

HK, Singapore play complementary roles

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Wednesday, October 31, 2012

Hong Kong and Singapore play complementary roles in global and regional supply chains, Secretary for Commerce & Economic Development Gregory So says.

Speaking at the Hong Kong Festival 2012: ASEAN - Hong Kong Business Forum in Singapore today, Mr So said both Hong Kong and Singapore know that free trade under a rules-based trading system is the best way to secure prosperity.

"Hong Kong and Singapore are the nodes to connect the two hinterlands of Mainland China and ASEAN. The expansion of supply chains between ASEAN and China offers ample opportunities for service providers in Hong Kong and Singapore to collaborate." Mr. So said.

HK tops financial development index

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
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Hong Kong has topped the World Economic Forum's Financial Development Index for the second consecutive year.

According to the WEF Financial Development Index released today, Hong Kong took the top spot with a score of 5.31 on a seven-point scale. The US, UK and Singapore take the next three places, while Mainland China ranks 23rd.

"Hong Kong is highly competitive vis-à-vis most other financial systems in the world, especially in terms of contract enforcement, taxes and the infrastructure of the business environment, as well as the efficiency of banking financial services.

Among the seven component pillars assessed - institutional environment, business environment, financial stability, banking financial services, non-banking financial services, financial markets and financial access - Hong Kong ranks first in banking financial services, second in business environment and fourth in both financial access and financial markets.

The study ranks the breadth, depth and efficiency of 62 of the world's leading financial systems and capital markets, analysing financial system development drivers that support economic growth.

Companies Ordinance consultation starts

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Friday, November 02, 2012

The Financial Services & the Treasury Bureau has launched the second phase of a [public consultation](#) on subsidiary legislation for the implementation of the new Companies Ordinance.

These regulations and rules will set out the administrative, technical and procedural matters required for the implementation of the new ordinance.

They include the Companies (Trading Disclosures) Regulation; the Companies (Revision of Financial Statements & Reports) Regulation; the Companies (Disclosure of Information about Benefits of Directors) Regulation; the Companies (Residential Addresses & Identification Numbers) Regulation; and, the Companies (Unfair Prejudice Proceedings) Rules.

HK, Swiss tax treaty in force

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Wednesday, November 07, 2012

An agreement between Hong Kong and Switzerland for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to income taxes has entered into force, the Financial Services & the Treasury Bureau said today.

The agreement was signed in October last year, and came into force on October 15 after the completion of ratification procedures on both sides.

In Hong Kong, the agreement will apply to any year of assessment beginning on or after April 1 next year.

HK, Canada tax pact signed

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Sunday, November 11, 2012

Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury Prof KC Chan today signed an agreement with Canada for double taxation avoidance and fiscal evasion prevention with respect to taxes on income on behalf of the Government.

It is the 26th comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreement concluded by Hong Kong with its trading partners.

Under the agreement, tax paid in Hong Kong will be allowed as a credit against tax payable in Canada. Double taxation will be avoided in that any Canadian tax paid by Hong Kong companies doing business through a permanent establishment in Canada will be allowed as credit against the tax payable in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong residents receiving interest from Canada are subject to Canada's withholding tax. Canadian withholding tax on royalties will be capped at 10%. The Canadian dividends withholding tax will also be reduced to 15%.

Goods exports volume up 13.6%

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Tuesday, November 13, 2012

The Census & Statistics Department said today the volume of goods re-exports grew 13.7% over a year earlier, while that of domestic exports rose 9.2%. Concurrently, the volume of goods imports increased 13%.

The prices of re-exports during the month rose 1.9% over a year earlier, while those of domestic exports grew 0.9%. Taken together, the prices of total goods exports increased 1.9%. Goods imports' prices rose 2.2%.

Comparing the first nine months of 2012 with the same period last year, the volume of goods re-exports fell 1.9%, while that of domestic exports fell 15.7%. Taken together, the volume of total goods exports dropped 2.2%. The volume of goods imports decreased 0.8%.

During the first nine months of 2012 the price of goods re-exports rose 4.1% over the same period a year earlier, and that of domestic exports increased 2.4%. The price of total goods exports grew 4%, while that of goods imports increased 3.7%.

Stamp duties stabilise property market

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Wednesday, November 14, 2012

Secretary for Transport & Housing Prof Anthony Cheung says the special stamp duty and buyer's stamp duty have been introduced to manage demand and further curb speculation amidst the tight supply and high demand in the residential property market, thereby facilitating healthy and stable development of the market.

Mr Cheung made the statement in the Legislative Council today, saying the measures will help reduce the risk of a property bubble, and maintain the stability of the macro-economy as well as the financial system, which are of vital importance to the overall business environment.

As to whether the measures will have an impact on small and medium enterprises using residential properties as collateral to seek financing from banks, Mr Cheung said banks will not rely solely on the value of collateral to decide whether or not to offer loans to SMEs. The Government considers the new measures will not have any real impact on SMEs in seeking financing from banks.

Q3 GDP up 1.3%

by news.gov.hk, Hong Kong
Friday, November 16, 2012

Gross Domestic Product grew 1.3% year-on-year in the third quarter, similar to the 1.2% growth seen in the second quarter.

Government Economist Helen Chan announced the figures today, saying there might be some improvement in the fourth quarter.

The GDP growth forecast for 2012 has been revised to 1.2%, from the earlier forecast of 1%-2% in August.

China, Japan, Korea discuss free trade pact

by thestandard.com.hk, Hong Kong

Tuesday, November 20, 2012

China, Japan and South Korea will set aside bitter maritime territorial rows and launch talks for a free-trade agreement, diplomats said.

The trade ministers are scheduled to meet on the sidelines of an 18-nation East Asian Summit, in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, to launch negotiations, AFP reports.

The meeting will be held in the afternoon, South Korean and Japanese diplomats told AFP. If successful, the three-way talks are expected to create one of the world's biggest free-trade zones.

The move comes amid deep tensions between China and Japan over competing claims to islands in the East China Sea.

Japan and South Korea are locked in another row over islands in waters between their countries. Tensions boiled over in August after a surprise visit by South Korean President Lee Myung Bak to the Dokdo islands, known as Takeshima in Japan.

Officials and diplomats said they hoped that deepening trade relations would help ease the territorial tensions or, at least, the pact talks would be able to push ahead despite the spat.

Analysts said a China, Japan and South Korea FTA could be a linchpin for a wider Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement also to be launched today in Phnom Penh that will involve 16 Asia-Pacific countries.

RCEP will cover all 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand and South Korea.

All the countries have bilateral FTAs with ASEAN on which they can build.

Manufacturing boost for China economy

by RTHK News, Hong Kong

Friday, November 23, 2012

China's manufacturing expanded for the first time in 13 months in November in a further sign that the economy is recovering from its deepest slump since the 2008 global crisis.

HSBC said that its monthly Purchasing Managers' Index improved to 50.4 on a 100-point scale on which numbers over 50 indicate expansion. That was a moderate improvement from October's 49.5.

It is the first time in 13 months that the reading has been above 50. The PMI index measures overall manufacturing activity by surveying numerous indicators including orders, employment and actual production.