



Hard-won victory

Mbappe sends France past Paraguay into World Cup quarterfinals **SPORTS, PAGE 20**

UN adopts rules on automated driving systems

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Epic turnaround

Film revisits legendary campaign that secured Red Army's survival **LIFE, PAGE 18**

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Space eye breakthrough



天和手持摄像机b

Shenzhou XXIII crew members — Zhu Yangzhu, Lai Ka-ying and Zhang Zhiyuan — assemble and test the Multi-Spectral Imaging Carbon Observatory, also known as the Tianyun camera, inside the Tianhe space station's Tianhe core module. Developed by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the Tianyun camera is the world's first lightweight, high-resolution collaborative detector designed to monitor and pinpoint carbon dioxide and methane emissions from orbit. The crew has completed the in-cabin assembly and extravehicular installation, with regular operations expected as early as September. FOOTAGE SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF CHINA MANNED SPACE PROGRAM

HKSAR urged to pursue legal hub role in space governance

By **JESSICA CHEN** in Hong Kong
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Hong Kong is positioning itself as a key architect of global space law and governance by leveraging its common law system and dispute resolution expertise to serve the fast growing space economy. Anthony Neoh, chairman of the Asian Academy of International Law, told a forum that attracted representatives of 47 jurisdictions from around the world to discuss law, commerce, and order in outer space.

The 2026 Colloquium on International Law, which focused on legal frameworks amid the current surge of interest in the space economy, was held in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Friday, underpinning the common law jurisdiction's strategic position on the new frontier of outer space.

Secretary for Justice Paul Lam Ting-kyok said Hong Kong has "clear advantages" in the development of space law as the country's aerospace sector continues to make breakthroughs and the demand for related legal services grows.

Neoh and Regina Ip Lau Suk-yeek, convenor of the Executive Council of the HKSAR government, underscored the city's strategic position in shaping rules for commercial activities in outer space. Although neither Lam nor Neoh set out a timetable, Teresa Cheng Yeuk-wah, secretary-

general of the International Organization for Mediation, said Hong Kong's legal and financial sectors are already laying the groundwork for this new frontier as space commerce accelerates.

The forum examined how law and governance can keep pace with rapid advances in satellites, space-based data services, and emerging resource exploitation, amid mounting concerns over orbital congestion and space debris.

Cheng said the Global Governance Initiative proposed by China "sheds light, or even exemplifies, the fundamentals for the global community engaged in setting the governance and order for outer space," adding that the mediation organization based in the HKSAR could provide a viable forum for resolving extraterrestrial disputes.

As space debris accumulates and competition for orbital and spectrum resources intensifies, speakers at the forum said Hong Kong is being pushed into a new role in connecting international governance with the commercialization of space. "With its financial markets, its common law tradition, and its role as a superconnector, Hong Kong is well placed to help finance and shape this economy," said United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs Director Aarti Holla-Maini, noting that "the question of who shapes the rules of this frontier and

who benefits from them will be answered in large part by players in Asia."

Roger Tong, CEO of satellite operator AsiaSat, pointed to growing demand for specialized financial, legal and insurance services as private satellites, space tourism, and new data applications multiply.

Ip highlighted Hong Kong's unique status under the "one country, two systems" policy as a core advantage, saying the city can act as a superconnector for space projects by offering trusted governing law, contract structures, and risk management tools for cross-border ventures.

With commercial activity in orbit outpacing existing regulatory frameworks, experts at the forum argued that Hong Kong is well-placed to host a dedicated space disputes hub, building on its established reputation in arbitration and mediation, and to develop model legislation for space assets and liability.

The city was urged to "move quickly" to consolidate its role as China's "space finance capital" and legal center for the new space economy, and to take into account that other jurisdictions are also racing to attract space related business and develop rule-making.

If Hong Kong acts with purpose, Ip said, the next chapter of the city's story could be written not only on its skyline, but also in orbit.