

Grasping opportunities

The Belt and Road Initiative presents an excellent chance for Hong Kong companies to take part in infrastructural projects in more than 60 countries, but more information is required on upcoming ventures and bidding processes.

May Chan Rhodes



Mr Raymond Yip
Deputy Executive Director
of the Hong Kong Trade
Development Council



Sr Ng Kin Siu
Chairman of FDB Holdings



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1. Zhang Dejiang, Member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, and Chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, delivered a keynote speech at the inaugural Belt and Road Summit on 18 May 2016.
2. John Tsang, Financial Secretary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (right) and Ali Tayyeb Nia, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in Tehran on 8 November 2016 to enhance economic cooperation between Hong Kong and Iran. Mr Tsang was leading a business delegation to Dubai, UAE and Tehran, Iran in November to forge business ties between Hong Kong and new markets along the Belt and Road.
3. The site of the Nepal Project which withstood a devastating earthquake in April 2015.
4. China's Ministry of Commerce and the HKTDC jointly organised a mission to the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary on 20-28 November 2016 for mainland investors and Hong Kong's professional, finance and IRES-related sectors to explore investment and business opportunities under the Belt and Road Initiative. The delegates, led by Raymond Yip, Deputy Executive Director, HKTDC (front row, third from left), visited the site of the Rokycany-Pilsen Railway Line and Tunnel Modernisation project in the Czech Republic on 21 Nov 2016.

“Demand is expected to be especially huge in emerging markets such as the Chinese mainland, ASEAN countries and the Middle East.”

The Belt and Road Initiative is gathering momentum both at home and abroad, with a series of trade missions, seminars and workshops being arranged in the coming year. In turn, business communities in many countries are eagerly anticipating the developments as the Mainland China and Hong Kong governments, together with associated trade bodies, seek to raise the profile of their professional services.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) has been leveraging its international network and close ties with industries, governments and other intermediaries to promote Hong Kong services for Belt and Road projects. Its Hong Kong headquarters and 46 other offices worldwide are collaborating to highlight Hong Kong's world-class services, and its role as a “super-connector”.

“The Belt and Road is about connectivity and integration, which calls for infrastructure and real estate development along the routes, such as bridges, railways, port and airport facilities, factories, and mixed-use housing and commercial projects, to name but a few,” says Raymond Yip, Deputy Executive Director of the HKTDC.

“Demand is expected to be especially huge in emerging markets such as the Chinese mainland, ASEAN countries and the Middle East,” Yip adds. “This will certainly present tremendous opportunities for Hong Kong surveying professionals, who are valued for their excellent professional expertise, strong management skills, world-class integrated services and abundant international experience.”

Under the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), agreements on mutual recognition of qualifications are being signed between HKIS and industry associations on the mainland, thus enhancing access both to the mainland and its network in Belt and Road markets for Hong Kong surveyors.

According to the Asian Development Bank, Asia will require US\$8.2 trillion in investment for infrastructure projects from 2010 to 2020, equating to annual average demand of US\$820 billion. A shortage of local professionals means firms from outside Asia are increasingly allowed to participate as investors in owning as well as managing these projects.

In addition to the infrastructure boom, a growing

number of shopping malls are being either built or renovated in China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and other Asian countries, driven by a rise in consumption on the continent.

As for the Middle East, Saudi Arabia recently rolled out Vision 2030, an ambitious economic diversification scheme involving massive infrastructure projects. Rapid growth is also expected in other Middle Eastern cities such as Abu Dhabi.

Multiple Hong Kong trade missions to Belt and Road countries at inter-government level are already up and running. Local businesspeople from various sectors, including infrastructure and real estate services (IRES), have been invited to meet government officials and business leaders across the continent and further afield.

A five-day business mission led by the Financial Secretary to Astana and Almaty in Kazakhstan took place in September this year, where a memorandum of understanding was signed between the HKTDC and the Astana International Financial Centre to facilitate future business delegations to both destinations and investment projects in Kazakhstan. Other business missions to Dubai, Tehran, and European capitals including Prague, Warsaw and Budapest also took place in November, involving networking events, briefing sessions and company visits.

More such visits are planned next year to help the IRES sector capitalise on opportunities arising from the Belt and Road scheme. The HKTDC is organising a business mission to Indonesia and Cambodia in February, and also an urbanisation-focused event known as “Building For the Future” in Fujian Province in late 2017 to promote Hong Kong's IRES.

The next Belt and Road Summit will take place on 11 September 2017. The inaugural summit in May this year featured more than 40 speakers, including senior government officials and business leaders from Belt and Road countries. More than 2,400 participants, including investors, project owners and services professionals attended.

At the 2016 summit, Zhang Dejiang, Member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National

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People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China, said Hong Kong plays a pivotal role in the Belt and Road Initiative.

He mentioned in particular an example where a Hong Kong company was appointed as engineering consultant for a China-aided project in Nepal. The project withstood a devastating earthquake in April 2015 which saw many other buildings collapse.

“This shows the superior quality of Hong Kong’s professional services, and proves that such services have a big role to play in the Belt and Road development,” Zhang said.

Sr Ng Kin-siu, chairman of the Hong Kong company that was awarded the Nepal project, said the main thing learned from the project was the importance of cultural exchange. Working with both a Mainland China contractor and the local Nepalese people, Ng said his team had to bridge cultural differences among the various parties when it came to concepts such as safety, quality and professional standards.

“For example, Hong Kong companies such as ours are used to adhering to international standards on safety,” Ng added. “However, in Nepal, it is a completely different picture. We would have to remind local staff of the importance of wearing helmets at the construction site, and that they should wear protective footwear instead of slippers. We also had to make sure there were no children playing on the construction site. These are just a few examples of how vast the cultural differences can be.”

Ng’s team also organised regular training with local staff, on top of frequent meetings with the mainland contractors to ensure everyone was on the same page at each stage of the project.

He explained how it is important to be aware of both the natural constraints and the geopolitics of a country and to get to know the capacity of local contractors, facilities, and suppliers. For example, several months ago, a riot on the Nepal-India border affected the supply of construction materials for the project. Ng’s team was able to use its local market intelligence to find an alternative supplier to turn the situation around.

“You need to stay on the top of the game rather than wait for someone to give you advice,” Ng said. “It is

important to have local knowledge and connections so that you can mobilise local resources in times of crisis.”

Nepal, like many other Belt and Road countries, is brimming with opportunities, Ng said. However, he feels that there is a “missing link” when it comes to the availability of market information, which could be addressed by more direct communication between existing and potential stakeholders.

“We know that there are lots of things going on between the mainland and the Belt and Road countries where Hong Kong companies like us could participate and contribute,” Ng said. “But we wouldn’t know who to turn to. It would also be awkward for private companies like us to go directly to ask government departments about what is happening in the market.”

Yip says the HKTDC is dedicated to establishing Hong Kong as an information hub for the Belt and Road Initiative. It has launched a Belt and Road portal (www.beltandroad.hk), which allows visitors to source Hong Kong services providers for their projects. It welcomes more Hong Kong services providers to list their company information on this database.

The website also offers valuable information, such as links to various official tendering and bidding websites for major economies along the Belt and Road. It also provides market intelligence, including detailed profiles of the 60-plus Belt and Road economies and examples of projects in countries that Hong Kong’s IRES sector is involved in.

“With infrastructure and real estate development laying the foundations for the Belt and Road Initiative, surveyors will be among the first to benefit from the projects,” Yip said. “I would encourage surveyors to sign up for our events and outreach promotions related to the Belt and Road. This is the best way to meet relevant industry players and learn about opportunities that will emerge as the Initiative continues to take shape.”

The article is published courtesy of Classified Post.

「預計中國內地、東盟國家及中東等新興市場的需求將會相當龐大。」

把握機會

「一帶一路」倡議為香港企業提供參與超過 60 個國家的基建項目的絕佳機會，但對於未來的項目及投標程序，我們還需要更多資訊。

May Chan Rhodes

隨著「一帶一路」倡議在海內外升溫，一系列商貿考察團、研討會及工作坊將於明年展開。中國內地和香港政府以及其他相關貿易機構期望藉此機會，推廣專業服務。各國的商界人士無不熱切期待該計劃取得進展。

香港貿易發展局（下稱香港貿發局）一直善用其國際網絡，以及與各行各業、政府及其他中間的緊密聯繫，推廣香港與「一帶一路」的相關項目。其香港總部及分布全球的 46 間辦事處正聯手推廣香港的世界級服務，以及其「超級聯繫人」的角色。

香港貿發局副總裁葉澤恩稱，「『一帶一路』旨在連接及整合資源，為此，我們需要發展沿線的基礎設施及房地產，包括橋樑、鐵路、港口及機場設施、工廠及混合用途的住房及商業項目。」

葉氏亦提到，「預計中國內地、東盟國家及中東等新興市場的需求將會相當龐大。對香港的測量專才而言，此計劃將為他們提供諸多機會，讓他們能夠展示卓越的專業技能、高超的管理技巧、世界級的綜合服務及豐富的國際經驗。」

根據《內地與香港關於建立更緊密經貿關係的安排》(CEPA)，香港測量師學會與內地相關行業協會已就資格互認簽署相關協議，協助香港測量師涉足內地及利用中國於「一帶一路」市場的網絡。

據亞洲開發銀行預測，於 2010 年至 2020 年期間，亞洲將需要投入 8 萬 2 千億美元建設基建項目，相當於年均需求為 8 千 2 百億美元。由於缺乏當地專才，亞洲以外的企業獲准以投資者的身份擁有及參與管理項目，將逐漸成為一項趨勢。

除基礎設施項目蓬勃發展之外，在國民消費水平提升的推動下，中國、印度、印尼、泰國、馬來西亞及其他亞洲國家正大舉興建或翻新大型商場。

至於中東方面，沙特阿拉伯於近期推出〈願景 2030〉，這項雄心勃勃的多元化經濟計劃涉及大規模興建基礎設施。預計

阿布扎比等其他中東城市亦將錄得迅速增長。

香港政府已多次安排商貿代表團前往「一帶一路」沿線國家進行政府級訪問。來自本港基建及房地產服務等行業的多名商業人士獲邀與沿線各國的政府官員及商界領袖會面。

今年 9 月，財政司司長率領香港代表團在哈薩克斯坦的阿斯塔納和阿拉木圖進行為期五日的商貿訪問。香港貿發局與阿斯塔納國際金融中心簽訂備忘錄，以期促進兩地日後的商事訪問及哈薩克斯坦的投資項目建設。本港政府亦於 11 月組織前往杜拜、德黑蘭，以及包括布拉格、華沙及布達佩斯等歐洲國家首都進行商貿訪問，主要包括交流活動、簡介會及企業參觀訪問等環節。

香港貿發局將於明年開展更多訪問，幫助基建及房地產服務行業把握「一帶一路」帶來的良機。香港貿發局現正籌劃於 2 月出訪印尼及柬埔寨，並計劃於 2017 年底在福建省舉辦以城市化為主題的活動——「未來建設 建設未來」，以推廣香港的基建及房地產服務。

下屆「一帶一路」高峰論壇將於 2017 年 9 月 11 日舉行。在今年 5 月舉行的首屆高峰論壇上，超過 40 名演講者齊聚一堂，當中包括「一帶一路」沿線國家的政府高官及商界領袖，而與會者更多達 2,400 人，當中包括投資者、項目擁有人及服務業專業人士。

於 2016 年的高峰論壇上，中共中央政治局常委及全國人大常委會委員長張德江發表演講，稱香港在「一帶一路」倡議中扮演關鍵角色。

他特別提到一個例子。在尼泊爾的中國援建項目中，一家香港公司獲委任為工程顧問。2015 年 4 月，尼泊爾發生強烈地震，大量建築物倒塌，但該項目依然屹立不倒。

張氏說，該項目「充分體現了香港專業服務的優良品質，也證明香港專業服務參與『一帶一路』建設大有可為。」

投得尼泊爾項目的香港公司主席吳建韶測量師稱，參與該項目的主要得著是了解到文化交流的重要性。吳氏稱，在與中國內地承包商及尼泊爾當地工人合作的過程中，其團隊需要在安全、質素及專業標準方面處理各方的文化差異。

吳氏亦提到，「舉例而言，香港公司通常會嚴格遵守國際安全標準，但尼泊爾的情況完全不同。我們必須提醒當地員工，在建築工地須穿戴安全帽及穿著防護鞋（而非拖鞋）。我們亦須確保沒有任何兒童在工地玩耍。以上所列，只不過是巨大的文化差異的幾個例子。」

吳氏的團隊亦為當地員工組織定期培訓，另外亦會經常與內地承包商會面，確保所有參與方在項目的每個階段意見一致。

「熟悉當地情況和人脈網絡十分重要，隨時能助你調動當地資源，履險如夷。」

他解釋稱，必須了解一個國家的自然環境限制和地緣政治狀況，以及當地承包商、設備及供應商的能力。舉例而言，數個月前，尼泊爾和印度邊境發生暴動，令項目的建築材料供應受到影響。吳氏的團隊利用當地市場資訊物色到一家替代供應商，成功扭轉局面。

吳氏說，「你需要時刻掌控局面，而不是坐等別人提出意見。熟悉當地情況和擁有地方脈絡十分重要，這意味著你能夠調動當地資源，應對突發危機。」

吳氏說，和其他「一帶一路」的國家一樣，尼泊爾充滿商機。不過，他認為相關市場資訊仍較為缺乏，現有和潛在的持份者更多直接溝通有助改善情況。

「我們了解到，內地與『一帶一路』的國家之間的往來相當頻繁，而像我們這樣的香港公司本來亦可參與其中，」吳氏稱：「但我們不知道應該向何人參求協助。如果像我們這樣的私人公司直接向政府部門諮詢關於市場方面的情況，似乎做法有欠妥當。」

葉澤恩稱，香港貿發局一直致力將香港打造成為「一帶一路」的資訊中心。政府已推出一個「一帶一路」門戶網站(www.beltandroad.hk)，讓使用者能夠為其項目搜尋香港服務供應商，網站同時亦鼓勵香港服務供應商透過這個數據庫展示公司資料。

該網站亦提供大量有價值的資訊，例如「一帶一路」主要經濟體的多個官方招投標網站的連結，同時亦提供市場資訊，當中包括 60 多個「一帶一路」經濟體的詳細資料，以及香港基建及房地產服務行業有份參與的項目示例。

葉氏稱，「隨著基建及房地產發展為『一帶一路』奠定基礎，測量師將會率先受惠。我鼓勵本港測量師積極參與我們的活動及與『一帶一路』有關的推廣活動。他們可藉此寶貴機會，接觸相關行業領袖，以及了解在該倡議的發展過程中出現的機遇。」

本文由《Classified Post》撰文。



中共中央政治局常委及全國人大常委會委員長張德江（中）、香港特別行政區行政長官梁振英（左六）及全國政協副主席董建華（右六），與一眾嘉賓於「一帶一路高峰論壇」上合照。



尼泊爾項目中所興建的食堂。