

## Stacy Shi

The first batch of 23 directorate-level civil servants last week attended a seven-day national training program to study the country's policies on governance and major strategies in Beijing, the country's modern history as well as science and technology developments in Shanghai.

Participants came away with the understanding that the country's situation was important for the SAR to actively integrate into the overall development and were left impressed by the rapid development of the country compared with 10 years ago when they attended similar programs.

The first of five lectures they took at National Academy of Governance last Monday was given by Xie Chuntao, executive vice president of the academy in charge of daily operations, which Arsene Yiu Kai-cheuk, Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene) said, reflected the importance the academy attached to this study program.

In addition to the constitution of the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong's Basic Law and the Chinese-style modernization, they also learned how to improve their ability to deal with emergencies while having lively exchanges with the speakers.

They also visited the Hong Kong and Macau work office, where they met Wang Lingui, deputy director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office.



Xie Chuntao and John Lee witness the signing of the agreement.



The civil servants at the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office.

# Top civil servants get big picture on national front



The 23 get together with Xie Chuntao for a group photograph after a class at the National Academy of Governance.



The civil servants get a briefing on the nation's aviation and aerospace achievements in Shanghai.

The 23 participants departed for Shanghai on June 7 in the afternoon by high-speed train, where they visited aircraft manufacturing and high-technology industries.

"We learned the country has a strong theoretical foundation in governance, and

that it's crucial to understand not only our own system, but also the nation's system to take the advantage of one country, two systems," Yiu said.

Eve Tam Mei-yee, Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Culture), said she learned of the environmental prob-

lems the nation was facing in 2013 during a training in Beijing, and was "impressed to see how much progress can be made within 10 years on such a tough issue" when seeing the clean streets and blue skies 10 years later.

Choi Shu-keung, the director of inves-

tigations in the private sector at the Independent Commission Against Corruption, added they also needed to write an assignment to reflect their feelings and gains.

Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu met Xie at the central government offices in Tamar yesterday.

They witnessed the signing of an agreement between the Civil Service Bureau and the academy on the national studies program for senior directorate-level civil servants, marking a new stage of cooperation between the SAR government and the academy.

Xie also delivered a talk to about 350 senior officials, including department secretaries, bureau directors, and other politically appointed officials.

"The talk enabled senior government officials and civil servants to have a deeper understanding of the governance philosophy and mission of the CPC, and to have a more accurate appreciation of the country's policies of governance, so that the SAR government can play a more active role in supporting the overall development of the country," Lee said.

Lee thanked the academy for its support in training the SAR government and hoped officials would serve Hong Kong better and leverage the distinctive advantages of Hong Kong under one country, two systems and its unique advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world, and contribute to the realization of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

## MTR invested HK\$70 million to bolster smart railway technology through research with ASTRI

To strengthen smart railway operations management and intelligent maintenance with the latest technology, the MTR Corporation has invested and reserved a total of about HK\$70 million to deepen its collaboration with the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI).

Given ASTRI's rich research and copious experience in applying communication technology, artificial intelligence technology, the Internet of Things (IoT) and data analytics, the collaboration between the two parties will enhance the performance and efficiency of MTR's railway operations and intelligent maintenance.

This collaboration is marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which establishes a framework for fostering innovative solutions and technology applications. Officiating at the signing ceremony are Dr Tony Lee, Operations

Director of MTR Corporation and Dr Denis Yip, Chief Executive Officer of ASTRI, Mr. Chan Hing-keung, Chief of Operations Engineering Service & Innovation of MTR Corporation, and Mr. David Chan, Chief Operating Officer of ASTRI.

MTR has been working with ASTRI since 2021, during which MTR allocated approximately HK\$50 million to embark on projects with ASTRI. They kick-started multiple contracts and projects, including the use of precise automatic optical inspection technology to monitor railway safety, joint research and development of a portable escalator gap clearance inspection tool, and the application of digital twin to enhance the operational efficiency of the maintenance centre in the future.

Moving ahead, MTR and ASTRI look forward to further collaboration, jointly researching, developing and applying new technologies such as IoT, artificial intelligence and data analysis to build a smart railway system.

Dr. Tony Lee, Operations Director of the MTR Corporation, notes that MTR spares no effort in applying technology to enhance operational and management performance,

and strives for excellence in providing safe and reliable railway services for its passengers. He is grateful for ASTRI being its close partner over the years, assisting MTR to improve its operational and management efficiency with innovative solutions. "We look forward to working with ASTRI's experts to contribute to 'industry-academic-research' collaboration and facilitate the development of Hong Kong's smart railways," Lee adds.

Dr. Denis Yip, Chief Executive Officer of ASTRI, is keen on working with MTR to promote the comprehensive application of intelligent railway technology. "ASTRI is pleased to establish a close cooperative relationship with MTR to develop an intelligent railway using advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, big data, Internet of Things, digital twin, optical inspections and more," says Yip.

Yip adds that as intelligent railway service plays an essential role in building an international smart city, this collaboration will bring epoch-making breakthroughs to smart mobility technology in Hong Kong,

continuously providing passengers with better travel experience and services and empowering smart living with technology.

Under the new corporate strategy "Transforming the Future", the MTR Corporation actively joins hands with research institutions, universities and start-ups to continuously promote smart railway services and operations, while contributing to local scientific research to help Hong Kong get ahead.

Meanwhile, ASTRI will remain steadfast in solidifying Hong Kong's status as an international smart city. By actively supporting the improvement of the innovation and technology ecosystem, and promoting cooperation among the government, industry, academia and research sectors, ASTRI seeks to transform advanced technology into practical applications, creating intelligent living and business environments for the public.



Dr Tony Lee, Operations Director of MTR Corporation (from right) and Dr Denis Yip, Chief Executive Officer of ASTRI (from left), Mr Chan Hing-keung, Chief of Operations Engineering Service & Innovation of MTR Corporation (Second right) and Mr David Chan, Chief Operating Officer of ASTRI (second left) signed the MoU today.



The escalator gap clearance inspection tool co-developed by MTR and ASTRI recently won a Silver Medal in the Geneva International Exhibition of Inventions 2023.