordance with the regulations." Zhou Chaonan, founder of the parent company of Hong Kong Range Intelligent Computing Technology, told RTHK on the sidelines of the "Two Sessions" meetings in Beijing that she felt honoured that the company had won the tender award. She is confident that the company will meet the targets, given that the group has experience of more than a decade in the field. "We will work hard at building the data centres," Zhou said. "This is a duty we ought to be able to fulfil." The firm will work with universities and talents in the research, academic and industry sectors in the SAR, Zhou said, adding that the city holds high promise in artificial intelligence advances. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Hainan CPPCC chief wants to leverage HK port strengths](#) (2026-03-07 10:22)

Hainan may seek closer ties with Hong Kong to leverage the SAR's strengths as a free trade port, a delegate to the country's top political advisory body said on Saturday. Li Rongcan, who chairs the Hainan provincial committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), called for deepening collaboration between the two places. "Hainan is the only free trade port with Chinese characteristics while Hong Kong is an internationally renowned and highly mature free trade port," he told a CPPCC plenary meeting in Beijing.

"Collaboration between the two places offers not just support for Hainan's development with the help of Hong Kong's capital, technology and international experience but also what it takes for the joint development of the Hainan free trade port and the Greater Bay Area." Li also called for support at the national level to foster deeper collaboration between the two places on commerce and finance. China has launched island-wide special customs operations on Hainan, the world's largest free trade port by area, allowing freer entry of overseas goods, expanding zero-tariff coverage and more business-friendly measures. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Two warded after assault, arson and attempted suicide](#) (2026-03-07 10:07)

Police launched an investigation after a man and a woman were hospitalised following a violent incident involving assault, arson and an apparent suicide attempt in Yuen Long on Saturday morning. According to officers, emergency services were alerted at 9.43am after a 31-year-old woman reported that she had been attacked by her husband inside a flat on Fung Cheung Road. She told officers that her husband also used a knife during the assault. Senior inspector Chan Man-hei said the woman managed to escape from the lower-storey flat and call for help. "Upon arrival, police arranged for the victim, who had sustained a hand injury, to be sent to Tuen Mun Hospital," she said. "Later, officers also found the suspect lying on the pedestrian walkway outside the building, believed to have fallen from height. "He was immediately rushed to Tuen Mun Hospital for emergency treatment. He is currently unconscious but in a stable condition." Chan said thick smoke billowed from the unit and that the Fire Services Department extinguished the blaze. "During the fire, around 30 residents heard the fire alarm and evacuated the building," she said. "The fire was quickly contained, did not spread to any other units, and caused no further injuries." Preliminary police investigations suggest the suspect, a 31-year-old man who runs a restaurant, had been arguing with the victim over business matters. "During the argument, the suspect became emotionally agitated, took a fruit knife from the kitchen. The victim immediately tried to stop him, and during the struggle, the suspect cut her in the hand," Chan said. "After she managed to take the knife away, the male suspect locked himself in the bedroom. While the victim was leaving the flat and calling police, the suspect used a lighter to set fire to the mattress and then fell from the unit." The police said the motive for the incident had yet to be ascertained. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Lawmakers get 'proactive' national development call](#) (2026-03-07 07:05)

Beijing expects the current Legislative Council to be "more proactive" in aligning Hong Kong with the country's latest five-year plan, according to local National People's Congress (NPC)

deputies. They were speaking following a meeting with Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang in the capital on the sidelines of the “Two Sessions” assemblies during which he directed Legco to come up with practical ways to better implement the executive-led governance system in Hong Kong. The city’s sole delegate to the NPC Standing Committee, Starry Lee, said she shared her thoughts on how to further develop the governing structure during the hour-long meeting with Ding. “I think he does, of course, expect [lawmakers in] this term to have a more proactive approach, especially when we talk about how to integrate into the 15th Five-Year Plan,” she said. “We will work according to his advice.” Asked about how the next SAR administration could follow through with the city’s own five-year plan, Lee said the focus of the development initiatives would always be geared towards helping the country achieve its policy targets. Fellow NPC deputy and finance-sector lawmaker Ronick Chan said Ding also called for vigilance in maintaining financial stability, which is vital for Hong Kong. “In terms of the current financial development, we have a lot of virtual asset products to be introduced in Hong Kong and also the wider application of artificial intelligence in Hong Kong,” Chan said “[Ding] reminded us to be mindful of the current development, and we must be vigilant [with regards to] the financial stability for Hong Kong.” Other issues discussed at the meeting included the recent Legco elections, the Wang Fuk Court blaze and “important national security cases”, said other NPC deputies who were at the meeting. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK 'keeping eye on Middle East to safeguard markets'](#) (2026-03-07 06:35)

The government will take the necessary action and introduce measures to safeguard market stability as geopolitical hostilities escalate in the Middle East, according to Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury Christopher Hui. Speaking on an RTHK radio programme on Saturday, he said authorities would monitor the situation closely and respond in a timely manner, acknowledging the Middle East’s critical role in global energy supplies. “Everyone is very concerned about the conflict in the Middle East because its continuation will have an impact on the real economy and other aspects. We are continuously monitoring this closely,” Hui said. “In fact, this moment precisely highlights Hong Kong’s role as a safe harbour. From the perspective of policy foresight and stability, this is an advantage amid major global changes.” Hui also addressed the immediate impact of the Middle East conflict on financial markets, with Hong Kong stocks having experienced declines alongside other Asian markets. He attributed this volatility to rising global uncertainty, describing the stock market as a “thermometer” that naturally reflects prevailing conditions. Amid these challenges, Hui reaffirmed the government’s commitment to its core duties. “As the government, regardless of the changes, we must do the right thing and do what we ought to do,” he said. “This includes continuously maintaining market stability while simultaneously introducing different measures to develop our market.” Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK's safety a big draw for overseas talent](#) (2026-03-07 05:39)

Secretary for Labour and Welfare Chris Sun has highlighted Hong Kong’s stable and secure environment as a growing competitive advantage in the global race for talent, particularly amid

the escalating conflict in the Middle East. Speaking on a Commercial Radio programme on Saturday, he said that against the current backdrop of geopolitical instability, Hong Kong's unique strengths were set to become increasingly prominent, both in the immediate future and over the medium to long term. Drawing on recent experience, Sun noted that feedback from newcomers consistently pointed to security as a top reason for their choosing the city. "One of Hong Kong's advantages that is frequently mentioned is safety," he said. "In addition to our strong educational resources and diverse opportunities, safety is a crucial factor – often ranked first or second – in their considerations." A secure and stable environment, Sun said, is valued immensely by global professionals. "With the shift in events, the importance of safety is growing," he said. "From that perspective, both my team and I believe that this enhances our ability to draw talent, not only from the Middle East but from around the world." While acknowledging that relocation decisions take time due to family and other considerations, the labour chief expressed confidence that the city's reputation as a safe environment would greatly amplify its ability to attract international professionals. Sun also revealed that, after three years of focused work, approximately 270,000 talents had arrived in Hong Kong through various talent schemes, injecting fresh momentum into the economy and yielding encouraging results. Among these, he said, the Top Talent Pass Scheme accounted for about 40 percent of arrivals. Sun added that the scheme boasts an application renewal rate of approximately 54 percent and a success rate of nearly 95 percent. The majority of these top-tier professionals are engaged in business and trade, he said, followed by the finance sector. A significant portion of these new arrivals, he added, is also contributing to innovation and technology, with one in every six new arrivals working in that field. Sun emphasised that these individuals were contributing to tech innovations and diversifying Hong Kong's economic development. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [HK households face power bill hike as fuel costs rise](#) (2026-03-07 04:43)

Hong Kong households may soon face higher electricity bills, as the conflict in the Middle East ties up oil and liquefied natural gas supplies and pushes up fuel costs. Speaking to reporters after a Commercial Radio programme, Billy Mak, an associate economics professor at Baptist University, said electricity bills in Hong Kong reflect fuel costs through the Fuel Adjustment Clause. "Yesterday, the oil price was about US\$90 per barrel. This is pretty high because a month ago, the oil price was just about US\$50 to US\$60," Mak said. "So in the near future, we can foresee that our electricity prices will increase because the fuel cost adjustment account will increase," he added, referring to the monthly tariff adjustment. The clause reflects the difference between the projected and actual fuel costs for Hong Kong's two electricity providers, Hongkong Electric and CLP Power. Mak warned the cost of a barrel could surge to US\$100 or even US\$150, saying that when the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out four years ago, oil hit US\$120 per barrel. Oil prices have risen about 30 percent this week. About 20 percent of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas supplies are shipped through the Strait of Hormuz between Iran and Oman. Meanwhile, Chairman of the Hong Kong Shippers' Council Peter Hui told reporters that air-freight costs had increased by at least 20 to 30 percent due to the Middle East

conflict, especially since airports in Dubai and Qatar are vital transshipment hubs for shipments from Asia to European countries. Import and export sector lawmaker Tommy Chung, though, was more optimistic. Also speaking after the same programme, he said that even though the conflict was a hindrance to traders in the short run, he believed it would be business as usual once hostilities ended. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [No licence issued for alleged Kowloon Tong dorm](#) (2026-03-07 04:34)

The Home Affairs Department (HAD) says a mainland organisation, which media reports allege is running a student dormitory without authorisation, does not hold a bedspace apartment licence. The organisation, Gleam Haven, in a recent social media post, said it was offering 60 bed spaces for students who had just arrived in Hong Kong at premises on Waterloo Road in Kowloon Tong. Regulations require any flat with at least 12 bed spaces to be licensed prior to operation, unless managed by a registered school. HAD said Gleam Haven had not made any applications. HAD said the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) has stepped up inspections of premises that claim to be student dormitories and boarding apartments. HAD said OLA had conducted around 3,000 checks between 2025 and January 30 this year, and that it had pressed charges against eight operators over unlicensed bedspace apartments between 2021 and 2025. All eight were convicted. The Education Bureau earlier said the Kowloon Tong premises were neither registered nor provisionally registered as a school. It also said it had not received an application from the organisation to operate a school at the site. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Legco urged to help better executive-led system](#) (2026-03-07 04:04)

Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang has asked the Legislative Council to come up with practical ways to better implement the executive-led political system in Hong Kong. He made the remarks at a meeting on Saturday during which Hong Kong's sole delegate to the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee Starry Lee said Legco plays an important role in carrying out executive-led governance. Ding urged Lee, the Legco president, to lead lawmakers on the matter. "The Legislative Council, in particular, has much to offer under the topic of executive-led governance, with ample room for implementation, exploration, and theoretical research," he said. "I hope that during the eighth Legco term, Lee will lead the legislature to explore, study and put into practice such an issue to yield more practical results that are in line with Hong Kong's actual situation and the central government's requirements." Other Beijing officials who were present at the meeting with SAR deputies to the NPC include Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office; Xu Qifang, the office's executive deputy director; and Zhou Ji, who heads the liaison office. The meeting came a day after the vice premier met Hong Kong and Macao members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, where he had also said they shared a duty to better implement the executive-led governing system. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Three arrested over Wang Fuk Court theft](#) (2026-03-06 14:15)

Police said on Friday that they've arrested three renovation workers for allegedly stealing jewellery from a unit at fire-ravaged Wang Fuk Court. Officers said they became suspicious about the three men, aged between 32 and 38, who were carrying out reinforcement works inside a unit of Wang Tai House on Thursday. Brian Chung, Assistant District Commander of Tai Po, said the workers were arrested after seven pieces of jewellery, worth around HK\$90,000, were found on them. "It is believed they stole the items from the unit that they were working in. Police arrested the trio for suspected theft," Chung said. "Officers have contacted the tenant of the unit, who confirmed ownership of the jewellery." Chung stressed there are security measures in place to monitor those who work in Wang Fuk Court. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK women's football team returns home after Dubai exit](#) (2026-03-06 13:57)

The SAR's women's football team returned to Hong Kong on Friday after pulling out of a tournament in Dubai amid rising tensions in the Middle East. The squad was initially stranded in Dubai, but they flew to Bangkok on Wednesday. Captain Ma Chak shun thanked the Football Association of Hong Kong, China and the Immigration Department for their help, saying she's glad all players and staff are home safe. "It's an unforgettable experience. In Hong Kong, we've never experienced any real threat to our lives. Now we're back, we will cherish each other more. To safely return to HK, we feel fortunate and happy," she said. In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, confirmed the team's decision to pull out of the Pink Ladies Cup 2026, saying their safety is the top priority. The squad had originally been scheduled to return to Hong Kong on March 8. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- [Three arrested in bid to rob forex duo of HK\\$10m](#) (2026-03-06 10:36)

Three men have been arrested for conspiracy to rob after two people carrying HK\$10 million were held up at knifepoint at Sheung Wan MTR Station in the morning on Friday. Superintendent Lo Ka-chun from the police's organised crime and triad bureau said the robbery attempt occurred after two victims had exchanged yuan and US dollars for Hong Kong dollars at a foreign exchange shop on Hillier Street in Sheung Wan. Police officers, waiting nearby as part of a stakeout following a tip-off, subdued two suspects on the spot. Another suspect, a driver who was waiting in a car nearby, was also arrested. Lo said all three suspects, aged between 19 and 31, were detained for investigations. The two victims, who were relatives, are residents of Macao and Hong Kong. One of them was in a stable condition after being sent to Queen Mary Hospital with an injury on the left hand, Lo said. "It has come to the attention of the police that there have been three robberies involving foreign currency exchange outlets in recent months, in which customers of these shops have been robbed," he said, with the two earlier robberies also happening in Sheung Wan. "The police attach great importance to solving these cases and has used intelligence-led operations to that end. "Using surveillance cameras installed as part of the SmartView programme, officers were able to collect important evidence to crack these cases." Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Top advisers urged to do more for executive-led system](#) (2026-03-06 09:19)

Henry Tang, a Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Standing Committee member, said on Friday Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang had encouraged Hong Kong delegates to the top political advisory body to contribute more in advancing executive-led governance in the city. The former SAR chief secretary was speaking after taking part in a meeting between Ding and CPPCC deputies from Hong Kong and Macao during the annual “Two Sessions” in Beijing. Tang noted that Ding singled out for mention several significant events that happened in Hong Kong over the past year, including a Legislative Council election turnout that was higher than the previous one and the national security trial of Apple Daily founder Jimmy Lai. On the Wang Fuk Court fire that claimed 168 lives in November, Ding said the SAR government had “properly handled the aftermath”, according to Tang. He also said the vice premier outlined five expectations for CPPCC deputies. One is to offer further support to the SAR chief executive and the government in providing executive-led governance. “The vice premier did say quite a bit about how CPPCC members can play an active and positive role in the executive-led government of Hong Kong,” Tang said. “This role is demonstrated by the CPPCC members [having] in the past always contributed to the development of the mainland and we will continue to do so in many areas... the CPPCC members can continue to play that role in taking that lead and participate in the process.” Tang added that people can also show their support for the executive-led system by backing the government. Other expectations Ding conveyed, Tang said, included ensuring a smooth subsector election for the Election Committee this year; supporting Hong Kong’s prosperity and financial stability and accelerating the development of Northern Metropolis; and safeguarding national security to make sure future governments are led by patriots. Ding also said CPPCC delegates should be actively involved with the 15th Five-Year Plan, Tang said. “I think the most important point was that Hong Kong must grasp the opportunities presented by the 15th Five-Year Plan,” Tang said. Using shipping as an example, Tang said some people might think it was a sunset industry in Hong Kong given the steady decline in shipping volumes over the past few years. He stressed that a lot of shipping-related matters involved opportunities in financial and professional services that Hong Kong could seize, as the 15th Five-Year Plan explored new development fields for the shipping industry. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK should step up N Metropolis development: Ding](#) (2026-03-06 09:03)

Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang outlined the need for Hong Kong to develop innovation and technology and the Northern Metropolis, according to local delegates of the nation's top political advisory body. Hong Kong members of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), including CPPCC Standing Committee member Jonathan Choi, told RTHK that a two-hour meeting on Friday between Ding and delegates from Hong Kong and Macao covered the SAR’s high-quality development, among other matters. Choi quoted the vice premier as saying that while Hong Kong excels in finance, the city has to build an international innovation and technology hub. “The Northern Metropolis is an area of concern for [Ding], and [he] wishes that we can... connect with the Greater Bay Area, Qianhai, Nansha and Hetao,” he said. Choi, who chairs the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, also said that among the

directives were for Hong Kong to align with the national Five-Year Plan, and that it is a shared duty to implement the executive-led governing system. “He hoped that the business community, CPPCC members, and people from all sectors of society would support the SAR government and the chief executive under the executive-led system, to govern Hong Kong well and maintain its prosperity and stability,” Choi said. Fellow CPPCC delegate and former president of the Law Society, Melissa Pang, said promoting patriotism and safeguarding national security were also mentioned at the meeting with the vice premier.

“There are external forces remaining in Hong Kong. We must stay vigilant and prevent foreign interference. We will take resolute and effective actions,” Pang said. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Most childless women reluctant to start families](#) (2026-03-06 08:34)

A new survey has found that a majority of Hong Kong women of childbearing age, who do not have any offspring, remain reluctant to have children, citing financial pressures, housing constraints and career priorities as key factors for their hesitation. The poll, conducted online in February by the Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions, surveyed 550 childless women aged between 18 and 45. Around 60 percent of the respondents said they had no intention of having children while others would only consider having, at most, one or two. Financial considerations and housing problems topped the list of obstacles, followed by age related and work related concerns, the survey found. Among women aged 36 to 45 who did not plan to have children, around one third cited physiological factors while age was a decisive consideration in the refusal by the rest. Career development featured frequently as a reason to delay or forego having children among women earning more than HK\$50,000 a month. Childcare subsidies topped the list of incentives for most of the respondents at over 90 percent, and that was followed by enhanced tax relief and longer paid childcare leave. Federation chairman Lam Chun-sing said there was an increasing need for support measures as having two or more babies would exact a financial burden on both the grassroots and the middle class. “We hope that the government can provide long-term support for them because promoting childbirth is a long-term, not just a short-term, policy or part of one or two promotional efforts,” he said. The federation urged the government to strengthen fertility-support measures through co-operative efforts with mainland medical institutions or funding for egg-freezing. It also called for stronger childcare and after-school support, including more nursery places, a higher subsidy for parents and extending the newborn baby bonus scheme, which is available up until October. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Judges 'delivered flawless ruling in Jimmy Lai case'](#) (2026-03-06 05:59)

A Beijing official said Hong Kong's judges handed down the right judgement in the case involving Jimmy Lai, founder of the now-defunct Apple Daily. Sun Qingye, deputy head of the Office for Safeguarding National Security, made the remarks on the sidelines of the ongoing Two Sessions in Beijing, after Lai was sentenced to 20 years in prison on three national security-related charges last month. Sun, also a delegate to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, told RTHK that the judges in Lai's case should not be subject to

sanctions imposed by foreign nations. "The judges handed down the ruling based on his criminal acts in accordance with the National Security Law. Therefore, they made a very good judgement. I think there weren't any flaws," he said. Sun also said he's not worried about news sanctions that may be imposed by foreign countries on Hong Kong and mainland officials. He expressed confidence in the situation in Hong Kong now that the National Security Law and Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, enacted in line with Article 23 of the Basic Law, are in force. "I believe Hong Kong's national security situation will be even better, with the safeguards becoming increasingly robust," Sun said. "In the coming five years, as long as the SAR adheres to the National Security Law and Article 23, I have full confidence [in the city's national security]." Sun also said Hong Kong should further enhance financial, technology as well as cyber security in the future to protect national security. Meanwhile, Lai's lawyer said on Friday he would not lodge an appeal against his conviction and 20-year prison sentence. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [Family of deceased fireman receives more than HK\\$6m](#) (2026-03-06 04:25)

The government announced on Friday that it had disbursed HK\$6.15 million to the family of the firefighter who died while battling the Wang Fuk Court blaze last November. Senior fireman Ho Wai-ho, 37, was one of 168 people who lost their lives in the Tai Po inferno. The grant was approved by the Committee on Financial Assistance for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others. Its chairman, labour and welfare minister Chris Sun, described Ho as demonstrating exceptional courage and a high degree of gallantry to save and protect other people's lives. "We deeply mourn the loss of such an excellent and devoted public servant," he said in a statement. "The grant represents the government's recognition of the late Mr Ho's gallantry and selflessness of the highest order." The government said the current range of grants offered under the scheme is between HK\$6.15 million and HK\$12.3 million. It went on to say that grants are worked out according to a formula with reference to the age of the deceased, normal retirement age, as well as the median monthly employment earnings in Hong Kong at the time. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Executive-led system 'needs support from everyone'](#) (2026-03-06 03:59)

Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang has stressed that the executive-led political system in Hong Kong is "not a matter that concerns only the chief executive" and that truly implementing the governing principle is not an easy task. The senior Beijing official also told Hong Kong and Macao members of the nation's top political advisory body on Friday that executive-led governance required strong understanding from SAR officials of their leadership roles in the territories. The remarks came in a meeting between Ding, a Politburo Standing Committee member, and the delegates of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) during the ongoing "Two Sessions" in Beijing. "The actual implementation of the [executive-led system] is not an easy task," he said. "It requires the chief executive and the government to strengthen their sense that they lead the SAR. "It also requires co-operation and support from all aspects of society, including the legislative and judicial organs. "The

executive-led system is not a matter that concerns only the chief executive, it is also the collective responsibility of the Hong Kong and Macao governments, members of the public and all sectors of society.” The director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, Xia Baolong, and CPPCC vice-chairman and former SAR chief executive Leung Chun-ying were among those present at the meeting. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['Get guardians accredited for non-local students'](#) (2026-03-06 03:44)

The principal of a school with a semi-boarding programme on Friday said the government should get guardians accredited to help tackle potential problems arising from an expected increase in the number of non-local students coming to study in the city. The government has approved 48 Direct Subsidy Scheme schools to increase the number and size of their classes in order to take in more non-local students with visas starting in the next academic year. Speaking on RTHK, Samuel Cheng from United Christian College (Kowloon East), also said there was a high demand for student hostels due to the expected influx, but more than 30 of the schools that had been given the green light for class expansion do not have dormitories. He said Hong Kong needs to get guardians accredited to help monitor boarders. "For instance, universities and tertiary institutions can set up guardianship accreditation programmes, so as to allow those who wish to host non-local students studying in Hong Kong to understand how they should take care of them and become an accredited guardian through such programmes," he said. Cheng's school has been operating a dormitory for over a decade. He said that it is vital for student hostels, which are privately run and not managed by actual schools, to ensure the needs of these minors are met and their living environment, as well as matters such as curfew and tutorial sessions, are handled properly. If they are unable to address these issues, they should not be open for business, the principal said. Cheng, who is also the external affairs secretary of the Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council, went on to say that dorm operators have to address students' psychological needs, as they can be homesick while struggling with the new academic system. On a more advanced level, dorm operators should also arrange activities to help students adapt to the living and learning environments in Hong Kong. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [TKO Hospital probes patient's death after surgery](#) (2026-03-06 03:38)

Tseung Kwan O Hospital has launched a probe into the death of an 85-year-old patient after surgery. According to the Hospital Authority, the patient, who had colon cancer, underwent a transverse colostomy on February 7 to relieve an intestinal obstruction. The procedure involves creating a surgical opening, known as a stoma, in the abdomen to allow waste to leave the body. The stoma was intended to be placed in the transverse colon. Following the surgery, the patient was admitted to the intensive care unit before being transferred to a general surgical ward. On February 16, she was moved to Haven of Hope Hospital for rehabilitation, where her vital signs remained stable. However, medical staff noted that the stoma continued to produce a relatively high output. On March 1, the patient began experiencing abdominal pain, low blood pressure and a rapid heartbeat. She was transferred back to the surgical ward at Tseung Kwan

O Hospital the following day for further treatment. An emergency CT scan conducted on March 3 revealed that the stoma was located in the stomach, rather than the intended position in the transverse colon. Hospital officials reported that the patient then developed severe dehydration and supraventricular tachycardia, a condition characterised by a sudden acceleration in heart rate. The patient required cardioversion and medication before being transferred back to the intensive care unit. As her condition worsened, medical staff consulted with her family and agreed not to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The patient passed away that evening from multiple organ failure. The hospital expressed deep sorrow over the incident and confirmed that staff have already met the patient's family to offer a detailed explanation and an apology. The hospital said it has also implemented immediate measures to enhance relevant surgical training and reminded medical staff to maintain vigilant postoperative monitoring. A root-cause analysis panel will conduct a thorough investigation, with a comprehensive report and improvement recommendations expected within eight weeks. The hospital has pledged to maintain close communication with the family and provide necessary support. The case has also been referred to the coroner for follow-up. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Govt works to get stranded HK people home safely](#) (2026-03-05 13:45)

The Immigration Department said on Thursday that it's doubled the manpower of a unit responsible for helping Hong Kong people stranded in the Middle East because of the Iran war. Those who require assistance can call the hotline, 852-1868. The department said on social media that it set up an emergency command centre soon after the conflict broke out, and the unit has been giving stranded residents advice regarding flight arrangements and itineraries. It said officers have been offering help through staying in close liaison with the Commissioner's Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the SAR, Chinese embassies and consulates overseas, as well as the local tourism sector regulator. "The Director of Immigration, Benson Kwok, visited the 1868 hotline centre today for an inspection and listened to a briefing, while encouraging colleagues to keep working hard to help stranded Hong Kong people depart as soon as possible," the department said. It added that as airports in the region gradually resume limited operations, the centre will stay in contact with the hundreds of Hongkongers and help them return home. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- [Report responds to global challenges: NPC deputies](#) (2026-03-05 13:01)

Local National People's Congress (NPC) deputies have hailed a government work report unveiled by the country's leaders, saying it is effective in responding to external challenges. Beijing has set an economic growth target of 4.5 percent to 5 percent for the year. Ronick Chan, a Hong Kong member and lawmaker, said setting a range for the nation's GDP growth target allows for more flexibility in implementing fiscal and monetary policies. "As we all know, the international situation is complex and ever-changing, and setting a single target may make the country's policies passive," Chan said. "Having a range can set a base with the lower limit, while having the upper limit as a goal to work towards." Fellow NPC deputy Priscilla Leung said the work report – delivered by Premier Li Qiang – not only outlines the direction of

developments at home, but also carries “huge international value” . “Under the uncertain international economic and political situation in the world, China has provided a very practical work report together with an international strategic development for humankind,” Leung said. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- [RTHK, Malaysia station sign MoU to boost collaboration](#) (2026-03-05 09:33)

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) has taken another step in expanding its regional partnerships, signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Malaysia’s Ministry of Communications on Thursday to enhance media collaboration and foster cultural exchange. In a statement, the Hong Kong broadcaster said the agreement focuses on several core areas of cooperation, which include joint productions aimed at showcasing the cultural and tourism highlights of both the SAR and Malaysia, with the goal of encouraging more visitors between the two destinations. The signing ceremony took place at the headquarters of Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) in Kuala Lumpur and was officiated by Director of Broadcasting Angelina Kwan and RTM Director-General Ashwad Ismail. During her visit to Malaysia, Kwan held discussions with Ismail to explore future avenues for collaboration. Talks covered potential programme exchanges, co-productions and talent development initiatives. These efforts, the statement said, are expected to strengthen people-to-people ties under the Belt and Road Initiative and deepen cultural connections between Hong Kong and the Asean region. Kwan emphasised RTHK’s commitment to supporting government efforts in building closer ties with Asean, noting that the public broadcaster is actively expanding cooperation with media organisations across the region. With the signing of MoUs with broadcasting bodies in both Indonesia and Malaysia, RTHK is bolstering its international communication capabilities. These agreements are part of a broader strategy to elevate Hong Kong’s media profile and reinforce its cultural presence within the Belt and Road region, Southeast Asia and beyond. RTHK is currently in discussions with other Asean media organisations with the aim of further deepening regional collaboration. Looking ahead, RTHK said it would continue to leverage the SAR’s unique position as a bridge between the mainland and the world in telling the stories of the nation and the city while promoting Chinese culture on the global stage. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Cabbie, woman passenger killed in collision with truck](#) (2026-03-05 08:27)

Two people have died following a vehicular collision near Hong Kong Golf Club in Fanling. Police received reports at 11.30am on Thursday of a collision between a taxi and a 16-tonne truck on Fan Kam Road. The collision, which saw the taxi pile into the side of the truck, left the 56-year-old cabbie and a female passenger, 65, trapped inside the vehicle. Firefighters managed to extricate the two. Both of them were pronounced dead at Northern Hospital. The truck driver, 35, was arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving causing death and was being detained for further enquiries. _____ Last updated: 2026-03-05 HKT 18:11 Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK cruises ahead towards green fuel supply chain](#) (2026-03-05 08:13)

Hong Kong has been building a comprehensive supply chain for green fuel since rolling out the Action Plan on Green Maritime Fuel Bunkering in November 2024, Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan said. Officiating at the first green methanol bunkering ceremony on Thursday, Chan said the SAR had established itself as a port for regular operations and bunkering involving liquefied natural gas and biofuel. "Last year, we carried out 16 bunkering operations for liquefied natural gas and 110 operations for biofuels, involving up to 220,000 tonnes of fuel-loading capacity for marine vessels," she said. "We will focus on green methanol next to provide global shipping companies with a comprehensive supply chain and trading environment, with the aim of offering the best solution for different stakeholders in the international shipping industry." To achieve the goal, Chan said, the Marine Department had already released a set of working guidelines on methanol bunkering. She added the relevant tax incentive policies had gained support from the Legislative Council. Sinopec Hong Kong, the company providing green methanol for the ceremony, said it was planning to build a storage facility for the fuel in the city, after it became the first company in the SAR to blend and provide biofuel in July – with the amount supplied so far exceeding 50,000 tonnes. Clean energy storage facility provider, CIMC Enric, said Hong Kong could offer a great opportunity for the development of green methanol bunkering despite limitations in operational costs and space. It was also confident that the city's competitiveness in biofuels would continue to rise in the future. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['HK should strategise to keep its doctoral graduates'](#) (2026-03-05 07:03)

Hong Kong should strengthen its strategies for retaining doctoral graduates so as to allow them to pursue their academic careers in Hong Kong more easily. This would consolidate the city's leading position among global tertiary education hubs, a new study by Hang Seng University suggested. The study conducted between September 2025 and February 2026 draws on comparative policy analysis and in-depth interviews with 50 doctoral students and university leaders in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and the UK. Provost and vice-president of the university Joshua Mok said the study shows Hong Kong's immigration policies and post-study work opportunities are the most decisive factors influencing international doctoral students' choices. Currently, non-local university graduates can stay in Hong Kong for two years without a job offer. Mok suggested lengthening this period to attract more students and graduates to Hong Kong. "If the government is very keen to retain those talent trained in Hong Kong for some selected area of high technology, which Hong Kong and also our country really needs, then the government may be more open in retaining them... maybe [for] a longer period of time for them to stay in Hong Kong for [the] further enhancement of the research," Mok said. He also urged the government to deepen local research investment, promote the strengths of local doctoral programmes, collaborate with mainland universities and offer housing and living cost support to graduate students. Mok noted students were also concerned about geopolitical tensions affecting research collaboration, mobility, travel opportunities and visa process when deciding on study destinations. Amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, Mok anticipated more students from the Middle East would come to Hong Kong and other Asian regions for

their studies instead of the US due to existing tensions. "My experience of working with colleagues and students coming from the Belt and Road and Middle East is that they're very hard working... if we can attract them and retain them, it would be to the advantage of Hong Kong as a hub in future," he said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK to set broad, strategic five-year plan: CE](#) (2026-03-05 05:39)

Chief Executive John Lee has pledged to formulate a “broad, strategic and forward-looking” five-year plan for Hong Kong, which is expected to be completed within this year. The city’s leader attended Thursday’s opening of the National People’s Congress in Beijing, during which the country unveiled its development targets for the 15th Five-Year Plan and mentioned the SAR in the work report. Lee, on social media, said his administration will unwaveringly implement One Country, Two Systems, and unite all sectors to further deepen reforms and make better use of the city’s advantages. He also vowed to lead SAR authorities in aligning with the nation’s 15th Five-Year Plan. “We will make a more comprehensive, precise and detailed strategic deployment of key development areas and formulate the first broad, strategic and forward-looking five-year plan for Hong Kong,” Lee wrote. The chief executive said officials are committed to building an international innovation and technology centre and bring in more high-value-added industries to settle in the Northern Metropolis. The city will explore emerging markets and deepen international collaboration, Lee added. Edited by Aaron Tam

- ['4.5-5pc growth target a reasonable forecast'](#) (2026-03-05 04:41)

Hong Kong deputies attending the annual “Two Sessions” meetings in Beijing on Thursday voiced support for the country’s economic growth target of between 4.5 percent and five percent this year, saying it was a reasonable forecast given the current geopolitical instability. Henry Tang, former financial secretary and a local Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Standing Committee member, said he was confident the country could meet the target. “I believe the forecast for this year at 4.5 percent to five percent is a reasonable forecast. Last year we achieved five percent growth despite the circumstances being quite challenging,” he said. “It is a reflection and a ratification of the country’s leadership and the party’s leadership. So I am confident that we will be able to achieve the forecast growth.” Local CPPCC delegate and non-executive chairman of HSBC, Peter Wong, also said he believes the growth target is suitable. “Because the economic base is getting larger, a 4.5 percent growth rate is actually very impressive. This indicator is a very solid benchmark, especially given the current state of global instability,” he said. Meanwhile, CPPCC Standing Committee member and mainland economist Justin Lin said he expects steady and sustained growth throughout the 15th Five-Year Plan period. “This can be extrapolated from the growth target of 4.5 percent to 5 percent this year,” he said. “The economy has increased by 10 trillion yuan every year over the past years. I believe this growth rate will continue.” He added that China’s total economic output could “very likely” reach 170-180 trillion yuan in five years. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Li urges HK to contribute to national development](#) (2026-03-05 04:26)

Premier Li Qiang pledged in his annual work report that the central government will fully implement One Country, Two Systems, while reiterating Beijing's resolve to advance the cause of national unification. Li made the remarks at the opening of the annual National People's Congress in Beijing on Thursday. Apart from recapping the government's work in 2025, he also laid down 10 targets for this year. Hong Kong came up numerous times in the 35-page report, most notably in the 10th and final target of "strengthening risk prevention and mitigation, and enhancing security capacity in key areas". "We will resolutely implement the policy of One Country, Two Systems, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong, and the people of Macao administer Macao," the premier read. "And we will see that Hong Kong and Macao are administered by patriots, so as to raise the governance efficiency and foster economic and social development." He also pledged support for the two SARs to integrate into and serve the country's overall development. The report also called for the full integration of technological innovation and industrial innovation, including the construction of a world-class tech hub in the Greater Bay Area. On the Taiwan issue, Li made clear Beijing's position. "We will stay committed to the One-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, resolutely fight against separatist forces aimed at 'Taiwan independence', and oppose external interference so as to promote the peaceful development of cross-strait relations and advance the cause of national reunification," he said. Edited by Cecil Wong

- ['Cognitive gap' among obese key hurdle for action plan](#) (2026-03-05 04:11)

Health and sports experts have welcomed the city's first-ever action plan to tackle rising obesity rates but pointed out that the biggest hurdle isn't just dietary or a lack of exercise but a significant "cognitive gap" where people simply do not realise they are overweight. The three-year strategy, launched on World Obesity Day on Wednesday, aims to curb obesity through a cross-departmental approach built on five key pillars – strengthening health education, fostering a supportive social environment, enhancing healthcare services, adopting a life-course approach to health promotion and continuously monitoring weight trends. Speaking on an RTHK radio programme, Dr Anne Chee, head of the non-communicable disease branch at the Department of Health, said data from a 2022 health survey showed that over half of Hong Kong adults are either overweight or obese. "In Hong Kong, over half of chronic diseases are related to obesity," she said. "Many people with obesity also suffer from diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure. It is very possible that over half of these individuals have these comorbidity issues." However, Chee noted a major disconnect in public perception. "Hong Kong citizens have pretty good self-perception. We see that among overweight individuals, two thirds feel their weight is just right, or even feel that they are too thin," she said. "The downside is that in the past year, many of them haven't done anything to control their weight, so we see a significant perception gap." Chee emphasised that many people might not fully understand how to calculate their body mass index, underscoring the need for intensified public education. The plan distinguishes itself by adopting a "whole-of-government and community approach", she said, adding willpower and clinical care alone cannot solve the obesity crisis and that the broader environment must also support healthy choices. As such, Chee said, the initiative

brings together health services, education, labour safety, public housing management and urban planning, with practical steps including improving access to local services and providing multi-disciplinary support – from nurses and dietitians to occupational therapists – at district health centres. Urban planning will also play a role, with plans to expand exercise infrastructure in public housing estates and new guidelines encouraging pedestrian-friendly waterfronts, cycling paths and building designs that nudge people to use stairs. "We hope that after three years of effort, Hong Kong citizens' knowledge of weight management, including how to manage it, can increase by 10 percent," Chee said. "Our aim, in line with global targets, is to halt the upward trend of obesity – to stop it from rising further." Speaking on the same programme, sports professor Lobo Louie from the Education University welcomed the initiative but warned that changing behaviour patterns was a long game. "The biggest difficulty is that people lack motivation," he said. "There is an interesting analysis from the US. If you buy an exercise bike for home, on average, after three to six months, it will disappear because you've lost motivation, and you've probably started draping clothes over it." He stressed that while the action plan was a positive step, "raising awareness and promoting active behaviour is the crucial strategy in promoting healthy living, especially weight management". Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['Student dorms should be licensed amid rising demand'](#) (2026-03-05 03:43)

A lawmaker on Thursday called on the government to set up a student dormitory licensing system, after media reports alleged that a mainland organisation is operating such a facility without authorisation. The group – Gleam Haven – marketed itself as a trilingual secondary school, located at 101 Waterloo Road in Kowloon Tong, that offers 60 beds for students who have just arrived in Hong Kong. Education sector legislator Tang Fei told RTHK that the closest thing to a student dormitory licence is a bedspace apartment licence. But, noting that many newly-arrived students are not adults, he pointed out that bedspace licences have no guidelines on supporting measures, such as whether or not guests have to have guardians. "Can we set up a student dormitory licence or boarding licence? Certainly, it will be different from those in mainstream schools," he said. "But we can reference them, such as the student-teacher ratio for a housemaster, and whether there is a need for a social worker. This is worth looking into, and stepping up legislation." He went on to say that the government should offer unified licensing to save applicants' time, and believed demand for such services will go up under the "Study in Hong Kong" brand. Shang Hailong, the founding president of the Hong Kong Top Talent Services Association told the same programme that he is concerned about the students' safety as he suspected there are unauthorised works at the Gleam Haven site. He suggested the government should offer more guidelines – such as by taking reference to the hardware requirements similar to those for guesthouses or basic housing units – to schools that wish to set up dormitories for students from outside the territory. The Buildings Department told RTHK that it has found existing and newly built unauthorised structures at the site's courtyard, but they pose no immediate danger. It said a removal notice has been issued to the owners, adding that it will follow up on enforcement actions. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Travellers flying back from Dubai glad to be home](#) (2026-03-04 15:32)

The first Hong Kong-bound flight departing from Dubai since the Middle East conflict broke out landed in the SAR on Wednesday evening. Emirates flight EK380 touched down at Hong Kong International Airport at 9.50pm after flying for nearly seven hours. Among those on board was jockey Karis Teetan, along with his wife and daughter. Teetan said the past few days had been stressful, adding that he was just grateful to be home. “I’ve never felt so good to be home in my whole life,” he said. “It was a bit hectic. Even buying tickets was not easy. We had the Hong Kong Jockey Club team trying to buy us tickets every day because we had to always keep [track of] the schedule of the flights. “And also I had my family with me so it was difficult to actually get three tickets at once.” Teetan recalled that on Saturday night, when the conflict first broke out, was a hectic and terrifying moment. “It was very scary, especially like the first night... We could see the missiles high in the sky, especially on Saturday night we could see a few going through,” he said. A woman surnamed Kwok, who had travelled to Dubai with five others, is also grateful to be back. “I’m very happy. It turns out Hong Kong is the safest place in the world. Coming back to Hong Kong without living in constant fear is just relieving and something I’m deeply grateful for,” she said. A man surnamed Leung, who owns a restaurant in Dubai, said he was thrilled to be back in Hong Kong after waiting several days for a flight. He said this experience would not change his future work plans, and added that he intends to return to the Middle East once the situation de-escalates. Meanwhile, the Football Association of Hong Kong, China said the SAR women’s football team had safely landed in Bangkok and would depart for Hong Kong on Saturday. The squad had been in Dubai for the Pink Ladies Cup 2026 but withdrew from the tournament earlier this week due to safety concerns. The Immigration Department said that as of 5pm, it received inquiries from about 680 Hong Kong residents in the Middle East over flight and travel arrangements. The department said about 100 of them had safely left the region, while others reported that they were in safe locations. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Xia confident in HK setting its own five-year plan](#) (2026-03-04 10:50)

A senior Beijing official has expressed confidence that Hong Kong will formulate a “sound” five-year plan of its own, as the country is set to unveil more policy goals during the Two Sessions meetings in Beijing. Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, met Chief Executive John Lee in the capital on Wednesday. According to a statement from Xia’s office, the Beijing official told the chief executive that the SAR administration had “achieved remarkable results” in every aspect of its work. He praised the city’s officials for their efforts in firmly safeguarding national security and promoting high-quality development. On the nation’s 15th Five-Year Plan, Xia was quoted as saying he believes the SAR government and the whole of society will seize opportunities, focus on the nation’s development, and set the city’s own five-year plan well. He also expressed the hope for the SAR in making full use of its strengths, consolidating its status as an international finance, shipping and trade centre, and accelerating the construction of a global innovation and technology hub. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [NPC delegates 'well-prepared for longer meetings'](#) (2026-03-04 08:13)

Hong Kong delegates to the nation's top legislature body on Wednesday said they are ready and well-prepared for longer meetings this year. The National People's Congress (NPC) will hold its annual session from March 5 to 12, with 11 items on the agenda. Speaking to reporters a day before the session opens, local NPC delegate Ma Fung-kwok pointed out that the agenda for this year is a bit more extensive than in previous years. "This year's meetings are a bit special. The first thing is to review the draft outline of the 15th Five-Year Plan. In addition, there are a few more draft laws to be deliberated, covering areas including the environment, ethnic unity and national development planning. So the meeting time will be a bit longer," he said. Echoing Ma's remarks, another local NPC member, Allen Yeung, said the most important thing for the 35 Hong Kong delegates was to get themselves prepared to rigorously review each item on the agenda. "We will have small group discussions every day to review all items on the agenda... As this year marks the beginning of the 15th Five-Year Plan, everyone will likely focus on how to further improve the plan," he said. Yeung, who is a former government Chief Information Officer, added that as Hong Kong is set to formulate its first-ever five-year plan to better integrate into the national development, he personally would drive forward initiatives to transform the SAR into an international innovation and technology hub. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['More measures to benefit HK in new 5-year plan'](#) (2026-03-04 07:28)

There will be more measures benefiting the SAR in the country's 15th Five-Year Plan, according to a spokesman of the National People's Congress (NPC) which will open in Beijing on Thursday. At a press conference ahead of the annual NPC meeting, Lou Qinjian said the measures will support the city in leveraging its unique strengths and roles. With the central government's strong backing, he said the SAR government has led society in striving for economic development. The NPC spokesman noted there had been a large number of stock launches on the Hong Kong bourse while a record of more than 10,000 outside firms had set up shop in the SAR. Lou stressed that under the country's latest plans, Beijing supported the city in building an international innovation and technology hub, as well as efforts for both Hong Kong and Macao in attracting global high-end talent. On the mainland economy, the spokesman said China would roll out more measures to boost domestic consumption, after achieving steady GDP growth last year. Lou said more than half of last year's GDP growth came from consumption-based activities. Overall retail sales of consumer goods exceeded 50 trillion yuan for the first time, he said, while double-digit percentage growth was seen in areas such as consumer spending on culture, tourism, recreation and travel. China's gross GDP exceeded 140 trillion yuan, Lou noted, contributing around 30 percent to the world's economic growth. "This year, we will continue expanding domestic demand as a strategic underpinning, vigorously boost consumption, and work to build a strong domestic market," he said. "We will carry out a programme of quality upgrade in the consumer services sector and move faster to cultivate new growth areas in services consumption. We will optimise the trading policy for consumer goods and expand and upgrade goods consumption." He added that efforts would be made to

promote tourist consumption in China, such as organising a series of "Shopping in China" events. Lou said the NPC would vet 11 items during the session that will run from March 5 to 12. He described the draft outline of the 15th Five-Year Plan on the agenda as a major event for the country's politics. Other items to be reviewed include the government's work report and a code on ecology and the environment. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK unveils first weight management action plan](#) (2026-03-04 04:50)

Hong Kong unveiled its first-ever action plan for weight management on Wednesday, marking World Obesity Day with a comprehensive strategy built around five key pillars. These include strengthening health education to boost public understanding of personal weight indicators, fostering a supportive social environment, enhancing healthcare services, adopting a life-course approach to health promotion and continuously monitoring weight trends among citizens. In a statement, the Department of Health said the plan brings together multiple government bureaus and departments to pool resources and strengthen collaboration between Chinese and Western medicine. It sets out 15 specific objectives to be achieved through a variety of initiatives, aiming to drive weight management efforts across the city and support citizens in building a healthier, more vibrant community. Key objectives include promoting healthy eating from market to table, encouraging a culture of physical activity, offering personalised weight management care plans, improving referral mechanisms within primary healthcare and integrating Traditional Chinese Medicine principles through multidisciplinary teams. The action plan will be rolled out over three years with the themes "Raise Awareness", "Positive Changes" and "Maintenance - Part of Life". The department said this phased approach is designed to implement the five strategic directions and 15 objectives in a systematic and progressive manner. Dr Edwin Tsui, controller of the Centre for Health Protection, said the plan seeks to strengthen primary healthcare's role as the "gatekeeper" of public health. By promoting collaboration between Chinese and Western medicine and integrating health data through the "eHealth" platform, the initiative aims to help citizens manage their wellbeing - allowing traditional wisdom and modern evidence-based medicine to complement each other in safeguarding public health. Kicking off the first year under the "Raise Awareness" theme, the government will launch a regularised walking challenge as part of the "10,000 Steps a Day" campaign. Starting March 21, the challenge will be available on the e+Life platform within the "eHealth" mobile app, encouraging the public to explore various themed routes with family and friends and make physical activity a part of daily life. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Middle East conflict sparks fears for supply chain](#) (2026-03-04 04:35)

A shipping sector representative on Wednesday said the industry is worried about the impact to the global supply chain brought by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. "Some customers in Dubai have already asked manufacturers in Southeast Asia to hold dispatches for now as they are worried about the uncertainties," said Peter Hui, chairman of the Hong Kong Shippers' Council. Hui told an RTHK programme that traders will have to make constant changes, such as deciding whether to maintain their production lines or not. He added that the conflict has led

some shipping firms to impose an additional war risk surcharge. Tommy Chung, who represents the import and export sector in Legco, told the same programme that he expects overall shipping costs to rise by 10 percent. He added that changes to shipping routes are extending journey times by at least 10 days. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Mega project will attract state-owned firms, Lee says](#) (2026-03-03 13:31)

Chief Executive John Lee has told mainland officials that he's confident more state-owned enterprises will tap into opportunities in the Northern Metropolis. Lee, who's in Beijing to attend the opening of this year's National People's Congress on Thursday, met Zhang Yuzhuo, chairman of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission. The CE thanked Zhang for the commission's support for the mega infrastructure project. Lee expressed confidence that more state-owned enterprises would tap into opportunities in the Northern Metropolis, making good use of Hong Kong's role under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in connecting with both the mainland and the world and leveraging Hong Kong as a springboard to explore overseas markets. The chief executive also met with the head of the Civil Aviation Administration of China, Song Zhiyong, and said the SAR government will "proactively" align with the 15th Five-Year Plan to seize new opportunities. Lee added his administration will continue to reinforce Hong Kong's top global ranking in cargo throughput and its advantages as a transit hub in the Greater Bay Area, and accelerate the expansion of the SAR's aviation network. Edited by Edmond Fong

- ['Stars aligned' for HK under five-year plan: Xia](#) (2026-03-03 13:10)

A senior Beijing official overseeing Hong Kong affairs has told SAR delegates attending the upcoming "Two Sessions" in the capital that the city will enjoy numerous opportunities under the country's latest five-year plan. Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, met National People's Congress (NPC) and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) members from the two SARs on Tuesday afternoon, a day before the CPPCC opens. In a statement by his office, Xia urged delegates during the closed-door meeting to fully understand the "extraordinary significance" for Hong Kong and Macao under the 15th Five-Year Plan. He called on them to cherish the hard-won situation in the two SARs and focus on the country's top priorities. Those attending the hour-long meeting said Xia noted that "the stars are aligned" for Hong Kong, which has many opportunities under the latest five-year plan. Starry Lee, the city's sole delegate to the NPC Standing Committee, said the meeting centred on Xia's call for members to unite and work together and "to make good use of the 15th Five-Year Plan". "In the meantime, if we implement that, Hong Kong and Macao will result in a better future because we can help our country grow stronger, and at the same time we benefit from all these measures," Lee told reporters. CPPCC delegate Thomas So said the senior Beijing official assured that the city has nothing to worry about in the face of external challenges. "The geopolitical situation is very uncertain, but for Hong Kong, if we are going to do what we are good at, if we are going to commit and do our development, there is nothing that we need to worry about because there are a lot of opportunities for Hong Kong and Macao

coming from the 15th Five-Year Plan,” So said. Fellow CPPCC member Michael Ngai said Xia urged delegates to take the lead in safeguarding national security and preventing external forces from posing a threat to the SAR. Edited by Edmond Fong

- ['Compound caregivers need better support'](#) (2026-03-03 11:33)

Researchers at Lingnan University have called for the introduction of a "care manager" system to help ease the pressure facing caregivers. Research carried out by the university's Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies highlights the plight of what it terms "compound caregivers" – individuals providing daily care for two or more family members, for example those who are caring for ageing parents and young children. Based on 45 in-depth interviews conducted between April 2025 and this January, the study found some respondents describing themselves as being trapped in a "state of being spread too thin" . Many of them said they were "busy from morning to night" and had no time for themselves as they juggled medical appointments and household duties across multiple generations with work commitments, the institute's director Dickson Chan said. The study also cited issues such as insufficient workplace flexibility and mounting financial pressures. Chan said policy support and society's focus are on "single caregivers" – those looking after just one person. The institute is calling for a series of systemic reforms, which includes the introduction of a "care manager" system under which dedicated personnel would act as a single point of contact between caregivers and various government departments over healthcare, rehabilitation and social welfare. "A lot of respondents said they did not know about available services and found it very difficult to go through the application procedures," Chan said. "If there is a care manager who can offer advice and help them find resources, it could quickly help them cope with their caregiving needs." Additional recommendations include establishing regular feedback mechanisms for caregivers, such as standardised annual surveys and consultation platforms, as well as amending labour policies to introduce seven days of leave per year for unpaid caregivers from their jobs. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [Cathay cancels Dubai, Riyadh flights until March 14](#) (2026-03-03 10:19)

Hong Kong's flagship carrier Cathay Pacific on Tuesday said it is suspending all its flights to and from Dubai and Riyadh until March 14 because of the conflict in the Middle East. It called on customers affected who are yet to receive messages from the airline to check the latest status of their booking online. The company said a ticket waiver policy allows customers to rebook, reroute or refund their tickets without the usual fees, and staff will help with re-booking of flights. People who bought tickets via a travel agent or third-party website are advised to contact the companies involved to arrange refunds or flight changes. "We're continuing to monitor the situation closely. Further changes to our flight schedule may be needed in the coming days with the safety of our customers and people being our first priority," a statement from the airline said. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Bay 'on cusp of direct travel with southbound scheme'](#) (2026-03-03 09:08)

A spokesman for China's top political advisory body said on Tuesday the Greater Bay Area was entering a new era of direct cross-boundary travel following the successful rollout of the scheme allowing Guangdong vehicles to drive into Hong Kong. Liu Jieyi, spokesman for the fourth session of the 14th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) national committee, was speaking at a news conference a day before this year's session, which runs until next Wednesday. He said Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao made strong progress in integration last year – co-hosting the 15th National Games, co-ordinating policies and regulations, and staging a major sporting event that showcased the bay's institutional strengths and unity. Liu pointed out that the elderly health care voucher pilot scheme now covered all nine bay cities and that there was a growing number of designated medical institutions serving Hong Kong and Macao residents living and working on the mainland. "In today's Greater Bay Area, roads link the three places, cities blend into one another, and the hearts beat as one. A world-class bay area and globally significant city clusters are emerging rapidly," he said. He said the CPPCC national committee would continue to offer proposals to boost co-operation between Hong Kong, Macao and the mainland and help the two SARs better integrate into and serve the country's overall development. On China's economy, Liu said the country had shown resilience and vitality despite a turbulent external environment and would maintain a positive long-term growth trend. Domestic consumption and tourism figures point to solid economic fundamentals, he added. "While there are still some old issues and new challenges, the Chinese economy enjoys solid fundamentals, plentiful strengths, strong resilience and vast potential. The supporting conditions and overall long-term positive trend remain unchanged," Liu said. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK set for lunar eclipse Tuesday](#) (2026-03-03 08:48)

Hong Kong residents will be able to take in a full lunar eclipse if weather conditions permit on Tuesday, according to the observatory. The eclipse will begin before moonrise, and part of the moon will enter the Earth's umbra by 6.22pm. The total eclipse phase will last for just under an hour, starting at 7.04pm, when the moon will be completely engulfed by the umbra, with the maximum eclipse occurring half an hour later and the moon exiting from the umbra at 8.03pm. The moon will appear dull red during the period. The entire astronomical event will conclude at 10.25pm. The forecaster said locations facing east with no obstructions are ideal for viewing the eclipse, subject to cloud cover and rainfall developments. "Our weather forecast for Tuesday night is mainly cloudy with occasional showers. If there are any coincidence that there are gaps between the clouds, that would make the lunar eclipse visible," said Scientific Officer Wong Yat-chun. "But I would say as of the weather forecast, the probability would be relatively on the low side." Meanwhile, the observatory also said that last month was unseasonably warm due to the generally weaker northeast monsoon over southern China, with Hong Kong recording a monthly mean temperature of 20.1 degrees Celsius – three degrees above normal. Only one cold-weather warning signal was issued during the month, with the mean maximum temperature hitting 22.9 degrees and the mean minimum temperature at 18.1 degrees – 3.5 degrees and 2.8 degrees higher than normal respectively. The hottest day of the month was on

February 16, with the mercury rising to 27.9 degrees in the afternoon, making it the highest on record for Lunar New Year's Eve. This was followed by February 15, which clocked a maximum temperature of 26.9 degrees. The forecaster said the city experienced the warmest winter on record from December 2025 to February 2026, with mean temperatures reaching 19.3 degrees or two degrees above average. Only five cold days were recorded during the season. During the period, the mean maximum temperature was 21.9 degrees and the mean minimum temperature was 17.3 degrees – the highest and second highest on record respectively for this period of the year. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Supercomputing tender award powers N Metropolis hopes](#) (2026-03-03 08:32)

The successful tender of the right to build a supercomputing hub in the Northern Metropolis offers strong encouragement to more enterprises to follow in the footsteps of the mainland company that won the award, according to local industry representatives. The lawmaker representing technology and innovation also said the project would, once the hub came online, offer the artificial intelligence industry a strong shot in the arm, thanks to the expected 36-fold surge in the city's computing power. Their comments came a day after the government announced that it had awarded the tender for a data facility site at Sandy Ridge to the sole bidder, Hong Kong Range Intelligent Computing Technology, in return for payment of a HK\$581 million land premium and HK\$23.8 billion worth of investments. Speaking on an RTHK radio show on Tuesday, Advisory Committee on the Northern Metropolis member Edward Lau said the successful tender marked the first major investment by a private industrial firm in the drive to develop an area linking Hong Kong and Shenzhen. "I think it will give other industrial companies a shot in the arm and let them know that the [government's] industry-oriented model can be successful," he said. "I believe [the tender] can also encourage more industries and enterprises to plan similar projects and invest in the Northern Metropolis." The firm's holding company, Hebei-based Range Intelligent Computing Technology Group, is one of the top enterprises in the country that specialises in developing and operating high-end data facilities. Under the terms of the tender award, the company must complete its investments over the first three years and begin operations within 42 months. The project is envisaged to raise the city's computing power to 180,000 petaflops by 2032, a level that is 36 times the current capacity. Technology lawmaker Duncan Chiu said on the same radio show that the long-anticipated move would offer a great boost to an artificial intelligence industry that was highly dependant on data-processing capacity. "In fact, if we talk about companies that handle large-scale computing power – for example firms that are dealing with meteorological data or data for social-media platforms – they consume some 20,000 to 30,000 petaflops on average," he said. "So if we want to have more such large-scale computing models to move to Hong Kong, we must have the computing power first. It'll provide one key reason for AI teams to settle in Hong Kong." Chiu also pointed to the scarcity of such supercomputing hubs, which are different from the conventional data centres and have more sophisticated and tailored construction layout. "There are actually not many supercomputing centres, even in China or the United States. Some might be used by tech firms such as Google or the mainland's [original version of]

TikTok," he said. In a statement, the Hong Kong Productivity Council said the site would help attract tech firms and talent and facilitate the city in ushering in its own "Silicon Valley moment". Separately, Ryan Ip, vice president of think tank Our Hong Kong Foundation said the adoption of a "two-envelope" approach to the tender exercise – under which a weighting of 70 percent was given to the non-premium proposal and 30 percent to the premium proposal – marked "a milestone". "This approach is more effective as it ensures that the project closely aligns with the government's industrial policy orientation, allowing strategic and high-quality investments to stand out," he said, adding that such an approach should be used in more future tenders. CLP Power said in a statement that it would fully co-operate with the government and support the SAR in transforming the area into a regional data centre hub. It added that it would keep in close communication with the company to understand the planned project's electricity needs, while offering tailored solutions, adding that it's confident of meeting the Northern Metropolis' higher power demands. Located to the east of Lo Wu, the Sandy Ridge Data Facility Cluster site covers an area of over 110,000 square metres. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK women's footballers withdraw from Dubai tournament](#) (2026-03-03 07:09)

The SAR's women's football team have withdrawn from an ongoing football tournament in Dubai due to increased tensions in the Middle East. The team arrived in Dubai for the Pink Ladies Cup 2026 on February 25 and were originally scheduled to return to Hong Kong on March 8. A statement released by the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, on Tuesday said it has informed organisers that the team will withdraw and that their safety is the top priority. The association also said the team have suspended all outings and are remaining in their hotels to ensure personal safety. It added that communication will be maintained with the team to understand their needs and make appropriate arrangements accordingly. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [CE calls for 'constructive' ideas at Two Sessions](#) (2026-03-03 04:23)

Chief Executive John Lee said on Tuesday he looked forward to “constructive suggestions and proposals” on ways Hong Kong could serve the nation’s development during the upcoming “Two Sessions” meetings in Beijing, as he arrived in the capital. Upon landing in the morning, he was greeted by officials from the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office. Writing on social media, Lee expressed the hope for National People’s Congress and Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference delegates to offer their thoughts on promoting the city’s integration with and contribution to national development efforts as well as the high-quality development of the country and the SAR. “This year marks the start of the 15th Five-Year Plan,” he said. “I look forward to each and every delegate actively putting forward constructive suggestions and proposals from different fields and perspectives during the ‘Two Sessions’.” Lee will attend the opening of the National People’s Congress on Thursday. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HK delegates set off for Two Sessions in Beijing](#) (2026-03-03 03:58)

Hong Kong delegates on Tuesday set off for Beijing to attend the Two Sessions meetings which start on Wednesday. Members of the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) will be joining the country's largest annual political gatherings in the capital this week. Speaking at the airport, Starry Lee, Hong Kong's sole delegate to the National People's Congress Standing Committee, said this year's Two Sessions are of special significance, as it marks the opening year of the nation's 15th Five-Year Plan. "I also look forward to Hong Kong, under the leadership of the Chief Executive and the SAR government, formulating its first-ever five-year plan with joint efforts from all sectors of society. This will allow our development to align with, integrate into, and serve the overall national development, enabling Hong Kong to play a more significant role in this regard," she said. Lee, who is also the Legislative Council president, said she has prepared ten proposals for the Two Sessions, which include consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre, as well as promoting and normalising the issue of Renminbi (RMB) sovereign bonds in Hong Kong. Fellow lawmaker and local NPC member Stanley Ng said Legco will also establish a working committee to actively align with the 15th Five-Year Plan. The FTU president also outlined some of his proposals for the Two Sessions. "Personally, I will focus on enhancing Hong Kong's AI computing capabilities and ensuring a stable power supply for them. To this end, I propose importing electricity generated from environmentally friendly sources from the mainland, as a stable green energy supply is of strategic significance," he said. "Furthermore, I aim to facilitate smoother cross-border travel for personnel by further optimising the network coverage of the high-speed rail." Another local NPC deputy and lawmaker Ronick Chan, for his part, suggested the People's Bank of China and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority increase the size of the RMB business liquidity facility from the current 200 billion yuan to 250 billion yuan or even more. He also pointed out that this year's Two Sessions will last one or two days longer to review several important draft laws, including the draft environmental code, the draft law on promoting ethnic unity and progress, and the draft law on national development planning. Local CPPCC deputy and chairman of the Liberal Party, Peter Shiu, called for the establishment of a platform in Hong Kong to bridge the mainland's domestic product standards with international requirements. By aligning "national standards" to the global market through Hong Kong, mainland products can be easily and smoothly brought to all parts of the world with fewer hurdles, he said. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Travel agency cancels Middle East tours until Mar 10](#) (2026-03-03 03:40)

A local travel agency on Tuesday said it cancelled all tours to the Middle East until March 10, due to the ongoing conflict in the region. Yuen Chun-ning, chief executive of WWPKG told an RTHK programme that 20 Hong Kong travellers from two tour groups in Dubai will likely be stranded, even though they were supposed to be back by Thursday. But he said there was good news for the travellers, who had earlier been confined to their hotels. "There was good news. Because Dubai announced yesterday that they can go out for sightseeing and it is safe to go to the city centre today. This was better than during Saturday evening to Monday morning when they could not go out and had to stay indoors," he said. Many of them are concerned about

when they can return home, given that many of the airports in the Middle East remain closed. He said that depending on the situation, the agency will decide whether or not to call off more tours after March 10. It has also allowed travellers who have booked Middle East tours scheduled for the Easter holiday to opt for other destinations, Yuen added. Wing On Travel told RTHK that 22 Hong Kong travellers taking part in their tour in Dubai were also stranded. But they did not comment on whether they would cancel upcoming Middle East tours. Speaking on Commercial Radio, a Hongkonger who is currently stranded in Dubai said that he had seen missiles flying from afar, and received missile alerts twice over the weekend asking people to stay indoors. He said malls were later operating as usual, even though there were fewer people on the streets. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Asian region feels bite as fuel prices, fares soar](#) (2026-03-03 03:24)

Asian airline shares remained under pressure on Tuesday as the US-Israeli attacks on Iran escalated, with carriers closely monitoring fuel price spikes and many seeing a surge in bookings as passengers switch from Middle Eastern airlines. Cathay Pacific Airways shares were down more than 2 percent while Air China, China Eastern Airlines and China Southern Airlines all dropped between 3 percent and 5 percent in both the Hong Kong and Shanghai markets. The CEO of Australia's biggest investment bank Macquarie Group, Shemara Wikramanayake, said on Tuesday the conflict appeared likely to affect the availability of oil, as well as the cost. "There is going to be a deliverability issue there," said Wikramanayake, whose company is one of the world's largest traders of oil and gas. Alternatives to Gulf airlines showed a surge in passenger bookings and ticket prices, checks of the carriers' websites showed. A search on Cathay Pacific's website on Tuesday showed no available economy class seats on the Hong Kong-London route until March 11, with a one-way ticket on that day costing at least HK\$21,158, falling to a more normal HK\$5,054 later in the month. For flights from Sydney to London, Qantas is not offering any economy class tickets on flights via its normal Perth and Singapore routings until March 17, when one is available for A\$3,129 one way. For earlier dates, it has pricey options with non-traditional stopovers such as Los Angeles and Johannesburg. Mainland airlines' websites showed air fares on China-UK routes have also surged far above normal levels, with economy seats largely unavailable on near-term departures. A return economy ticket typically costs under 10,000 yuan, but Air China's only option for Wednesday is business class, with a one-way direct ticket priced at 50,490 yuan. China Eastern is offering a Wednesday Shanghai-London ticket for 38,108 yuan, also in business class. Economy seats reappear on Thursday, but prices remain several times higher than usual, with Shanghai-London at 25,808 yuan and Beijing-London at about 23,000 yuan. Oil prices have surged amid the widening Middle East conflict, potentially driving up the cost of jet fuel and hurting airlines' profits. Major Gulf hubs, including the world's busiest international airport Dubai, which usually handles over 1,000 flights a day, remained closed for a fourth day due to the conflict. That has left tens of thousands of passengers stranded as aviation faced its biggest test since the Covid-19 pandemic. Qantas said last week that it had 81 percent of its fuel hedged for the second half of its financial year ending June 30. Chief executive Vanessa Hudson

said Qantas had "pretty good" fuel hedging in place but the spike in oil prices as the United States and Israel attacked Iran was significant for the aviation industry. "We've got pretty good hedging in place, but these are pretty significant impacts on aviation and we're just continuing to watch how it all unfolds," she said at the Australian Financial Review's business summit as the airline's shares fell for a second day, trading as much as 3.9 percent lower. Japan Airlines chief financial officer Yuji Saito said on Monday the carrier planned to adjust its fuel surcharge for international flights, but did not provide a timeframe. In the domestic market "since there is no surcharge, we're offsetting part of the price spike through hedging," he said. Japan Airlines shares were down 3.5 percent in early trading on Tuesday. (Reuters) Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['HK shippers brace for higher costs over US-Iran war'](#) (2026-03-02 13:28)

A local shipping sector representative on Monday said while the conflict in the Middle East may have limited impact on the industry in the short term, shippers would have to bear higher costs in the long run. The military showdown between Iran and the United States has driven up oil and gas prices, while equities tumbled. Speaking in an interview with RTHK, Peter Hui, chairman of the Hong Kong Shippers' Council, pointed out that only about five to 10 percent of local shippers have business dealings with the Middle East region. "Until this moment, in the short term, in fact, the impacts might not be very substantial, especially for Hong Kong shippers," he said. "But because Dubai area is also the transshipment hub to the southern Europe, Africa and Mediterranean [regions], so it'll indirectly affect many businesses." Hui pointed to a seafood trading firm that ships fish from the southern Europe to Hong Kong as well as the mainland, noting that the company now has to find an alternative route because Dubai airport was closed. "We can see that no matter where you are doing businesses with, the shipping costs might have an increase - no matter what," he said. Hui also warned of the impact of a prolonged war. "Luckily, late February or early March is the low season for the shipping industry or the manufacturing business. "But if it's going to last for a longer period, I expect the Hong Kong shippers to bear higher shipping cost. It is a must." Edited by Edmond Fong

- [As talent summit approaches, more feel at home in HK](#) (2026-03-02 11:34)

A technology sector professional who has successfully renewed his visa under the city's Top Talent Pass Scheme described Hong Kong as his "second home", a sentiment officials hope will resonate with job seekers as the Global Talent Summit Week approaches. Tony Zhou, who came to the SAR from Shanghai with his family two years ago, said life in the city has far exceeded his initial expectations, despite early concerns about the cost of living and education. "We kind of saw lots of difficulties and challenges before we moved to Hong Kong, like the living cost, like the condition of the living, like the education of the kids," he told RTHK. "But luckily we all conquered [them] through the two-year period." The decision to renew his visa was a family one, rooted in the integration they have achieved since arriving. Zhou recalled a pivotal moment when he returned to Hong Kong from a holiday abroad. "Suddenly, I have a very strong feeling that, 'Oh, I'm going back home.'" "At that moment, I thought I had already considered Hong

Kong as my second hometown in my mind." Working as the director of a data centre company, Zhou noted that Hong Kong's push into artificial intelligence and technology infrastructure aligns closely with its efforts to attract specialised labour. Zhou was speaking at a press conference on Monday ahead of the Global Talent Summit Week, an international mega event focused on the integration of education, technology and talent. Scheduled to be held from March 17 to 29, the summit aims to foster cross-regional talent exchange and explore future trends in the field. Organised by the Labour and Welfare Bureau and Hong Kong Talent Engage, it will feature three core components. These include the International Talent Forum and the CareerConnect Expo, both set for March 18 and 19 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Additionally, a series of satellite events focused on human resources and talent development will be held. Felix Chan, director of Hong Kong Talent Engage, said the summit brings together leaders from government, business and academia to discuss emerging talent trends and showcase a wide range of development opportunities. "When talents come here and attend the expo and also attend the forum... it helps a lot of talents to see small opportunities and understand different pathways in Hong Kong, whether they want to find a job or whether they want to establish a business," he said. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [13 more flights axed as local tour groups stranded](#) (2026-03-02 10:58)

The Travel Industry Council said on Monday that it was hard to estimate how many travellers had been affected by the war on Iran as the Airport Authority said it had caused 13 more flight cancellations on Monday thus far. A flight had also been delayed due to the conflict in the Middle East as of 10.45am. Twelve flights were cancelled on Sunday. A travel agency, WWPKG, said it had cancelled tours to the region until March 10 due to safety concerns. Its chief executive, Yuen Chun-ning, said around 20 travellers in two tour groups in Dubai were originally due to return on Wednesday. But because the airspace in parts of the region has been closed, his firm has arranged for them to stay in hotels. "Governments in the region have appealed to residents not to go out. Some tourist hotspots have been closed, some are still in operation. But we have urged our customers not to go out," Yuen said on a Commercial Radio programme. "Of course, they were a bit sad and disappointed, but safety comes first above all else." With the Easter Holidays approaching, he said, there have been more customers enquiring about joining tour groups. Yuen said tours would be cancelled if there were no flights and the Security Bureau's red travel alert to the region was still in place. His firm will try and see what it can do if customers want to change their tour bookings and go to other places. The Travel Industry Council said it was hard to determine the exact number of Hong Kong travellers affected by the attacks on Iran because the region was a popular transit hub. But it added that it was able to confirm that all tourists were safe. The Education Bureau said exchange tours by 40 pupils and five teachers to Dubai organised by three primary schools had recently returned safely. A group from a secondary school had planned to transit in Dubai on the way to another region for an exchange trip, but it will rebook tickets to fly elsewhere. The Football Association of Hong Kong, China said the SAR women's football team, in Dubai playing in the Pink Ladies Cup, were safe and training in the gym at their hotel. The association has been in close liaison with the SAR

administration and will arrange for the team's return as as soon as possible. Edited by EdmondFong

- ['Safe and stable cities draw global talent'](#) (2026-03-02 09:46)

Secretary for Labour and Welfare Chris Sun said places offering safety, stability and abundant opportunities naturally became more appealing to international talent in times of geopolitical uncertainty. He was speaking after being asked at a press conference on Monday over whether the ongoing situation in the Middle East might impact Hong Kong's ability to attract global professionals. In response, Sun emphasised that as the global landscape shifts, places that offered a combination of security and opportunity would find their appeal enhanced. The labour minister also revealed that the Hong Kong Talent Engage office had drafted an official itinerary for the upcoming year. The office is planning trips to the mainland, the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and North America. "For any travel, safety is also the first concern, but once it's safe to fly all over the world, they will make every effort to visit," Sun said. He also said talented professionals will be eager to explore opportunities once conditions allow. "But you can rest assured, for those who are from the Middle East, if they're interested in Hong Kong, they could visit Hong Kong." Hong Kong Talent Engage director Felix Chan said that while the Middle East was among regions being considered for talent outreach, any decisions would depend on the needs of Hong Kong businesses and the types of talent available there. He also said that the office would continue to liaise with local universities and chambers of commerce in identifying the timing that was most suitable for these visits. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [HKAM aims to boost expert witness participation](#) (2026-03-02 09:31)

The body that regulates specialist doctors on Monday said it would try to encourage more medics to serve as medical witnesses to support proposed reforms to the Medical Council. The government had earlier invited the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM) to set up a specialist talent pool to speed up the obtaining of expert reports for handling complaints and inquiries. Speaking at a spring reception for the media, HKAM's president, Philip Li, said around 400 doctors had joined its training course on becoming medical expert witnesses since 2022. Li said about 170 doctors went through the full course, adding the academy was exploring ways to boost participation and completion. "They need to know this is part of their social responsibility for the whole society to become a specialist as a medical witness for the system," he said. "At the same time, we are looking into incentives, for example, when they participate in the course, they will be given continuous medical education points, or when they even participate in the medical witness, they would be given such points as well." Currently, around 580 out of some 9,900 doctors across 74 specialities have joined the expert witness pool under the HKAM. Li acknowledged that specialists face heavy workloads and sometimes feel their efforts in handling cases receive insufficient recognition. "This may not be easy to address, so enhancing the medical expert witness pool is only one factor," he said, adding that it was difficult to quantify how increasing the number of medical witnesses improves the overall timing for each proceeding. On a separate note, the academy has drafted a position statement

that aims to formulate a clear blueprint for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in medical education. The document will be published in the Hong Kong Medical Journal in the first half of the year. The academy is also developing an AI-powered virtual patient consultation platform for its specialist training programmes, which will first roll out in emergency medicine and family medicine later this year. Clement Tham, vice-president of education and examinations, said it was important for doctors to adopt AI tools, but only as an assistance.

“We do not want our future doctors to be de-skilled by the over-reliance on artificial intelligence,” he said. “That’s why we have been repeatedly emphasising the importance of training our future generations of doctors to be able to make independent professional judgements and diagnosis, and also to independently conduct their clinical practice.” Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Residency-for-investment scheme inflows to hit HK\\$95b](#) (2026-03-02 05:40)

The government on Monday said the city's investment-for-residency scheme had attracted nearly 3,200 applications over the past two years, with inflows expected to amount to HK\$95 billion. Officials also said the scheme's rules were being updated to allow applicants to use eligible private holding companies for investment assessments and that they were effective from the start of this month. The New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme (New CIES) was launched in March 2024 to lure global high-net-worth individuals and business elites to relocate to Hong Kong by making capital investments. In a statement, the government noted that over half of the applicants, or 1,762, had already completed investments and received "formal approval" from the Immigration Department as of the end of last month. While most of the verified capital, HK\$55 billion, had poured into authorised funds or equities, about 10 percent of it had been invested in the CIES investment portfolio run by Hong Kong Investment Corporation, which supports the city's long-term economic and tech developments, it added. "These funds will be strategically deployed across a range of investment themes, including AI-enabled applications, sustainable technologies, materials science and biotechnology," it said. The government investment promotion arm, InvestHK, also noted that the 2025 batch of capital from the portfolio would start making investments amounting to HK\$3 billion this quarter. Separately, the government said, the scheme has been further updated to allow New CIES applicants to use eligible private holding companies that had been set up in less than six months for investment assessments – without a minimum incorporation period. The changes had been made taking market demand into consideration so that there would be greater flexibility for investors to allocate their assets. "Upon arriving in Hong Kong, investors under the New CIES will not only bring substantial capital inflows but also generate ripple effects across real estate, dining, retail, education and lifestyle services," Alpha Lau, InvestHK's director general, said in the statement. "This will stimulate both high-end and daily consumption, subsequently creating economic benefits for local small and medium-sized enterprises and professional service sectors." Director of Immigration Benson Kwok said the department was pleased to see a "positive market response" to the scheme. "Together with other admission schemes, these programmes work in synergy to attract talent and capital from around the

world, supporting Hong Kong's sustainable development and long-term competitiveness," he said. The scheme allows high-net-worth individuals and their families to obtain residency in the SAR when they make investments of at least HK\$30 million in local funds, stocks or properties, among other vehicles, with HK\$3 million needing to be placed in the CIES investment portfolio. Earlier tweaks to the scheme also included easing property purchase rules as part of efforts to boost the real estate market growth in September. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Govt unveils Kowloon Bay light public housing project](#) (2026-03-02 04:44)

Housing minister Winnie Ho said the launch of a light public housing project in Kowloon Bay symbolises the government's determination to resolve the issue of sub-divided flats. Residents began moving in on Monday into the project's 148 flats on Choi Shek Lane, which used to be a school campus. They will have to pay a monthly rent of between HK\$1,200 and HK\$3,300, and the block is a nine-minute walk away from Choi Hung MTR Station. Nearly half of the units range in size from 250 to 300 square feet, meant for families of three to four. Speaking at the moving-in ceremony, Ho said tenants could save thousands of dollars in rent every month compared with living in sub-divided flats. "Everyone can see that the current term government is very much determined to resolve the housing problem in Hong Kong," she said. "Some 20,000 light public housing flats will be completed by the end of the year. This housing supply provides a choice for residents living in dilapidated flats." The minister also noted the former school campus had been abandoned for some time, and converting it into public housing breathes new life not only to the premises, but also the neighbourhood nearby. She said facilities such as shops and laundry services could be used by the nearby community. Ho went on to note that a new registration system for basic housing units - or sub-divided flats that pass certain standards - began on Sunday. But landlords will be given time to register and renovate their flats as there is a year-long grace period. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK 'a safe haven in times of global turbulence'](#) (2026-03-02 04:08)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Monday said Hong Kong's safe haven status stood it in good stead to attract capital during times of war. Speaking on a radio programme, he said financial market volatility was "inevitable" following military action starting over the weekend by the United States and Israel against Iran. Chan stressed that investors often regarded the SAR as a secure destination for their funds during periods of market turmoil. "In Hong Kong, as you know, the free flow of capital is one of our core advantages," he said. "Coupled with the fact that the Hong Kong dollar is linked to the US dollar, that means our exchange rate remains relatively stable. "Whenever there is global turbulence in the past, we have served as a safe haven for capital." Chan stressed that global investors were optimistic about the economic prospects and growth potential of China and the rest of the Asia-Pacific region, saying capital had already been flowing into the SAR for these reasons. Hong Kong will maintain robust management of financial risks, Chan said, and will continue its efforts to help great companies go public. He also noted that Saudi Arabia had shown growing interest in investing in Hong Kong, saying the Middle Eastern country wanted to diversify away from a

US-heavy portfolio. However, Chan added, visits to war-affected areas, including in the MiddleEast, will be postponed until the situation there stabilises. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [New driving licence booking system set for non-locals](#) (2026-03-02 04:05)

The Transport Department on Monday said it would be rolling out an enhanced online booking system for non-local drivers from March 16 that allows them to complete submissions of applications for a test-free driving licence within 10 minutes. The new system would allow applicants to book a timeslot up to four weeks in advance at all four licensing offices across the city, with new slots available at 5pm on each working day. The online same-day queuing ticket service, which was implemented in January to ease queuing conditions at the department's Admiralty Office, will no longer be available from March 16. Applicants will be required to log in to the new system through either the government's "iAm Smart" app or, if they do not have such an account, use their driving licence to book a slot using the new system. Speaking on an RTHK programme, Assistant Commissioner Amy Lee said the system has incorporated artificial intelligence technology to verify the personal information of applicants. "We will implement some online authentication procedures to prevent online bots from snatching up the timeslots. Applicants will be required to type in some numbers, as asked, to prove that they are human," she said. "Another new measure is email authentication, which would deliver a password to the registered email immediately, and applicants will have to input the one-time password to complete the process." The system, Lee said, has passed Digital Policy Office stress and safety tests. To allow the public to book services available on the day that the new system debuts, Lee said, the booking quota will be released in batches between March 10 and 13. The department will also increase its counter services to 550 a day. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['Safety will be upheld in HK's railway standards'](#) (2026-03-02 03:49)

The Highways Department on Monday said safety standards would not be compromised amid the adoption of benchmarks from outside of Hong Kong in formulating its own railway standards. The recently-published Hong Kong Railway Standards spells out the requirements for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of future projects. Apart from existing standards in Hong Kong, it also includes those from the mainland and overseas. Speaking on RTHK, Raymond Ip, the department's Commissioner for the Northern Metropolis Railways Office, said factors of consideration include safety levels, cost effectiveness, supply chain situation and procurement efficiency, and it has opted for the best ones when reviewing the railway standards of other places. "There is absolutely nothing to worry about. Because in the standards, we have set performance levels and key performance indicators," he said. "We have made no changes to these. The levels will not be lowered by our adoption of standards from other places." On top of the document, a Railway Checking Unit tasked with approving building plans for future projects was also set up. The group, Ip said, would also act as a gatekeeper to ensure the works are up to par. He added the new set of technical specifications would be applied to the Northern Link and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link first. The commissioner also said more mainland standards were adopted in the document, instead of

the past practice of mainly referencing places such as the UK and Europe. Adjustments weremade under the adoption to suit Hong Kong's environmental situations, such as typhoon effectsand geological conditions, Ip added. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Cathay halts Riyadh, Dubai services](#) (2026-03-02 01:44)

Hong Kong's flagship carrier said it has suspended all Middle East services amid instability in the region. Cathay Pacific said in a statement late Sunday that flights to and from Riyadh have been scrapped until Tuesday at the earliest, while there will be no flights to and from Dubai between now and Thursday. "We encourage customers to check the latest flight information and announcements on our website flight information and announcements on our website," the airline added. In a separate statement, Cathay said customers scheduled to fly between Hong Kong and the two destinations -- as well as transfer through Doha -- between February 28 and March 7 may rebook, reroute or refund their tickets without the usual fees. Such requests must be made before March 7, and the new trips must be completed by May 31. Cathay has already suspended services to and from Tel Aviv since October 2025, citing "uncertainty related to the ongoing situation in Israel". Edited by Raymond Yeung

- [HK to push for tech growth at 'Two Sessions'](#) (2026-03-01 23:15)

Delegates and business leaders attending the country's largest annual political gatherings in Beijing this week will bring along their own ideas and proposals, many of which centre on closer ties with the mainland as well as technological advancements. The annual National People's Congress (NPC) will open on Thursday, while the top advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), begins a day earlier. With the 15th Five-Year Plan set to take centre stage this year, local deputies said the SAR should focus on the development of innovation and technology, to align with the country's latest blueprint. CPPCC Standing Committee member and chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Jonathan Choi, told RTHK that one of his areas of interest is how the SAR could collaborate with other mainland cities in innovation and technology. "There's a saying that Hong Kong is like the Wall Street, while Shenzhen is the Silicon Valley," Choi said. "We should focus more on research and development and work closely with Shenzhen and the Greater Bay Area." Lawmaker and CPPCC member, Johnny Ng, said he plans to suggest ways to sustain the country's technological innovations. "I would like to recommend a few areas like quantum computing, the space economy, and also Web3.0 and blockchain – how those technology areas can drive new quality productive forces to further improve our economic development... to support the whole country moving forward," Ng said. Ronick Chan, a lawmaker and NPC deputy, wants to put forward proposals to help facilitate cross-border capital flow. "I would like to see more mainland companies apply for IPO, that means listing here in Hong Kong, and also to issue their RMB as well as green bonds and even tokenised bonds here in Hong Kong," he said. Chan also suggested increasing the individual investment quota under the Wealth Management Connect scheme, which enables residents of the Greater Bay Area to invest in markets across the region through a closed-loop funds channel, from the current 3 million yuan to up to 8 million yuan.

Other groups will also be offering their ideas. Representatives from the DAB will bring more than 20 proposals, including optimising logistics and trade through enhanced port development and inter-modal transport networks within the Greater Bay Area. The Federation of Trade Unions wants to strengthen connectivity within the bay area, to generate new opportunities in trade, tourism and professional sectors. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [Man's best friend riding high on MTR](#) (2026-03-01 10:05)

For the first time, pet dogs have taken rides on the MTR's heavy rail line. Many of the 1,200 owners who were allowed to bring their dogs on board on Sunday said they enjoyed the experience and called for more pet-friendly policies in future. Each owner can bring one animal and use the last car of trains. Pets dogs must be placed in a fully enclosed carrier or backpack that complies with the MTR's size requirements for luggage, with no body parts exposed. Pre-registration was required and there's no limit on the number of journeys. Certain stations are off-limits, however, namely those on the Airport Express and at West Kowloon, Racecourse, Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau. Some pet owners said they enjoyed the experience. They pointed out that the only public transportation option thus far has been taxis, which are expensive. "The cost for riding taxis is usually over HK\$100, while the cost for MTR is ranging between some HK\$10 to HK\$20, which is much more cheaper," one said. Another owner noted that her dog remained calm during the journey thanks to prior training to stay in a carrier. The MTR previously ran a pilot scheme for pet dogs on its LRT network. And as the government proposes allowing dogs into restaurants, pet owners said the Hong Kong's environment is becoming more pet-friendly and society's acceptance is on the rise. They anticipate more pet-friendly policies will be launched. Sunday's campaign on the MTR was part of Dogathon 2026 organised by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

- [Cathay suspends passenger flights to Dubai, Riyadh](#) (2026-03-01 08:27)

Cathay Pacific announced it has suspended all flight operations in the Middle East amid the conflict between Iran and the United States. These include passenger flights to and from Dubai and Riyadh on Sunday, as well as freighter service at Al Maktoum airport in Dubai. Cathay also said flights that usually fly over relevant airspace in the region have been diverted. The SAR's flag carrier said the safety of passengers and its crew is its top priority, and it would review the situation before considering resuming the affected flights. The airline also said it has waived passengers' rebooking and rerouting charges, and urged them to check the latest flight arrangement before leaving for the airport. The Airport Authority said 12 flights had been cancelled as of 5pm on Sunday because of the situation in the Middle East. The cancellations included passenger flights to and from Dubai, Riyadh, and Doha. The authority added that eight flights scheduled for Monday have been cancelled. Meanwhile, the Immigration Department said it had received enquiries from 131 Hongkongers who are in the Middle East as of 8am on Sunday. All of them are reported to be safe. The department said it would continue to maintain contact with those Hong Kong residents and offer assistance where necessary.

_____ Last updated: 2026-03-01 HKT 18:08 Edited by Edmond Fong

- [New types of exhibitions considered to showcase HK](#) (2026-03-01 05:41)

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Algernon Yau said he hopes to introduce large-scale international exhibitions that have not been staged in Hong Kong before, to promote the city as an international exhibition hub and drive the local economy. His remarks came as the government earmarked around HK\$100 million in the coming fiscal year's budget for attracting large-scale international exhibitions to Hong Kong to cement the city's status as an international convention and exhibition hub. Speaking on a radio programme, Yau noted past figures showed the exhibition industry accounted for about 2.1 percent of Hong Kong's overall GDP, and the consumption amount of each person who came to these exhibitions was between HK\$7,000 to HK\$8,000. "We think a lot about what exhibitions can come [to the city] and we also want to cooperate with some exhibition institutions, hoping to do something that Hong Kong has not done before, such as large-scale machinery exhibitions or robot exhibitions," he said. "We have also talked a lot about the yacht economy, so perhaps we can do yacht exhibitions. Auto shows need big places with different car types, or maybe we can go a little deeper and see if small aircraft exhibitions are feasible." He said it would drive the development of the local tourism, catering, retail and entertainment industries. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Govt to coordinate N Metropolis development focus](#) (2026-03-01 05:30)

Secretary for Development Bernadette Linn on Sunday said dedicated legislation for the Northern Metropolis development would be tabled at the Legislative Council in late March. The law would loosen restrictions and allow flexibility for development, she said. Speaking on Commercial Radio, Linn said 40 percent of the 800-hectare development would be made available in the coming five years. She added authorities would look for companies that are able to carry out construction at these sites to accelerate the Northern Metropolis' development. Linn also said the government would coordinate development priorities among the different areas of the Northern Metropolis. "For example, the Hetao Park will obviously focus on cutting-edge, high-tech research and development. As for the San Tin Technopole, it will involve pilot production and manufacturing, which is still heavily related to innovation and technology," she said. "But at Hung Shui Kiu, with more than 20 hectares of land, the focus shifts away from innovation; it's more about diversified advanced manufacturing, construction and logistics industries. They all have different divisions of labour." Linn said some developers have already expressed interest in developing education, convention and innovation facilities at the Northern Metropolis. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['HK prepared for market swings due to Mideast war'](#) (2026-03-01 05:24)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Sunday said that Hong Kong had sufficient contingency plans regarding the financial turbulence expected from the war in the Middle East. He said the SAR doesn't have much direct trade and investment with Iran, but the conflict brought about significant uncertainties to the world. The minister said on a TVB programme that Hong Kong is prepared for market fluctuations, and even potential capital inflows from the Middle East. "For example, there'll be rather big fluctuations in financial markets. Capital flow changes might be

quicker and uncertain. There could be some capital from that region that wants to come to safehavens such as Hong Kong," Chan said. "We'll handle financial risks and fluctuations very carefully, we have made sufficient contingency plans." The minister added that officials would keep assessing the potential rises in transportation costs for international trade, as well as gold and crude oil prices. Meanwhile, Chan said the government's plans to use HK\$150 billion from the Exchange Fund as a kick-start investment in the Northern Metropolis, because it sees the project as an investment in the future. "We do invest a lot in the metropolis. But we're certainly not putting everything in one basket," he said. "In recent years and going forward, one of the areas we have to work hard in is to attract more outside companies to come to Hong Kong." The minister said Hong Kong needs to enrich its depth as a global financial centre by attracting more tourists and people doing business here. He said tax returns from the Northern Metropolis were expected in four to five years. As to whether the government plans to widen the tax base in Hong Kong, Chan said officials have studied relevant ideas and have proposals in mind. The minister stressed, however, that from the present social standpoint, the current-term administration wants to focus on economic development. He also emphasised that the SAR's simple tax system remains a core competitive advantage globally. Edited by Tony Sabine