Mediation body enhances investor confidence: FS

by www.rthk.hk
Jun 01, 2025

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Sunday said setting up an international mediation body in Hong Kong helps enhance the city's competitiveness as an international financial, trade and shipping centre.

Last week, a total of 33 countries signed the Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation at a ceremony held in the SAR.

Writing on his blog, Chan said authorities will push forward relevant work at full speed, and strive to put the organisation into operation as early as the end of this year.

He said an efficient, fair and trusted dispute resolution mechanism is crucial for promoting more international investment and trade, and it helps boost investor confidence.

Chan said Hong Kong has gained trust from different parties under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, and is taking advantage of the SAR's unique role as the only common law jurisdiction within the nation.

He added that the mediation body helps strengthen Hong Kong's status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre in the Asia-Pacific region.

Meanwhile, Chan pointed out that Hong Kong's economic and trade ties with Global South countries have been deepening since Asia's first Saudi Arabia exchange-traded fund was listed in the SAR in 2023.

He said Hong Kong has had frequent exchanges with Saudi Arabia's financial market, and that there has been more cooperation with Global South countries on aspects such as innovation and technology, the digital economy and tourism.

Hong Kong 'an ideal location for family offices'

by www.rthk.hk
Jun 05, 2025

Mahesh Harilela, family council convenor of Harilela Group, said on Thursday that Hong Kong's robust banking and legal systems make the city an ideal location for establishing family offices.

The comments by the entrepreneur and member of one of the city's most prominent families come after the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury Christopher Hui said that Hong Kong is looking to attract the next generation of wealth owners to establish family offices in the SAR.

Speaking to RTHK after a panel discussion, Harilela said Hong Kong has its appeal as the city offers significant intellectual capital, a robust legal system and efficient processes for financial transactions.

"Look at how many banks that we have in Hong Kong. Look at our regulation, our judiciary that's set separate from the government's policy. If you look at the legal system in Hong Kong that allows for fluidity of money and movement of money, there's no place like Hong Kong," he said.

"The second part is the professionals, the banking professionals, legal professionals, as well as the government that allows you to process fast, quickly, without burden. It's all here. You talk about language, Hong Kong has the capability."

Harilela stressed the need for a clear long-term strategy to attract investment and talent, ensuring Hong Kong remains a competitive family office hub.

On Hong Kong's investment landscape, he positioned it as a vital "super connector".

"I'm working with the government as well as the private sector on creating commercialisation of space discovery, space technology, space activation, using Hong Kong as the super connector for businesses to come in, for IPOs to be listed, for financial investment opportunities to go through Hong Kong, whether it's for China, whether it's from China outward," he said.

"I think Hong Kong has that, and I think that value, as we demonstrated, three to five percent bump in our GDP. That's just one facet. If we talk about the other facets, we have to create a little bit of a middle to longer term growth. AI, robotics, our capability in AI in Hong Kong, the intellectual power, great.

"But our outsourcing, our push is always done in China, across the border. But we look at Malaysia and we look at Indonesia, that's growing fast. And that market potential in those countries, phenomenal. I think Hong Kong, as a super connector to this whole region, is bar none."

HK proves doomsayers wrong, says Chan

by www.thestandard.com.hk
Jun 05, 2025

The doomsayers of Hong Kong have been proven wrong again and again in the past decades and the city will strengthen amid challenges, said the Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po.

It comes days after US economist Stephen Roach revised his "Hong Kong is over" conclusion, the most well-known doomsaying last year, and admitted that the city's financial market has been reinvigorated and will benefit from the Sino-US tensions.

Speaking at an event today, Chan said Hong Kong has experienced repeated doubts and dire predictions over the years, including the "Death in Hong Kong" headline published by Fortune Magazine in 1995.

But the city has "proven the pessimists wrong and emerged stronger," said the financial chief.

While not underestimating the headwinds, Hong Kong will not just "weather the storm" but will "prevail" with the support of mainland China and its commitments to openness, credibility and global connectivity as well as a people of agility and resilience, Chan noted.

The strong rebound of Hong Kong's stock market this year supports Chan's manifestation.

The benchmark Hang Seng Index marched nearly 22 percent this year as of June 5, far outshining the 1.5 percent rise in the US's S&P 500, the 3.7 percent gain of mainland China's Composite Index and the 4.5 percent fall of Japan's Nikkei 225.

The city also tops among global initial public offering markets with a cumulative fundraising amount of HK$77 billion year-to-date, Chan said. The Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing disclosed that there are about 150 companies in the pipeline.

Chan also mentioned that he has ordered the Securities and Futures Commission and the HKEX to facilitate the potential return of Chinese Concept Stocks currently listed abroad, as the US-listed mainland companies face delisting risks again.

The Hong Kong government maintained the forecast for full-year gross domestic product growth between 2 and 3 percent, though external challenges such as the Sino-US trade tensions remain.

As Roach, the former Morgan Stanley Asia chair, said in his latest story, Hong Kong is now being boosted by its closer ties with mainland China.

Chan noted in today's event that the tariff war and the drastic, flip-flopping policies of US President Donald Trump's administration have contributed to great uncertainty and heightened market volatility, which pushes global investors to diversify capital allocations and seek out markets that are growing, resilient, and stable in the long term.

Besides enhancing the traditional competitiveness in capital markets, Chan mentioned that Hong Kong is striving for financial innovation, including cryptocurrency, stablecoin and other virtual assets.

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Stablecoins laws effective Aug 1

by news.gov.hk
Jun 06, 2025

The Government today published in the Gazette the Stablecoins Ordinance (Commencement) Notice to appoint August 1, 2025, as the commencement date for the Stablecoins Ordinance to come into operation.

Gazetted last Friday, the ordinance mainly aims to supervise activities involving stablecoins, and to introduce a licensing regime for regulated stablecoin activities in Hong Kong.

Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury Christopher Hui said after the ordinance comes into force, the licensing regime will provide suitable guardrails for relevant stablecoin activities.

"It will be a milestone in facilitating the sustainable development of the stablecoin and digital asset ecosystem in Hong Kong."

The Financial Secretary has also made the Stablecoins Ordinance (Specification of Persons for Purposes of Section 9(2)(b)(iii)) Notice to allow the offering of specified stablecoins issued by a person who is not granted a licence under the ordinance to professional investors.

The Monetary Authority has launched a consultation on the detailed regulatory requirements of the regime, including provisions related to anti-money laundering and the counter-financing of terrorism.

The notices will be tabled before the Legislative Council on Wednesday for negative vetting.

HK rises to third on competitiveness

by news.gov.hk

Jun 17, 2025

Hong Kong's global competitiveness has risen by two places to third globally, after improving by two places to fifth last year, in the World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) 2025, published by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

The ranking marks Hong Kong's return to the global top three for the first time since 2019.

WCY 2025 finds that Hong Kong's competitiveness has improved significantly. The city's total competitiveness score of 99.2 out of 100 represents an increase of 7.7 points, the largest increase among the top 10 economies.

In terms of yearbook's four competitiveness factors, Hong Kong rose to second globally on government efficiency and business efficiency. Its rankings on economic performance and infrastructure also improved to sixth and seventh, respectively.

With regard to competitiveness sub-factors, Hong Kong tops the rankings on tax policy and business legislation, ranks second globally in international investment, education and finance, and third globally in international trade and management practices.

Ahead of this morning's Executive Council meeting, Chief Executive John Lee said Hong Kong's scores, both in overall terms and in many specific areas, have improved, showing that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's policy course is the right one, with various policies already yielding clear results.

Highlighting that the city ranks second globally on government efficiency, he said this reflects the inherent excellence and competence of the city's civil servants, and indicates that policies designed to make the Government more result-oriented are bearing fruit.

In addition, noting that Hong Kong ranks second globally on business efficiency, Mr Lee said this reflects business leaders' positive views of Hong Kong's competitiveness and of its strengths, including the rule of law, a simple tax system and low tax rates, and the free flow of capital, information, goods and talent.

HK likely to be top IPO market in 2025: Deloitte

by www.rthk.hk
Jun 19, 2025

Accounting giant Deloitte on Thursday upgraded its forecasts for Hong Kong's initial public offering (IPO) market outlook for this year as the city regained the world fundraising crown in the first half, with money raised exceeding that by Nasdaq or the New York Stock Exchange.

The firm noted that Hong Kong is set to see around HK$102.1 billion raised from 40 IPOs between January and June, which represents a 33 percent increase year on year in terms of number of deals and six to seven times more in terms of size.

The strong performance was boosted by four mega A+H listings, including that of battery giant CATL, which raised HK$41 billion, as well as a H-share listing by bubble tea chain Mixue that raised HK$444 million.

Deloitte now predicts the city will raise more than HK$200 billion from 80 listings this year – taking into consideration that almost 200 listing applications are currently in the pipeline, with five of them expected to raise at least HK$7.8 billion each.

That's notably higher compared with its December forecasts of between HK$130 billion and HK$150 billion this year.

The managing partner of Deloitte China's southern region, Edward Au, said the firm is "cautiously optimistic" that the city could maintain its top spot throughout the year – if there are no adverse geopolitical or macroeconomic disruptions at a time when the local bourse is continuing to woo global capital with reforms.

"What Hong Kong needs to do is on liquidity, how to continue to attract investors to Hong Kong, and secondly, to connect with the other exchanges, for example, in Asean and the Middle East, to facilitate secondary listings in Hong Kong," he said.

"The local bourse operator should also continue to upgrade its existing listing regime, to see if some of the listing rules and thresholds could be improved," he said.

Most of the new IPO heavyweights will come from the technology, media and telecommunications, consumer as well as medical and life sciences industries, Au added.

HK rated No 1 over Singapore, Tokyo as global business hub

by www.thestandard.com.hk
Jun 25, 2025

Hong Kong has claimed the top spot in the inaugural Asian Cities Internationality Index 2025, narrowly edging out Singapore, for excelling in the "Business and Economy", "Quality of Life" and "Infrastructure and Connetivity" categories.

Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce Chairman Agnes Chan Sui-kuen expressed confidence that the city will improve next year and widen its lead over Singapore.

The index, billed as an independent framework, is a new initiative by the HKGCC, assessing 11 major Asian cities across seven different areas as global business hubs.

In the overall results, out of 100 marks, Hong Kong ranked first with a score of 73.7, marginally outshining Singapore which scored 73.5, followed by Tokyo at 70.0.

Other cities are: Seoul (69.4), Shanghai (65.1), Bangkok (61.3), Kuala Lumpur (60.7), Taipei (57.9), Jakarta (55.5), Ho Chi Minh City (53.9) and Mumbai (53.1).

Among the seven areas, Hong Kong topped in “Business and Economy” because of its free and diversified financial markets, trading activities and an open environment.

The city also excelled in “Quality of Life” because it can offer a free, safe and stable living environment, and came off strong in “Infrastructure and Connectivity.”

However, the SAR stood at the fourth place for “Innovation and Ideas” and “Cultural Interaction,” and third at “Government and Legal System for Business.”

Shanghai was deemed the most innovative, as it is home to “unicorn” enterprises such as social media firm Xiaohongshu and self-driving technology supplier ZongMu.

Singapore led and outperformed Hong Kong in “Human Capital Diversity,” boasting a diverse talent pool from North Asia, Southeast Asia and other global economies.

Even though Singapore closely follows, Chan believed Hong Kong will show continued improvement in next year’s study, as various government initiatives begin to yield results, saying: “[Hong Kong] is moving in the right direction.”

For example, the Northern Metropolis, the cross-border tech park in Hetao, may boost the innovation indicator, while the newly opened Kai Tak Sports Park and upcoming major events could enhance the cultural indicator, she added.

The index also surveyed 1,107 business executives, both locals and expats, including those from the Middle East, Australia the Americas, Europe, and Africa.

Expats indicated that the most important factors encouraging them to stay in a city are the cost of living, quality of life, vibrancy, and career development opportunities.

HKGCC chief executive officer Patrick Yeung Wai-tim cited a European bank manager from Switzerland, who was assigned to Hong Kong and Asia for the first time.

"[The individual] was initially disappointed at the assignment, as the destination was Hong Kong rather than Singapore, but later became happy about how easy it was to make friends and the quick access to the city's 'backyard,' such as mountain tops."

Chan highlighted Hong Kong's common law system and status as a free port as key strengths.

To enhance international influence on par with sovereign nations like Japan and Singapore, she proposed that Hong Kong attracts more global organizations to establish a presence, citing the International Organization for Mediation as a prime example.

(Jamie Liu)

Consultation on regulating digital asset dealing and custodian services launched

by www.thestandard.com.hk
Jun 27, 2025

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) have launched a joint public consultation on the legislative proposals for establishing licensing regimes for digital asset dealing and custodian service providers.

The public consultation will last for two months until August 29, 2025, according to a statement on Friday.

Under the proposed regimes, any person who carries on a business of providing digital asset dealing services in Hong Kong will have to be licensed by or registered with the SFC, be it through a physical outlet or other platforms, both simple dealing services like smaller-scale conversions between different such assets or between virtual assets and fiat money and more complex services like brokerage activities, block trading activities, and other activities of advisors or asset managers.

Virtual asset custodian services providers – safekeeping or instruments enabling transfer of digital assets on behalf of clients – will also have to be licensed by or registered with the SFC.

The above-mentioned services providers will need to meet fit-and-proper criteria and comply with a range of regulatory requirements, including those related to proper protection of client assets, financial resources, knowledge and experience, risk management, financial reporting and disclosure, conduct of business, information and notifications, and record keeping.

Under the two proposed licensing regimes, the SFC will be the standard setter, responsible for formulating regulatory requirements applicable to licensed and registered digital asset dealing and custodian service providers. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) will be the frontline regulator for banks and stored value facilities (SVFs) registered to provide the relevant services.

Both the SFC and the HKMA will be provided with the powers to implement the regimes in accordance with the statutory requirements.

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