

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1605/08-09
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Friday, 6 February 2009, at 8:30 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun
- Member attending** : Hon LEE Wing-tat
- Members absent** : Hon Tanya CHAN (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon WONG Sing-chi
- Public Officers attending** : Home Affairs Bureau
Ms Florence HUI, JP
Under Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Jonathan McKinley
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (2)

Mr SO Kam-shing, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)

Miss Janet WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(Recreation and Sport)

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

Mr MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Chairman

Mr Louis YU
Chief Executive

Attendance by invitation : Miranda Chin Dance Company

Ms Miranda CHIN
Artistic Director

香港中國老年書畫研究會

Mr LAU Kwong-kai
Chairman

Hong Kong Children's Arts Society

Ms SUNG Yee-shui
Executive Secretary

All Theatre Art Association

Mr YEUNG Chun-wai
Administrative Director

Hongkong Kamsunfai Cantonese Opera World

Miss Eva WAN
Secretary

Opera Hong Kong

Ms Pamela WONG
General Manager

1A Group Limited

Professor CHANG Ping-hung, Wallace
Chairman

Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong

Mr YUEN Siu-fai
Deputy Chairman

Hong Kong Dance Federation and
Hong Kong Dance Sector Joint Conference

Mr KWONG Kwok-keung
Committee Member

C & G Artpartment

Ms Clara CHEUNG
Art Director

Proverse Hong Kong

Dr Gillian Bickley
Managing Editor

Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong

Ms Janet TAM
Executive Director

Hong Kong Oratorio Society

Professor CHAN Wing-wah
Music Director

Hong Kong Open Printshop

Ms YUNG Sau-mui
Project Manager

Design and Cultural Studies (Hong Kong) Workshop

Miss KWOK Sze-yin
Member

Hong Kong Cantonese Opera Troupe Limited

Miss CHEUNG Po-wah
Main Character

Shanghai Conservatory of Music Hong Kong Alumni
Association

Ms KU Ling-ling
Vice-Chairman

Spring Glory Productions

Ms Barbara TANG Kung-pik
Administrative Executive

Windpipe Chinese Ensemble

Mr CHAN Chiu-yin
Director

Cantonese Opera Promotion Association

Ms YE You-qi
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Children and Juvenile Chinese Opera
Limited

Miss CHIN Wai-fong

Para/Site Art Space

Mr Tim LI
Chairman

Osage Gallery

Mr Evengelo Costadimas
Curator

Jingkun Theatre

Ms TANG Yuen-ha
Artistic Director

Hong Kong Calligraphy and Seal-carving Society

Ms WAN Wai-yee
Secretary

Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups

Ms Alice LUI
Supervisor

Christian Family Service Centre

Ms LAM Yuk-hang, Yonnie
Art Development Coordinator

Hong Kong Boxing Association

Mr TSUI Ka-kit, Alex
Honorary Permanent Chairman

Hong Kong Sports Institute

Dr Trisha Leahy
Chief Executive

Head Badminton Coach of Hong Kong Sports Institute

Mr CHAN Chi-choi

Hong Kong Paralympic Committee and Sports
Association for the Physically Disabled

Mr Martin LAM
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong Equestrian Federation

Mr Sacha Eckjans
Secretary

Hong Kong Table Tennis Association

Mr Tony YUE
Chairman

Hong Kong Shooting Association

Ms IP Pui-yi
Sports Executive

Judo Association of Hong Kong, China Limited

Mr WONG Po-kee
Chairman

Hong Kong Canoe Union

Mr IP Chi-ming
Sports Executive

Hong Kong Basketball Association

Mr MAK Pak-ming
Vice-Chairman

Hong Kong, China Rowing Association

Mr Robert Wilson
President

Hong Kong Baseball Association Limited

Mr Philip LI
Chairman

Hong Kong Triathlon Association

Mr Mark CHIU
Senior Sports Executive

Hong Kong Tennis Association Limited

Mr Vincent LIANG
Honorary Secretary

Hong Kong Archery Association

Mr Dick TAM
Sports Executive

Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association

Mr KWAN Kee
Chairman

Hong Kong Badminton Association Limited

Mr TONG Wai-lun
Chairman

Clerk in attendance : Ms Betty FONG
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Janet SHUM
Senior Council Secretary (2)2

Miss Vivien POON
Council Secretary (2)1

Ms Anna CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2)2

Action

I. Proposed injection of funds into the Arts and Sport Development Fund

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)743/08-09(01), CB(2)580/08-09(06) and (07)]

Under Secretary for Home Affairs (USHA) briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper on the proposal to inject \$150 million into the Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF) of which \$60 million would be allocated to the arts portion and \$90 million to the sport portion.

Meeting with deputations

Views of deputations from the arts sector

Miranda Chin Dance Company
[LC Paper No. CB(2)809/08-09(01)]

2. Ms Miranda CHIN opined that the inadequate funding provided to small and medium sized dance groups by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) had stifled their growth. She suggested that the Administration should enhance arts education by subsidizing students to attend arts performances, and promote cultural exchanges between local arts groups and their counterparts in the Mainland and overseas.

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香港中國老年書畫研究會

3. Mr LAU Kwong-kai said that while the relevant provincial cultural authority in the Mainland had been active in promoting elders' participation in calligraphy and painting activities, similar support was lacking in Hong Kong. He hoped that the Administration would provide more resources and support in this aspect.

Hong Kong Children's Arts Society

4. Ms SUNG Yee-shui said that the Administration should provide more funding to support the development of children's arts, facilitate cultural exchanges between local children arts groups and their counterparts in other places, and provide a children's arts museum in the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) as a platform for the promotion of children's arts.

All Theatre Art Association

5. Mr YEUNG Chun-wai highlighted the venue shortage problem for small to medium sized theatre art groups and the need to organise more arts-related education and activities in school and the community, such as arts management and appreciation programmes, cultural exchange activities and educational guided tours at various exhibition venues.

Opera Hong Kong

6. Ms Pamela WONG opined that more resources should be allocated to the development of western opera which was a major art form for enhancing Hong Kong's status as a cultural metropolis. She also suggested that a performing venue dedicated to operatic performances should be provided in WKCD.

1A Group Limited

7. Professor CHANG Ping-hung suggested that: (a) the Administration should formulate a holistic cultural policy for Hong Kong and establish a cultural bureau/council to oversee cultural affairs; (b) more public spaces should be made available for creative expression of visual artists; (c) complimentary/concessionary tickets for cultural activities/performances should be made available to students, families and individuals to enable full community involvement in the arts; (d) a trust fund should be set up for arts development with contributions from private developers calculated at one to two percent of the construction cost of any new project; and (e) District Councils/District Officers should be involved in the development of district-based community arts with local characteristics.

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Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong(CAAHK)

8. Mr YUEN Siu-fai commented on the inequitable distribution of fund between the arts and sport portions. He also expressed disappointment about the Administration's failure to follow through the recommendations of the Committee on Performing Arts published in June 2006 in addressing the needs of the Cantonese opera sector, particularly in the provision of performance venues. Mr YUEN stressed that a permanent site for CAAHK was crucial for the development of Cantonese opera and conducive to the strengthening of cultural software in the light of the WKCD project. He further suggested that the Administration should consider setting up a cultural bureau and step up its effort in the promotion of Cantonese opera overseas.

Hong Kong Dance Federation and Hong Kong Dance Sector Joint Conference

9. Mr KWONG Kwok-keung urged the Administration to increase the injection of fund into ASDF so that the arts and sport portions would each receive the same level of funding. To enhance the competitiveness of home-grown dancers in international contests, the Administration should provide more resources to strengthen training and overseas exposure for local dancers.

C & G Artpartment

10. Ms Clara CHEUNG shared the view on the need for Administration to devise a holistic cultural policy. She further suggested that HKADC should support the organisation of large-scale international visual arts events in Hong Kong, and improve its funding procedure to allow retrospective and year-round grant applications from arts groups.

Proverse Hong Kong

[LC Paper No. CB(2)743/08-09(02)]

11. Dr Gillian Bickley opined that: (a) HKADC should earmark more funding for the development of literary arts in Hong Kong; (b) literary art should be more explicitly mentioned in HKADC's documents; (c) HKADC should relax its grant procedures to allow more frequent funding applications; and (d) the Administration should promote Hong Kong literary writing and enhance the appreciation of Hong Kong culture world-wide through internet.

Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong

[LC Paper No. CB(2)743/08-09(03)]

12. Ms Janet TAM supported the proposed injection of funds but pointed out that: (a) inclusive arts for persons with disabilities (PWDs) had been marginalised and Government support in this aspect was lacking in terms of hardware provision and software development; (b) many disabled artists had won awards in international events and the Administration should provide

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funding for the sustainable development of inclusive arts, as in its support for the Hong Kong Paralympics Committee and Sports Association for the Physically Disabled; and (c) the Administration should take into account the participation of inclusive arts groups and PWDs in the realization of the vision of WKCD.

Hong Kong Oratorio Society

13. Professor CHAN Wing-wah called for members' support for the proposed injection of fund into the arts portion of the ASDF, which was a moderate provision after its disbursement to the many grant recipients. He added that the funding provision for arts activities would also indirectly benefit service providers in ticketing, logistics, catering and venue.

Hong Kong Open Printshop

14. Ms YUNG Sau-mui said that the Administration should improve the management of public spaces to facilitate the creative work by visual artists. She added that the promotion of arts education, particularly visual arts, should be one of the long-term objectives of HKADC in order to tie in with the changes in the secondary school curriculum and the development of WKCD.

Hong Kong Cantonese Opera Troupe Limited
[LC Paper No. CB(2)880/08-09(01)]

15. Miss CHEUNG Po-wah shared the view that the proposed injection into ASDF should be allocated equally between the arts and sport portions. She further expressed the following views : (a) adequate funding should be provided to professional/commercial Chinese operatic groups as a matter of priority as many of their productions were no longer commercially viable, particularly in face of the need to provide concessionary tickets to attract audience which resulted in a substantial reduction of their income and (b) the nurturing of operatic artists was a long-term cultural investment which required sustainable long-term funding and venue support from the Administration.

Shanghai Conservatory of Music Hong Kong Alumni Association

16. Ms KU Ling-ling expressed support for the establishment of a cultural bureau/council. She added that the Administration should enhance its support for community arts, and increase its funding provision for arts activities to enable Hong Kong to fulfil its vision of becoming a cultural metropolis. She also called for the building of a world-class theatre with state-of-the-art acoustics for staging performances.

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Spring Glory Productions

17. Ms Barbara TANG said that professional operatic troupes had contributed to the development of Cantonese opera, but many of these troupes were operating on a deficit and were in need of sustainable support from the Administration. She further opined that funding should be granted in accordance with the artistic standard of the respective troupes.

Windpipe Chinese Ensemble

18. Mr CHAN Chiu-yin said that in comparison with other Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan, Hong Kong had been lagging behind in the publishing and production of Chinese music featuring local characteristics largely due to insufficient measures to encourage creative work in this artistic genre.

Cantonese Opera Promotion Association

[LC Paper No. CB(2)787/08-09(01)]

19. Ms YE You-qi called for greater Government support to promote Cantonese opera productions particularly those featuring local characteristics. In view of the high production costs, including rental for the storage of stage sets, Ms YE hoped that more resources would be directed to these arts groups to facilitate the on-going staging of local operatic productions.

Hong Kong Children and Juvenile Chinese Opera Troupe Limited

[LC Paper No. CB(2)923/08-09(01)]

20. Miss CHIN Wai-fong urged the Administration to (a) devote additional funding to promote Cantonese opera in schools, tertiary institutions and local communities/districts; (b) provide strategic support in the nurturing of young Chinese opera artists; and (c) expedite the provision of Chinese opera performance venues such as the Xiqu Activity Centre in Yau Ma Tei and the dedicated venue for Chinese opera in WKCD.

Para/Site Art Space

[LC Paper No. CB(2)809/08-09(02)]

21. While expressing support for the proposed injection into the ASDF, Mr Tim LI considered that the fund should be allocated in a transparent and equitable manner. He further opined that: (a) the Administration should consider the need of the visual arts groups and reinstate the mechanism for the provision of three-year grant to these groups to enable their sustainable development; and (b) the \$2 million annual grant for the five visual arts groups was far from adequate compared to the \$200 million annual subvention to the nine major performing arts groups.

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Osage Gallery

22. Mr Evengelo Costadimas said that the Administration should promote cross-cultural exchanges and implement measures to enhance creativity and arts appreciation in the community. Apart from budding artists, the Administration should also strengthen its support for established visual artists to complement the development of WKCD.

Jingkun Theatre

23. Ms TANG Yuen-ha shared the view that the Administration should set up a dedicated authority to formulate an explicit and long-term cultural policy, particularly in arts promotion and education; and address the specific needs of various types of traditional Chinese operatic performances. Ms TANG added that many of the Jingkun performances had merited awards and the Administration should strengthen the promotion of this art form overseas.

Hong Kong Calligraphy and Seal-carving Society

24. Ms WAN Wai-ye considered that the Administration should dedicate venues/exhibition halls, e.g. in WKCD, for the display of Chinese calligraphy and seal-carving, and introduce this traditional Chinese art to students through arts education at school.

Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups
[LC Paper No. CB(2)809/08-09(03)]

25. Ms Alice LUI expressed support for the proposed injection into ASDF to provide financial support for the development of budding artists and small and medium sized performing arts organisations. She added that the Administration should expedite the development of arts and cultural software to complement the development of WKCD, and enhance young people's participation in arts performances and their ability in arts appreciation by offering them complimentary/concessionary tickets to various arts events.

Christian Family Service Centre

26. Ms LAM Yuk-hang said that the Administration should (a) provide financial support to the disadvantaged groups, especially those with artistic talents, to enable their participation in arts-related activities; (b) encourage the development of arts therapy for rehabilitation purpose; and (c) provide arts management training and conduct research on the social impacts and functions of arts. Ms LAM added that it was uncertain if ASDF would cover arts-related projects organised by social/family service organisations for the disadvantaged groups in the community.

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Views of deputations from the sports sector

27. Deputations from the sports sector generally expressed support for the Administration's proposed injection of fund into ASDF. They considered that ASDF was crucial for the sustainable development of sports activities and indispensable in enabling both elite and up-and-coming young athletes to participate and achieve excellence in major sports games. Other views expressed by the deputations are summarised in paragraphs 28 to 43.

Hong Kong Boxing Association

28. Mr TSUI Ka-kit said that ASDF should be used for the benefit of the community as a whole. He considered that the Administration should formulate a holistic policy to encourage creativity and risk taking in sports and cultural development, and endeavour to enhance the professional standard and competitiveness of Hong Kong athletes.

Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)743/08-09(04)]

29. Dr Trisha Leahy highlighted that ASDF had provided crucial financial support for elite athletes in their preparation for major sports events, and for HKSI's new initiatives in identifying and nurturing young sports talents. She also pointed out that HKSI had received over \$24 million since 2004 from ASDF, resulting in the winning of a total of 33 medals.

Head Badminton Coach of the HKSI

30. Mr CHAN Chi-choi said that funding support for sports activities should be used for various purposes, including development of elite sports, nurturing of talented young athletes, as well as enhancing the community spirit and physical well-being of individuals.

Hong Kong Paralympic Committee and Sports Association for the Physically Disabled
[LC Paper No. CB(2)743/08-09(05)]

31. Mr Martin LAM said that with the growing competition in sports for the disabled worldwide, the Administration should provide continual support to disabled athletes on a long-term basis to enhance their competitiveness. Mr LAM considered that \$150 million injection to ASDF was inadequate in view of the difficulty in securing commercial sponsorship in the midst of the global economic crisis.

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Hong Kong Table Tennis Association

32. Citing the achievement of the Hong Kong table tennis team in the 2004 Athens Olympics, Mr Tony YUE pointed out that Government funding would be vital in enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong athletes and establishing Hong Kong's distinguished identity under the one country two systems framework.

Hong Kong Shooting Association

33. Ms IP Pui-yi said that the Association welcomed the proposed injection into ASDF.

Judo Association of Hong Kong, China Limited

34. Mr WONG Po-kee pointed out that ASDF, which was used for the preparation of athletes to participate in major sports events and enhancing the standard of their performance and achievement, would facilitate the development of up-and-coming sports like judo, karatedo and billiard sports. He also shared the view on the need to increase the subvention for the sports sector.

Hong Kong Canoe Union (HKCU)

35. Mr IP Chi-ming indicated HKCU's support for the proposed injection into the ASDF.

Hong Kong Basketball Association

36. Mr MAK Pak-ming called for the Administration's support in the provision of a permanent venue for shared use by members of the National Sports Associations and more sports venues of international standard such as a world-class basketball facility to support the long-term development of the sport of basketball and enhance the professional standard of local athletes.

Hong Kong, China Rowing Association

37. Mr Robert Wilson pointed out that many sports organisations would need to top up the expenses required for the participation of their athletes in major games, and ASDF should provide the financial support to these organisations.

Hong Kong Baseball Association Limited

38. Mr Philip LI considered that the proposed injection was highly inadequate due to the large number of grant applicants in both the arts and sports sectors. In view of the benefits of sports activities to youth

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development, he called for more funding support to facilitate the participation of young athletes in international competitions, many of whom were currently taking part in these events on a self-financing basis.

Hong Kong Triathlon Association

39. Mr Mark CHIU highlighted the need for the Administration to devise a policy to provide long-term support for elite sports, as it would take a considerably long period of training before athletes could achieve outstanding results in major sports games.

Hong Kong Tennis Association Limited

40. Mr Vincent LIANG opined that apart from enhancing athletes' performance for medal achievement, funding for sports should also target at promoting the engagement of the entire community in the pursuit of physical well-being. He also pointed out the need to upgrade sports venues and facilities such as the provision of world-class tennis facility to support the hosting of major sports events in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Archery Association

41. Mr Dick TAM considered that the proposed injection for the sports portion, which had taken into account the practical needs of the recipients, was worthwhile, as it would enhance the medal winning chances of local athletes and the international status of Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association

42. Mr KWAN Kee shared the views that more Government subvention should be provided for sports development in view of the difficulty in securing commercial sponsorship in the midst of the global economic crisis. He considered that the scope of ASDF should include provisions for hosting major games, such as the forthcoming 2009 East Asian Games (EAG). He added that the construction of new sports venues (such as the Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground) for the EAG would facilitate the hosting of more Asian athletic competitions at Asian level in future.

Hong Kong Badminton Association Limited

43. Mr TONG Wai-lun said that the "M" Mark System, which was supported by ASDF in the provision of matching funds or direct grant for recognised sports events, had enabled Hong Kong to become a prime location for hosting major sports events such as the Hong Kong Open Badminton Super Series, a world tournament well received by local and overseas audience.

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Discussion between members and the Administration

44. As many members had signified their intention to raise questions, the Chairman decided to extend the meeting for 15 minutes beyond its appointed ending time at 10:30 a.m. in accordance with House Rule 24A(a).

Allocation of ASDF

45. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong enquired about the rationale for the uneven allocation of ASDF, viz. \$60 million for the arts portion and \$90 million for the sports portion. He further asked whether the Administration would consider increasing the total fund injection from \$150 million to \$200 million so that the arts and the sports portions would each be apportioned \$100 million equitably. Mr Paul TSE urged the Administration to attach the same importance to arts and sports development and to ensure a balanced allocation of ASDF between the arts and sports portions.

46. USHA stressed that the Administration had attached equal importance to the development of the arts and sports. She further advised that ASDF had been allocated to the arts and sports sectors based on the actual expenditure of the respective sectors and assured members that where necessary, the Administration would consider further injection of fund.

Adequacy of the fund injection

47. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that the \$150 million injection to ASDF was relatively small in comparison with the \$21.6 billion upfront endowment to the WKCD project. Mr Timothy FOK declared that he was the President of the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China. He shared the view that the amount of injection into the ASDF should be increased for the benefit of both the arts and sports sectors. He hoped that more resources could be provided to the sports sector amidst the current economic crisis, without which many athletes would not be able to represent Hong Kong in major sports games overseas.

48. USHA stressed that the proposed injection of \$150 million to ASDF was an additional funding to the arts and sports sectors, on top of the annual recurrent subvention to the two sectors. She advised that excluding venue-related provision for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the annual recurrent subvention to HKADC, the 10 major performing arts groups and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts had amounted to some \$500 million to \$600 million. She added that similar amount of subvention was allocated for sports development.

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Policy on arts and sports development

49. While acknowledging the importance of strengthening the resource support for the arts and sports sectors, Mr WONG Yuk-man and Mr Paul TSE considered that the Administration should as a matter of priority, formulate a long-term policy for the sustainable development of the arts and sports. Mr TSE further suggested that the Administration should repackage and publicize major arts/cultural and sports events hosted in Hong Kong with a view to promoting tourism.

50. USHA pointed out that Hong Kong had adopted a descriptive approach in formulating its arts and culture policy. Such an approach, which also applied to countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, encouraged creative expression and pluralistic participation in the arts, with the Government essentially playing the role as a facilitator for arts development. The Administration would endeavour to implement the recommendations set out in the Policy Recommendation Report of the Culture and Heritage Commission with a view to positioning Hong Kong as an arts and culture metropolis. Regarding sports development, USHA said the overall policy would be steered towards the promotion of sports in the community, nurturing of elite athletes and developing Hong Kong into a world-class venue for major international sports events.

Support for non-main stream arts groups

51. Ms Cyd HO considered that the Administration should increase funding provision to ASDF for the support of non-main stream art forms such as seal-carving, literary arts and arts criticism. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che urged the Administration to (a) devise a policy to promote the participation of PWDs in arts and cultural activities, the needs of whom were always neglected; (b) enhance its support for the development of inclusive arts for PWDs; and (c) increase the amount of injection to ASDF to address the needs of non-main stream arts groups, including arts for PWDs.

Admin

52. USHA responded that the Administration had strived to encourage the participation of PWDs in arts programmes and the promotion of inclusive arts. She undertook to provide further information to the Panel in this regard.

Public and corporate sponsorship of the arts and sports

53. Professor Patrick LAU considered that the Administration should solicit public support and corporate sponsorship for the development of arts and sports. He expressed support for the deputation's suggestions on the setting up of a "fund matching" scheme and arts development funds for the promotion of arts, acquiring/commissioning art works or organising art activities. He also advocated the display of art works at public spaces, in particular Government

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buildings. USHA envisaged that the sustainable development of the arts and sports in Hong Kong would depend increasingly on a close partnership between the Government and corporate bodies, as in the case of the United States. She further advised that HKADC, with the support of HAB, was in the process of setting up the Hong Kong Arts Community Fund to garner public support and corporate sponsorship for the arts.

Review of funding mechanism for arts groups

54. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern about the inequity of the existing funding mechanism which was apparently tilting towards major performing arts groups rather than addressing the needs of the small and medium sized arts groups or budding artists. He highlighted the stance of the Democratic Party, which urged the Administration, in addition to its existing support to the major arts groups, to allocate more resources for the nurturing of budding artists, not merely in terms of financial subsidy but also in the provision of venue and publicity support as well as due recognition to their works.

55. USHA explained that since 2006, HKADC had focused its work on new and budding artists as well as small and medium sized arts groups. The injected fund for the arts portion would be used to provide support for HKADC's new schemes and initiatives targeting at these groups. USHA further advised that the Administration would soon commission a study to formulate a new set of funding mechanism for the performing arts groups, and devise assessment criteria for the non-major performing arts groups to rise to the league of majors and an "entry and exit" mechanism with the league of majors.

Venue shortage problem

56. To address the venue shortage problem for performing arts groups, Ms Cyd HO suggested that vacant school buildings/government properties should be used by performing arts groups for staging performances, rehearsals or storage of their stage sets and where necessary, an inter-departmental co-ordinating body to rationalise the use of such vacant properties should be set up. Furthermore, consideration should be given to enriching the contents of the "Arts Link", an arts periodical published by the Hong Kong Arts Centre, by featuring the works and activities of arts groups. USHA responded that a number of black box theatres were provided for small-scale productions to address the venue shortage problem for small and medium sized arts groups.

Development of cultural software

57. Ms Cyd HO said that the annual subvention for arts development, at a mere 0.2% of the total Government expenditure for 2008-2009 and 0.03% of Hong Kong's gross domestic product for 2008, was grossly inadequate. She further pointed out that the resources for the development of cultural software

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and humanware were disproportionately small in comparison with the investment in the hardware in WKCD. Mr KAM Nai-wai and Mr Paul TSE shared similar views and stressed that in the development of cultural software to complement the WKCD project, priority should be accorded to the nurturing of budding artists and audience building. Mr TSE also considered that it would be more meaningful to encourage young people to take part in programmes for the promotion of arts and sports activities in the midst of the current economic crisis.

58. In response, USHA advised that the level of arts subvention in Hong Kong was comparable to that in many overseas countries, which generally accounted for about 1% of the Government's total annual expenditure (including venue support). To complement the WKCD project, the Administration would step up its effort in the promotion of arts and culture to the community. For instance, to enhance arts appreciation and arts education, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), Education Bureau and LCSD had co-organized the Arts Mart, the first arts education fair, in January 2009 with the participation of more than 70 arts groups/artists covering a broad range of art forms including theatre, vocal arts, visual arts and dance. A New Senior Secondary School Curriculum would be implemented in September 2009 to provide students with different channels for learning arts.

Development of football

59. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that funding support for local football teams was gravely inadequate. He suggested that subvention should cover not only the Hong Kong Team selected by the Hong Kong Football Association, but also other football teams representing Hong Kong in various tournaments and sports events. Professor Patrick LAU shared similar views.

Motion

60. Members supported in principle the proposed injection of funds for the development of arts and sports, but considered that the proposed injection was insufficient for the sustainable development of arts and sports. With the concurrence of the Chairman, Mr KAM Nai-wai moved the following motion which was seconded by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che -

"本委員會強烈要求政府增加注資藝術及體育發展基金至 2 億元，並且公平分配，令更多市民參與藝術及體育活動。"

(Translation)

"That this Panel strongly requests the Government to increase the amount to be injected into the Arts and Sport Development Fund to \$200 million, and allocate the funds in a fair manner to enable greater participation by the public in arts and sports activities."

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61. The Chairman put the motion to vote. All members present voted in favour of the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

62. As instructed by the Chairman, the Secretariat would summarize the views expressed by members and deputations for the Administration's written response prior to the meeting of the Finance Committee on 20 February 2009.

(Post-meeting note: The summary of views and the Administration's response were circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)860/08-09(01) on 12 February 2009.)

II. Any other business

63. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:40 am.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
19 May 2009