

# Calendar of Events 2016

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## January

- 11 At the ceremonial opening of the legal year, the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal, Mr Geoffrey Ma Tao-li, says that if society puts any value on the concept of the rule of law as a cornerstone or pillar in our community, it is important to understand Hong Kong's legal system and how justice – for, conceptually, this is after all the purpose of law – is administered. Hong Kong's legal system is based on the common law and on that system's characteristics of fairness, transparency and access to justice, he says.
- 13 In his fourth Policy Address, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr C Y Leung, announces he will chair a new high-level steering committee to formulate strategies and policies for Hong Kong's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative. A Belt and Road Office will also be established to take forward related studies and to coordinate work between government departments and other organisations.
- 16-17 The Hong Kong Velodrome hosts the final round of the 2015-16 UCI Track Cycling World Cup for the first time.
- 17 About 61,000 of 74,000 registered runners take part in the Hong Kong Marathon as more than 75mm of rain is recorded by the Hong Kong Observatory from 15 to 17 January, the worst weather in the 20-year history of the race.
- 19-30 Ms Lee Wai-sze wins a gold in track cycling – women elite keirin for Hong Kong at the Asian Cycling Championships in Japan. Mr Cheung King-lok clinches three golds and two silvers, including one silver in a joint effort with teammate Mr Leung Chun-wing.
- 24 The mercury falls to 3.1 degrees Celsius in the coldest day since 1957. Temperatures as low as minus 6 degrees are recorded on Tai Mo Shan. Frost, rime, icing, freezing rain and ice pellets are widespread on high ground and observed in the New Territories.  
Hong Kong Tramways launches the territory's first sightseeing tram, numbered 68. The open-top tram gives a one-hour tour between Sheung Wan and Causeway Bay, looping through Happy Valley.
- 27 The Department of Justice says it will not initiate criminal proceedings against a former Independent Commission Against Corruption commissioner, Mr Timothy Tong Hin-ming, citing insufficient evidence, bringing to an end an investigation started by the ICAC in May 2013.
- 29 Ms Christy Leung Yi wins Hong Kong's first medal at the quadrennial National Winter Games, with a bronze in figure skating – women's individual free skating in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Hong Kong first took part in 1999.
- 30 The Legislative Council (LegCo) approves an extra \$5.4 billion for the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao bridge, taking the total cost estimate to \$35.9 billion.

- 31 The wettest January in 131 years sees 266.9mm of rain, more than 10 times the January average of 24.7mm and breaking the record of 214.3mm set in January 1887.

## February

- 1 MPF scheme members who reach the age of 65 or retire early at 60 have a new option to withdraw their MPF benefits by instalments if they do not take the money out in a lump sum.
- 2 The Washington-based think tank, the Heritage Foundation, ranks Hong Kong as the world's freest economy for the 22nd consecutive year.
- 5 The government classifies the Zika virus infection as a notifiable infectious disease. Medical workers are required by law to notify the Director of Health of any suspected case.
- 6 Hong Kong International Airport sets a new single-day record with 1,227 flight movements, surpassing the 1,210 movements on 3 April 2015 and nearly 10 per cent more than the daily average of 1,117 movements handled last year.
- 9 A riot breaks out in Mong Kok in the early hours following violence on the first night of the Lunar New Year. About 100 police officers and several media workers are injured.
- 24 The Financial Secretary, Mr John C Tsang, delivers the Budget for the financial year 2016-17. He announces a host of initiatives to consolidate Hong Kong's strengths and seize development opportunities under the global new economic order.
- 27 A Zlin Z242L fixed-wing, single-engined aircraft of the Hong Kong Aviation Club crashes along the shore of Fu Tau Sha at Tolo Channel, Tai Po, killing the pilot.
- 28 Mr Alvin Yeung Ngok-kiu, a barrister, wins with 160,880 votes the LegCo New Territories East geographical constituency by-election triggered by the resignation of Mr Ronny Tong Ka-wah, SC. A total of 434,220 people cast votes for a field of seven, a turnout of 46.18 per cent.

## March

- 11 LegCo approves an extra \$19.6 billion to build the Hong Kong section of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen-Guangzhou Express Rail Link. The cost estimate is now \$86.4 billion.
- 12 The Financial Secretary says in response to Moody's Investors Service's change of outlook on Hong Kong's rating from stable to negative that the territory's sound economic fundamentals, robust financial regulatory regime, resilient banking sector and strong fiscal position will continue to enable the economy to embrace the challenges ahead.
- 13 The Electronic Health Record Sharing System begins operation. It allows public and private healthcare organisations to share health records with patients' consent.
- 16 The Fire and Ambulance Services Academy at Pak Shing Kok, Tseung Kwan O, opens. It provides a wide range of advanced simulation training facilities and 526 residential training places for the Fire Services Department.
- 17 HK Express becomes the territory's first airline to ban the carriage of shark's fin. Cathay Pacific announces its own ban on 22 June, covering its subsidiary, Cathay Dragon, as well.

- 22 The Chief Executive meets the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Mr Algirdas Butkevičius, at Government House.
- The Chief Executive in Council approves applications for the renewal of the analogue sound broadcasting licences of Hong Kong Commercial Broadcasting and Metro Broadcast for a period of 12 years from 26 August 2016 to 25 August 2028.
- 31 A \$10 billion, five-storey Midfield Concourse opens at the airport. It adds 20 more parking stands to the airport and can handle at least 10 million more passengers per year.
- Hong Kong Television Entertainment holds a soft launch of its new Chinese-language free television channel, ViuTV.

## April

- 1 Ms Ng On-yee and Ms Katrina Wan win the Ladies Pairs championship at the World Ladies Snooker Championship in the United Kingdom.
- 2 Asia Television (ATV) ceases operation of its free TV programme service at 12am upon its licence expiry after 59 years on the air. Radio Television Hong Kong starts the simulcast of its digital TV programmes on the two analogue television channels vacated by ATV the next day.
- 13 Mr Cheung Ka-long makes history as the first Hong Kong athlete to win a gold in the men's foil individual at the Asian Fencing Championships in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province. The championships were established in 1989.

## May

- 11-12 The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam, inspects HKSAR-funded reconstruction projects in Sichuan Province and officiates at the opening of the China Giant Panda Garden in the Wolong Nature Reserve. She later officiates at the HKSAR's Post-quake Reconstruction Support Work in Sichuan Completion Ceremony cum Sharing Session on Reconstruction of the Wolong National Nature Reserve on 28 October.
- 17-19 Mr Zhang Dejiang, a member of the Political Bureau Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC), visits Hong Kong. His itinerary includes trips to the Development Bureau, Hong Kong Science Park, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Tseung Kwan O Aged Care Complex and two flats in On Tat Estate, a new public rental housing estate in Kwun Tong.
- 18 The HKSAR Government organises the inaugural Belt and Road Summit in association with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, with the state Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Commerce and People's Bank of China as supporting bodies. The NPCSC Chairman delivers a keynote speech to over 2,400 government officials and business leaders.
- 19 Hong Kong opens its first self-sustained sludge treatment facility, T•Park, in Tuen Mun. T•Park converts waste to energy via sludge incinerators with a total treatment capacity of up to 2,000 tonnes of sludge per day.

- 20 The rooftop of the Chan Tai Ho Multi-purpose Hall at the City University of Hong Kong's Hu Fa Kuang Sports Centre collapses. Two staff members are injured. An independent investigation committee appointed by the CityU President later concludes the design of the roof greening works, especially the loading assessment coupled with apparent use of incorrect data, is probably one of the core factors in the collapse.
- 26 The Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes (Amendment) Ordinance 2016 is enacted to require each MPF trustee to provide in each MPF scheme a default investment strategy, which is a highly standardised and fee-controlled investment approach to provide better investment solutions for scheme members. The strategy will be launched on 1 April 2017.
- 27 The Hong Kong Institute of Education in Tai Po is retitled The Education University of Hong Kong. EdUHK becomes the territory's 10th university and eighth publicly funded one.
- 30 The *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water* is published. The commission concludes leaded solder is the direct cause of excess lead that affected 11 public rental housing estates. The Hong Kong Housing Authority will start rectification works to resolve the problem completely as soon as possible, and will enhance its internal mechanism for risk assessment and management.
- 31 The Chief Executive in Council grants a domestic free TV programme service licence to Fantastic Television for a period of 12 years until 30 May 2028.  
The International Institute for Management Development's *World Competitiveness Yearbook 2016* ranks Hong Kong as the world's most competitive economy, up from second in 2015.

## June

- 5 Trading of live poultry is suspended after a faecal sample taken from a poultry stall in Yan O Market, Tuen Mun, tested positive for the H7N9 avian influenza virus. A total of 5,643 poultry are culled and trading resumes on June 9, except for the poultry stall in Yan O Market.
- 6 HK Tramways launches an air-conditioned trial tram numbered 88.
- 13 The temporary office of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office of the HKSAR Government in Jakarta begins operation.  
Amateur golfer Tiffany Chan Tsz-ching creates history by becoming the first Hong Kong woman to win the professional Hong Kong Ladies Open. The win also allows her to become the first Hong Kong golfer to qualify for the Olympics when the sport returns to the Games in 2016 after 112 years.
- 16 The government announces the subscription and allocation results of the sixth inflation-linked retail bond, or iBond, under the retail part of the Government Bond Programme. A total of 507,978 valid applications were received for a total of \$22.5 billion in principal amount of bonds. The final issue amount was \$10 billion with a tenor of three years.  
The Education Bureau says it will announce the suspension of classes simultaneously with the Observatory's issuing of a red or black rainstorm warning signal within the

relevant period so schools, parents and students will know of the arrangements as quickly as possible.

- 21 A fire breaks out at Amoycan Industrial Centre in Ngau Tau Kok and is upgraded to a No 4 alarm after nine hours. A senior station officer, Mr Thomas Cheung Y F, 30, dies on the same night and a senior fireman, Mr Samuel Hui Chi-kit, 37, dies two days later. Ten other firefighters are injured. The blaze is largely put out after 108 hours.
- 22 Hong Kong continues to be the world's second largest recipient of foreign direct investment flows in 2015, according to the *World Investment Report 2016* released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- 24 The Hang Seng Index ends down 2.9 per cent at 20,259 points, after falling as much as 5.8 per cent in intraday trading upon news that the UK has voted to exit the European Union.
- 28 Teams comprising the Fire Services, Buildings, Lands and Labour departments start inspecting all mini-storage facilities, first targeting those located in industrial buildings without automatic sprinkler systems.
- 29 The last batch of the government stockpile of confiscated ivory, weighing about 1.5 tonnes, is incinerated. This brings to 28 tonnes the amount of ivory destroyed since May 2014.
- 30 The 2016 Population By-census is launched. About 300,000 households, covering around 10 per cent of home addresses, may provide their answers via an e-questionnaire online, an e-questionnaire mobile app downloaded on their mobile devices or a face-to-face interview.
- Ocean Park records a \$241.1 million deficit for the 2015-16 fiscal year. It will raise daytime admission tickets for adults and children to \$438 and \$219 respectively on 1 January 2017, from \$385 and \$193.

## July

- 1 The Chief Executive confers posthumous gold medals for bravery on firefighters Mr Thomas Cheung Y F and Mr Samuel Hui Chi-kit.
- 9-10 Temperatures rise to 35.6 degrees, the second highest for July since 1884. The high temperatures trigger intense thunderstorms which affect Hong Kong in the late afternoon and last till the early hours of the next day, with about 10,000 bolts of cloud-to-ground lightning recorded.
- 14 The Electoral Affairs Commission introduces a confirmation form to ensure LegCo election candidates clearly understand the contents of the Basic Law and the legal requirements and responsibilities involved in signing the declaration in the nomination form, which states that the candidates will uphold the Basic Law and pledge allegiance to the HKSAR.
- 15 Six secondary students break Hong Kong's record at the 57th International Mathematical Olympiad with three golds, two silvers and a bronze. For the first time, the territory is ranked among the top 10 in the Olympiad, coming 9th out of 109 country and regional teams.
- 19 Four people in a group of five Hong Kong travellers are injured in an axe attack on a train in Würzburg, Germany.

- 20 Hong Kong and Guangdong Province launch a joint Electronic Cheque clearing service, under which e-cheques issued by banks in Hong Kong and deposited with banks in Guangdong will be settled on the next business day.
- 22 The M+ Pavilion becomes the first permanent facility to open in the West Kowloon Cultural District.
- 24-Aug 2 The Hong Kong delegation wins 79 medals in the World Rope Skipping Championships in Sweden. Five delegation members, Mr Timothy Ho, Mr Tommy Chow, Mr Angus Wong, Mr Man Lau and Mr Parco Shum, also break the world record of 603 times in the double dutch speed relay by jumping 671.5 times in three minutes.

## August

- 1 The Airport Authority Hong Kong begins construction of the three-runway system and starts to collect airport construction fees of \$70 to \$180 per passenger on air tickets issued from this day to tie in with the start of the works.
- The Belt and Road Office begins operation.
- The Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence and Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum start offering free admission to permanent exhibitions.
- 5 The names of 289 validly nominated candidates for the 2016 LegCo General Election are gazetted. Twelve candidates in 10 functional constituencies will be returned uncontested. Of the 154 nomination forms received, one nomination form was withdrawn, while five nomination forms and one nominee each from two nomination forms were ruled invalid by Returning Officers.
- 5-21 Thirty-eight Hong Kong athletes compete in nine sports at the Rio 2016 Olympics in Brazil.
- 7 The Eastern Harbour Crossing becomes a government tunnel at the end of a 30-year franchise by New Hong Kong Tunnel.
- 10 The government announces the subscription and allocation results of the first Silver Bond under the retail part of the Government Bond Programme. The Silver Bond targets Hong Kong residents aged 65 or above. A total of 76,009 valid applications were received for a total of \$8.9 billion in principal amount of bonds. The final issue amount was \$3 billion with a tenor of three years.
- 25 The Centre for Health Protection investigates the first imported Zika case, a 38-year-old woman with good health previously who had travelled to the Caribbean. She is discharged from hospital the next day.
- 27-29 A 64-member delegation of the Rio Olympic Games Mainland Olympians visits Hong Kong for a goodwill display of athletic skills.

- 28 Captain Hank Cheng sets off in the first made-in-Hong Kong plane, a two-seater named Inspiration. He returns on 13 November, having touched down at 45 airports in 20 countries in a journey of about 50,000km.

## September

- 4 Hong Kong goes to the polls to elect the sixth Legislative Council of the HKSAR. A total of 2,202,283 geographical constituency electors cast votes, a record turnout of 58.28 per cent out of 3,779,085 registered electors, up from 53.05 per cent in 2012. The average age of the legislature drops from 58 in July to 52 as at 31 January 2017, the youngest since the handover. The age range of 24 to 72 is also the broadest to date.
- 6 The Chief Executive meets the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr Justin Trudeau, at Government House.
- 7-18 Hong Kong collects two golds, two silvers and two bronzes in swimming, boccia, wheelchair fencing and table tennis at the Rio 2016 Paralympics. These include the territory's first Paralympic swimming gold medal. Altogether 24 athletes compete in eight sports.
- 8 Mr Yip Tsz-fung becomes the first Hong Kong player to win the World University Squash Championship, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The championship began in 1996.
- 15 The Chief Executive meets the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, at Government House.  
Hong Kong is ranked the freest economy in the world again by the Fraser Institute's *Economic Freedom of the World 2016 Annual Report*.
- 18-28 Mr Mak Cheuk-yin wins a record three golds for Hong Kong at the Asian Tenpin Bowling Championships in Hong Kong. The home team clinches six medals in all.
- 21 Hong Kong receives confirmation from the Regional Verification Commission for Measles Elimination in the Western Pacific of the World Health Organisation that the territory has achieved interruption of endemic measles virus transmission.
- 24 The Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness and Obstruction) Ordinance takes effect. It empowers police and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to issue \$1,500 fixed-penalty notices in addition to taking summons action against shopfront extensions involving the offence of 'obstruction of public places'.
- 27 An agreement with South Korea to avoid double taxation and prevent evasion of taxes on income comes into force. It will be in effect in Hong Kong for any year of tax assessment from 1 April 2017.
- 28 The Department of Health launches a three-year Colorectal Cancer Screening Pilot Programme. Residents born between 1946 and 1955 can undergo subsidised screening tests to detect colorectal cancer.

## October

- 1 The minimum monthly wage for foreign domestic helpers rises from \$4,210 to \$4,310 for contracts signed from this day.

- All 11 private hospitals take part in a pilot programme for price transparency, enabling patients to obtain more comprehensive information on hospital fees.
- 3 The Community Care Fund launches a three-year pilot scheme to provide free cervical cancer vaccination for teenage girls from eligible low-income families.
- 8-9 The FIA Formula E Championship Hong Kong ePrix debuts at the Central Harbourfront.
- 11 The ICAC lays a third charge, of ‘chief executive accepting an advantage’, against former Chief Executive Mr Donald Tsang Yam-kuen over the refurbishment and redecoration of a three-storey Shenzhen residence he leased.
- 13 The government denounces the behaviour of some LegCo members-elect who, during their oath-taking the day before, acted in violation of the dignity expected of the legislature’s members and spoke or acted in a manner that harmed the feelings of compatriots.
- 16 Jia Jia, the world’s oldest giant panda to have lived under human care, dies at Ocean Park aged 38.
- 23 The MTR Kwun Tong Line extends to Ho Man Tin and Whampoa.
- 27 A six-month public engagement is launched for ‘Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030’ to update the city’s territorial development strategy.
- 31 October swelters under record-breaking mean temperatures despite a succession of tropical cyclones and more than 20 per cent less sunshine than usual. The mean maximum temperature of 29.1 degrees, mean temperature of 26.8 degrees and mean minimum temperature of 25 degrees are all 1.3 degrees above their respective norms and are the highest in any October. Total rainfall is 624.4mm, six times more than the October average of 100.9mm.

## November

- 3-6 The RMB1.3 million Clearwater Bay Open golf tournament debuts as the first event in the PGA Tour China Series taking place outside the Mainland of China.
- 5 Ad valorem stamp duty on residential property transactions is increased to a new flat rate of 15 per cent to address the overheated housing market.
- 7 The NPCSC issues an interpretation and clear explanations about oath-taking by public officers specified in Article 104 of the Basic Law. The interpretation clarifies that a person who takes an oath in a manner which is not sincere or solemn is considered to have declined to take the oath. The oath is thus rendered invalid and the oath-taker is regarded as having lost the qualification for the corresponding public office.
- 10 The new MTR Academy opens in Hung Hom with the aim of training railway professionals from Hong Kong, the Mainland of China, the Belt and Road region and around the world. Its first accredited programme is an Advanced Diploma in Railway Engineering.
- 12 Actor Jackie Chan receives an honorary Governors Award in Los Angeles from the Oscars organiser, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, in recognition of his lifetime achievements in the film industry.

- 13 Pope Francis appoints Bishop Michael Yeung Ming-cheung as Coadjutor Bishop of Hong Kong, with the right to succeed Cardinal John Tong as Bishop of Hong Kong upon his retirement in July 2017.
- 14 A new Air Traffic Management System is fully commissioned at the airport.
- 15 The Court of First Instance rules that the oaths purportedly taken by two LegCo members-elect, Mr Leung Chung-hang and Ms Yau Wai-ching, on October 12 contravene the Basic Law and the Oaths and Declarations Ordinance, and are invalid. The Court of Appeal upholds this judgment on 30 November. The pair later file applications with the Court of Appeal for leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal.
- 22 The government announces the expansion and development of Hong Kong Disneyland Resort as agreed in principle with The Walt Disney Company. The plan, subject to LegCo's approval of the government's financial contribution, will introduce new attractions almost every year between 2018 and 2023.
- 27 Mr Angus Ng Ka-long becomes the first Hong Kong player to win the men's singles of the Hong Kong Open Badminton Championships, first held in 1982.
- 30 The HKSAR Government receives notification that the Central People's Government (CPG) has relaxed with immediate effect Mainland entry restrictions imposed on certain LegCo members and other people. The CPG will accept their applications for the Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents.

## December

- 1 Ms Chan Yuen-ting is named the Asian Football Confederation Women's Coach of the Year in Abu Dhabi. She led Eastern Sports Club to a 2-1 victory over South China in the Hong Kong Premier League on 22 April, becoming the first woman to lead a men's team to a top-league championship.
- The territory makes its first conviction for failing to charge for plastic shopping bags provided at the time of sale since the full implementation of the 50 cent levy on 1 April 2015. A grocery store proprietor is fined \$5,000 for contravening the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance.
- 2 The Chief Secretary for Administration unveils the theme for the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR: 'Together • Progress • Opportunity'.
- The government starts legal proceedings against LegCo members Ms Lau Siu-lai, Mr Yiu Chung-yim, Mr Nathan Law Kwun-chung and Mr Leung Kwok-hung, asking the court to declare invalid the LegCo oaths they purportedly took.
- 5 The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Stock Connect is launched. It enables Hong Kong and overseas investors to trade eligible A-shares listed in Shenzhen, and Mainland investors to trade eligible shares listed in Hong Kong.
- 7 An International Monetary Fund staff mission commends the HKSAR for its strong policy frameworks, robust oversight of the financial system and ample buffers, which stand the economy in good stead to meet challenges ahead.
- 8 A foundation stone laying ceremony is held for the East Kowloon Cultural Centre at the site of the former Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate. The centre is expected to open in late 2021.
- 9 The Chief Executive announces he will not seek re-election in March 2017.

- 11 A total of 107,841 voters cast ballots in the 2016 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections to form the 1,200-strong Election Committee. The turnout was 46.53 per cent, up from 27.6 per cent, or 65,565 voters, in 2011.
- 12 The Financial Secretary tenders his resignation to the Chief Executive, who submits it to the CPG.
- 13 HK Electric announces two special rebates resulting in tariff reduction of 17.2 per cent. The rebates will last for the whole year from 1 January 2017.  
The Chief Executive in Council approves the application for renewal of the domestic pay television programme service licence of Hong Kong Cable Television for a period of 12 years from 1 June 2017 to 31 May 2029.
- 15 The Hong Kong Monetary Authority increases the base rate by 25 basis points to 1.00 per cent after the US Federal Reserve raised its interest rate by the same magnitude.  
Mrs Regina Ip resigns from the Executive Council. She joined the ExCo in October 2012.
- 18 Mr Marco Fu Ka-chun wins the Scottish Open snooker tournament in Glasgow. He moves from 14th in the world to eighth place.
- 23 The Chief Secretary for Administration signs a memorandum of understanding with the Director of the Palace Museum, Dr Shan Jixiang, for the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority to develop a \$3.5 billion Hong Kong Palace Museum jointly with the Palace Museum to showcase collections of the Palace Museum on a long-term basis.
- 28 The 7km South Island Line opens, extending the MTR rail network to all 18 districts. The line comprises new stations at South Horizons, Lei Tung, Wong Chuk Hang and Ocean Park, and an expanded interchange at Admiralty.