



Newsletter

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We publish this month a photograph of TUI DISCOVERY of Columbia Cruise Service.

If you have pictures or postcards of your ship, please send them in to us for future Newsletters.

We Welcome

Carnival UK

Sushma Ale
Dev Bahadur Thapa
Mamata Rai
Swoma Nakarmi

Norwegian Cruise Lines

Pradeep Kumar
Vasu V. Srin
Bhanu Prakash
Appu Aji Kumar

Disney Cruise Lines

Surya Kumar Gurang

2017 is upon us and seems set to be an interesting year. Whatever happens, it seems that the security industry will be both more vulnerable to attacks and more in demand than before. This will put pressure upon us all, but it is part of our job. Whatever political events occur around the world, it is our job to make sure that they do not adversely affect the people we are pledged to protect. We shall all have our work cut out for us over the next few years, so be warned and be prepared!



SHIPPING COMPANIES

AND SHIPS LINKED TO US

We are working with 21 shipping companies, and have 738 men and 168 women on ships, a total of 906 crew and staff under management.



GI (HK) Business

We are providing security services for 28 Hong Kong Clients and have 104 security staff employed.

Our employment agency placement service found 0 Bodyguard/Driver post position over the last month.

Editor of Newsletter



Derek Lin

World Security

Economics

There is little news at present. The world's stock markets election of President-elect Trump has given the world's stock markets and the US Dollar are strong, the world's trade is sluggish or weak, and much of Europe remains mired in the recession from which it has never recovered since the 200-8 financial crisis. Greece is suffering badly now due to the austerity imposed upon it by its creditors, and many of its people are reverting to living in a level of poverty not seen in the west for a very long time. There is no solution on offer to that problem.

Nuclear

The new President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, has promised to revisit the agreement by which Iran's nuclear programme was regulated. There is likely to be much friction in the region of the Persian Gulf as a result.

Europe

Tensions on the border between Ukraine and Russia remain high, and NATO forces have deployed to stiffen the morale and provide a deterrent in member countries bordering Russia: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Joint NATO air patrols over the border regions have increased. Russia has increased its naval, including submarine, activity in the areas of the Baltic, the North Sea and the North Atlantic. Concern is growing in Sweden, which is not a NATO member, about Russian pressure.

Just after last month's Newsletter was written, an ISIS inspired terrorist attack took place in Berlin. On 19 December 2016, Anis Amri, a Tunisian failed asylum seeker, drove a lorry he had hijacked into the Christmas market beside Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church at Breitscheidplatz, killing 12 people and leaving 56 others injured. One of the victims was the truck's original driver, a Pole, Łukasz Urban, who was found shot dead in the passenger seat. Amri was killed four days later in a shootout with police near Milan in Italy.



Security and police officers seen near the damaged truck after it plowed through a Christmas market on Monday night in Berlin.

The Middle East and the Arab World

Conflict continues in Syria after the recapture of Aleppo by the regime of President Assad and its ally Russia have retaken Aleppo. ISIS forces recaptured Palmyra, the ancient city in the desert that they have largely destroyed.

Conflict has not yet ended in Libya and Yemen.

A bomb planted by terrorists sponsored by ISIS killed 39 and wounded 70 in the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey, on New Year's Eve. ISIS has carried out four attacks in the last month on Turkey and its forces, some of those killed being Turkish troops fighting ISIS inside Syria.

Iraqi forces aided by coalition planes and small numbers of foreign troops have begun to retake Mosul in the north of Iraq, which was captured by ISIS in 2014.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

The security situation in Afghanistan remains grave, but that in Pakistan has slowly improved.



ISIS forces recaptured Palmyra.

Somalia

There have been no more reports of Somali piracy. Fighting continues in the country between the government and its foreign allies and Islamic militant al-Shabaab fighters.

Thailand and Malaysia

The Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border, continues.

Asia

Tension continues in both the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan around islands claimed by China. The new US President, Donald Trump, has raised tension with China by attacking what he calls its 'manipulation of its currency' and its occupation of islands in the South China Sea. More importantly, he has continued to deny the validity of the One China policy upon which US-China relations have been based for over 50 years and by which it gave only covert support to Taiwan. This has alarmed and enraged China, which treats Taiwan as a red line.



China will "take off the gloves" if Donald Trump continues to provoke Beijing over Taiwan.

Palestine

The new US administration of President Donald Trump has promised to move the US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, which the Palestinians regard as occupied territory. Trump has also been forthright in his support of Israel, which has already begun to speed up Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. This will make a two state solution to the Palestinian problem impossible as there will not be left sufficient land and resources to form a coherent Palestinian state. It is also very likely to cause violence when Palestinians become clear that they have nothing left for which to negotiate. It will also cause problems between the US and its European allies, which regard the settlements as illegal and are supporting a two state solution.

Africa

Nigerian forces continue to attack Boko Haram Islamic terrorists in the north of the country. Civil conflict continues in South Sudan.

After he lost a general election, the President of Gambia, Yahya Jammeh, refused to resign. Other west African countries, members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), sent troops to pressurise him to leave, and he eventually went into exile in Chad having allegedly looted about US\$11 million from state coffers. His successor, Adama Barrow, who won the election, had fled to neighbouring Senegal, but has now returned to Gambia supported by ECOWAS troops.



Jammeh lost an election last month and has refused to accept his defeat.

Myanmar

Fighting continues in Shan State between the army and several local militia and in Rakhine State between Muslim guerrillas and the Army.

The Malacca Straits

There is no news this month of piracy in the area.

India

Kashmir remains disturbed.

The Americas

Problems remain in Venezuela, where the government's disastrous policies have led to impoverishment of the people and civil unrest.



Venezuela Issues New Bank Notes Because of Hyperinflation. Exchanging old notes for new ones at a bank in Caracas, Venezuela.



At the Story Kitchen in Nepal, women learn audio and interviewing techniques that enable them to become 'justice reporters'.

Nepal News

Nepalese women offer up food for thought in the Story Kitchen

30 Dec- Jaya Luintel has a vision: to see the history of Nepal retold through the eyes of women. The Story Kitchen, a project she helped set up, aims to do just that.

The initiative uses community radio and workshops to offer an outlet for women to tell their life stories, particularly their experiences during the country's decade-long civil war.

Luintel hopes the project will give women new skills, a safe space to talk and, crucially, increase their confidence so that they feel able to testify before Nepal's truth and reconciliation commission, set up to investigate rights abuses during the conflict.

"We want people to look at armed conflict through women's eyes," explains Luintel, the organisation's president and CEO.

"When my granddaughter reads about the history of Nepal and the history of conflict I really don't want her not to know about what women faced."

The Story Kitchen was established in 2012, but money from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and the Governance Facility - an initiative launched

in 2014 by the embassies of Denmark and Switzerland, and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), with the Nepalese government - enabled the project to step up its work last year.

Luintel has worked in radio for years, reporting on issues facing women and lending a female perspective to all the stories she has sourced. She hosted a Saturday morning show about women's rights and social justice.

When Luintel began working for an NGO she recognised that the "internet and new media technology can bring people together and provide a platform for people to share stories". The seed of an idea for the Story Kitchen was planted.

Through the project, women who survived violence in 10 districts - some among those most affected by the conflict - have been trained as "justice reporters", learning audio and interviewing techniques that allow them to record the testimonies of women in their communities. The journalists have been paired up with women's rights activists to offer support "if they [journalists] face problems or threats" in their work.

"The women get recognition for being justice reporters and go door to door. They know who in their communities

have survived violence. That is the best way to reach women," says Luintel.

Cultural taboos surrounding sexual violence and fear of reprisals mean it is hard to determine how many women and girls were abused during the conflict, which ran between 1996 and 2006.

In 2014, a tribunal, organised by Nepalese women's groups and the national human rights commission, confirmed that rape and other acts of sexual violence were committed against women during the conflict. The tribunal also heard that when violence was reported, no action was taken.

Despite the Nepalese government prioritising the issue of gender-based violence since the war, legislative changes - including outlawing marital rape and introducing a law against domestic violence - often go unenforced. In 2014, it was reported in the Social Institutions and Gender Index, published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's development centre, that the notion of women being subservient to men in Nepal was so rooted in society that "neither the violence nor the failure to complain about it is unusual".

So far, 94 stories have been collected and documented by the justice reporters. Some of the women who shared their stories have since attended a follow-up workshop to meet with other survivors, find support, and receive encouragement to seek justice for the crimes committed against them.

Some of the testimonies have been broadcast on Nepalese radio. Written summaries have been collated to provide a body of evidence that organisers hope will feed into the truth and reconciliation process, to ensure women's experiences are given prominence.

"We are also working with some radio stations at district level to help journalists to be more sensitive about violence against women ... so they can be aware ... and be sensitive when reporting stories about women who experienced violence," says Luintel. The media in Nepal is dominated by men.

"We want to boost the confidence of women, so they can testify and not feel alone, so they can come forward and seek justice," adds Luintel. "We want to put a microphone in the hands of women – that is powerful."

Funding for the Story Kitchen, which in December won the Tomorrow's Peacebuilders award, runs until the end of 2017. Hopeful that they can widen the project to include more women, Luintel and her team are busy trying to secure more money.

She admits changing perceptions about women in Nepal is still very challenging, but hopes the work they are doing will make men more sensitive to the needs and experiences of women.

"We really want them [men] to own these issues, to be in the shoes of those women and think about what would have happened to their mother, grandmother at that time. We have all gone through this armed conflict."



Activists protest to ensure women's rights in a new draft constitution, Katmandu, Nepal

Nepal makes big stride in terms of ensuring women's rights, says Mauritius former president

25 Jan- KATHMANDU - A visiting foreign delegation led by former President of the Republic of Mauritius and former Vice President of World Leadership Alliance Club- de Madrid, Cassam Uteem today called on Speaker Onsari Gharti at latter's office, Singha Durbar.

On the occasion, the two sides exchanged views on how to move ahead by allocating equal opportunities to all in the society in the period following the termination of conflict.

Speaker Gharti, apprising the delegation about salient features of Nepal's constitution, said Nepal has already found the path for development and prosperity by successfully facing the tough situation.

In response, the Mauritius former President said Nepal has made a big stride regarding the establishment of women's rights and praised Nepal for such achievement.

"The developed countries in the world have not been able to guarantee women's rights to the level of Nepal and results are enough to conclude that such countries are yet to acknowledge some of the women rights."

The Club, an alliance of former heads of state and government, is working in cooperation with other bodies to bring world's minorities and excluded communities to the mainstream of development.

On the occasion, the team informed the Speaker that it was keen to share its experiences about how to address concerns of conflict-affected communities and work in collaboration with Nepal toward that end.

Nepal made tremendous efforts in course of taking the peace process to a conclusion and has now found a smooth path for moving forward, the Speaker said.

Nepal recognises employment in India as foreign

25 Jan- KATHMANDU: Nepal has formally recognised migration of its countrymen to India for employment purpose as "foreign employment" and bring them under the insurance coverage for the first time.

The government decided to give equal recognition to the employment in India as in other countries such as Gulf countries and Malaysia, Xinhua news agency quoted Prime Minister Puspa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" as saying on Tuesday.

"Now, people leaving for employment in India will also get insurance coverage," Prachanda said.

There is no official data about the number of Nepali working in India but around two million persons are believed to have been living there.

After the government's recognition, Nepali migrant workers in India will be entitled to receive insurance coverage up to \$12,812 for critical illness and life insurance.



The precise height of Everest has been the subject of some controversy.

Aussie optometrists giving the gift of sight to Nepal's Sherpa children

24 Jan- Anyone who aspires to climb Mount Everest might already be one inch closer to their goal.

Indian scientists have announced they will send an expedition to the peak of Mount Everest to confirm theories that Nepal's devastating 2015 earthquake shrank the world's largest mountain.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake killed thousands of people and reshaped the landscape across the Himalayan nation.

Satellite readings have suggested the impact of the earthquake reduced Everest's height – officially recorded by India and Nepal as 8,848 metres (29,029ft) – by somewhere between a few millimetres and an inch.

But ongoing doubts within the scientific community have prompted India's surveying agency to find out for sure, said India's surveyor general, Swarna Subba Rao.

Rao said he would be sending a team to

the peak of the mountain including three or four agency officers "who are physically fit, able-bodied and qualified to go". "The rest will be professional mountaineers," he said.

They will spend about two hours at the summit, enough time to take GPS readings of the distance between their coordinates and satellites orbiting above. The data – accurate to within a centimetre – will take around two weeks to be processed.

To cross-check, a team will also be deployed to measure the mountain the old-fashioned way: by triangulation, the same method used by the Welsh surveyor Sir George Everest, an earlier boss of India's surveying agency, to determine the peak's height in the 1850s.

It involves standing at a horizontal surface at a known distance from the mountain, and using a high-powered, telescopic protractor to determine the angle between that point and the peak. In other words, trigonometry.

The first attempts to determine the height of Mount Everest by this method recorded

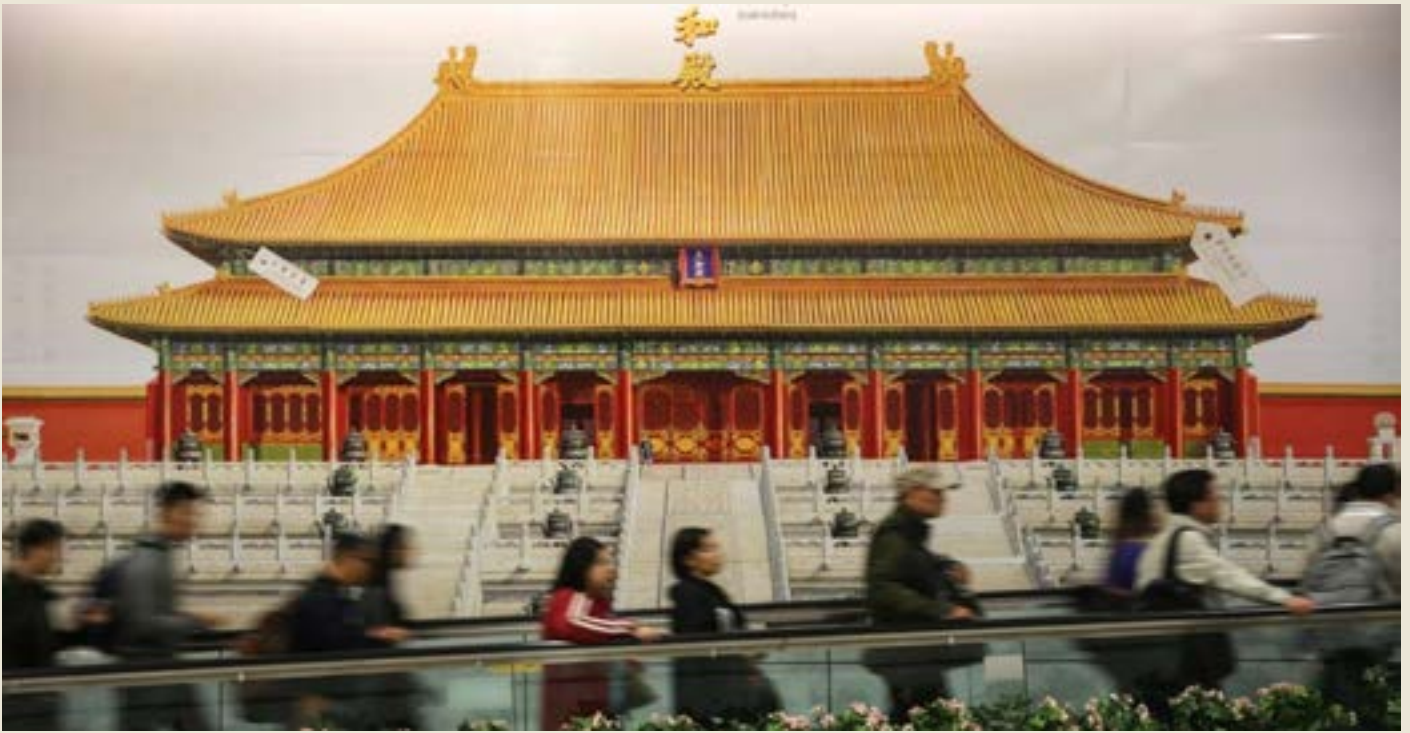
it accurately to within 30ft. The precise height has since been the subject of some controversy, including over whether the figure should include the mountain's snow cap or just the rock underneath.

Rao said the expedition would involve the usual level of danger but that he had been inundated with volunteers among his staff. "The risk is compensated by the recognition," he said. "They will be recognised as having summited the mountain."

He said the expedition, which will cost about US\$700,000 (£560,000) and be conducted jointly with the Nepal government, would happen when conditions and staff were ready.

"We're preparing our people, acclimatising them, training them in mountaineering," he said.

The new, updated height would be used to assist in scientific studies and to determine the position of the underlying plates, he added.



Hong Kong News

Hong Kong Palace Museum consultation delayed as authority moves to address public criticism

09 Jan- Consultation for the controversial Hong Kong Palace Museum project has been abruptly postponed less than one hour before it was scheduled to begin.

At 1.37pm, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority issued a press statement saying the launch, which was originally to be held at City Gallery at 2.30pm, would be deferred to Tuesday afternoon following a scheduled meeting of the authority's board.

Although authority chairman Chief Secretary Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor provided the Legislative Council's house committee with an explanation of the project last Friday, the authority said it wanted to first "consolidate" responses to public concerns on various issues.

Lam was not expected to attend today's launch of the public consultation.

"Despite the detailed explanation, the authority is aware of diverse remarks and comments on the project and concerns expressed by the community about the process over the weekend," the statement said.

"The authority takes the view that these public concerns, if not addressed as soon as possible, would divert attention from the public consultation."

On December 23, Lam announced the museum would be built in the West Kowloon Cultural District and would house a collection loaned from the Palace Museum in Beijing. But the decision quickly drew criticism for the government's lack of consultation and transparency in the decision making process.

WKCD Authority board member Kan Tai-keung said he was notified of the change "unexpectedly".

"I was having lunch, after which I would be going to the launch," he told the Post. He said he had no further information about the delay, but it may have been necessary given the "critical" nature of the consultation.

"The situation is critical because of the criticism, which could kill the project," the designer said.

Kan, former director of the Cheung Kong Art and Design school at Shantou University, said he had warned the board

and its chair of the museum project's criticism.

"I had a 30-minute teleconference with Mrs Lam conveying my concern to her, including the expected criticism she would get due to not having a public consultation," he recalled saying after learning of the project in early November.

He reiterated the warning at a November 28 board meeting, which saw the board vote unanimously for the project.

Kan acknowledged there were "many shortcomings" with the HK\$21.6 billion WKCD hub, and asked the arts and cultural community to "have mercy" on the Palace Museum project.

"I understand the need for public consultation. But this is a special case that is impossible to do a public consultation on," he said.

The authority's board is set to meet at 2:30pm Tuesday, with the public consultation to get underway shortly afterwards.

"A little more time is necessary to make adequate preparation to handle this issue, and I feel tired for those who work on this," he said.

Could Tsang v Lam shape up as elites v the people in Hong Kong chief executive battle?

16 Jan- Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor and John Tsang Chun-wah may share a similar career trajectory of having spent decades in government service, but they are hardly cut from the same ideological cloth.

Tsang, who joined the government in 1982, is a firmer believer in “big market, small government” and favours minimal government intervention.

But Lam, who joined the administration two years earlier after graduating from the University of Hong Kong, has sought to highlight the need to support the disadvantaged and to promote balanced development, given the city’s widening income inequality and hefty fiscal surplus.

The difference in their governing philosophy has given rise to a perception that Tsang is backed by the city’s elites and favours the status quo, while Lam is supported by people who favour a proactive approach to tackling social ills. While they may naturally appeal to such constituencies, academics warn against portraying the pair as representing exclusively the interests of opposing social classes or blocs. The candidates themselves are going to some lengths not to be painted into one corner, with Lam stressing she is not a socialist and Tsang uploading pictures of himself bonding with ordinary people.

As financial secretary, Tsang managed

large budget surpluses but was widely viewed as too conservative in how public money was spent. He had argued that the bigger the fiscal reserves the government amassed, the better.

At a closed-door dinner on December 13, Lam, formerly chairwoman of the Commission on Poverty, described the fiscal planning report as unfair to the elderly.

Lam raised eyebrows last year by acknowledging three “mountains” or contentious issues the government aimed to conquer.

Professor Lau Siu-kai, vice-chairman of the semi-official Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macau Studies, said it was natural that businesspeople and the wealthy were more receptive to Tsang’s pro-market approach.

But Lam was quick to make clear during the Science Park seminar that “I’m not a socialist” and that Hong Kong should not abandon capitalism.

Announcing her bid for chief executive on Thursday, she said: “I support the free-market economy but I agree there is a need to narrow the wealth gap and bridge the social divide. This is different from championing socialism.”

Dr Law Chi-kwong, who worked with Lam on the Commission on Poverty, pointed out that she was well connected to the business community and had worked with some second-generation tycoons.

Law said Lam also worked closely with Hopewell Holdings and Sino Land on the handling of hawkers next to The Avenue, a property project in Wan Chai.

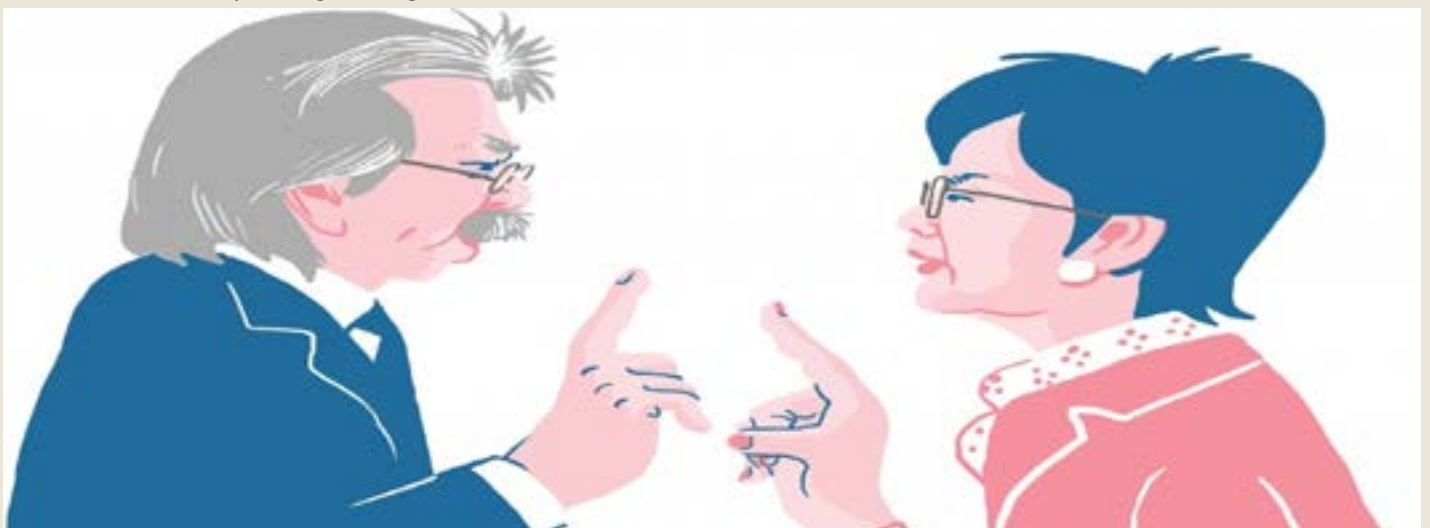
Tian Feilong, an associate professor at Beihang University’s law school in Beijing, said Tsang’s governing philosophy was closer to that of the business sector while Lam’s proactive approach was more in line with the need for social development, such as narrowing the wealth gap.

“But their differences are only about concrete policies, and labels like who represents business interests do not help rational analysis on who is the better candidate for the top job,” Tian said.

While Tsang’s more conservative stance may sit well with the entrenched elite, Lam’s attempts to reach out to be more inclusive suggests an acknowledgement that change must take place in the social compact.

Tian said this approach sat better with Beijing, which trusted Lam more. She also had the advantage of close interaction with the central government on issues like political reform, he added.

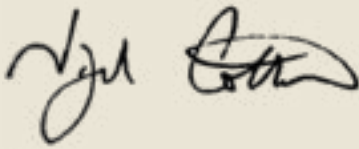
“The central government’s expectation of a chief executive is higher than for a minister. It expects the chief executive to have the capability of handling complicated situations in Hong Kong and its relationship with the mainland and the international community,” Tian said.



John Tsang and Carrie Lam are hardly cut from the same ideological cloth.

Conclusion

In the Chinese world, and in Hong Kong where we are headquartered, it is about to become the Year of the Rooster, so we wish everyone a very happy Chinese New Year!



Nigel Collett
Managing Director



Congratulation to Dhan bahadur wagle!