

For Information
19 October 2009

LegCo Panel on Home Affairs
Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau

Introduction

This paper highlights the main tasks to be carried out by Home Affairs Bureau in the coming year, including the further promotion of arts, cultural and sports development, enhancing youth development, the launching of anti-youth drug abuse community programmes, the promotion of national education, enhancing district administration and improving the arrangements for village representative election.

Culture and the Arts

2. We are determined to promote culture and the arts in a holistic, concerted and sustainable manner in order to realise our vision for the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and to complement the development of the cultural and creative industries. In collaboration of our partners, we will continue to strengthen the local cultural software through our three pronged approach of arts programme development, audience building and arts education and manpower training.

3. We are very pleased to know that United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved to inscribe Cantonese opera on the UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. We will continue to make use of the Cantonese Opera Development Fund to support more Cantonese opera performances, promotional and educational activities and projects to nurture new talents for the preservation and promotion of Cantonese opera. We will also develop venues of different scales to meet the development needs of Cantonese opera, including the conversion of Yau Ma Tei Theatre and Red Brick Building into a Xiqu Activity Centre with a small theatre; construction of a medium-sized theatre and rehearsal rooms at the annex building of the Ko Shan Theatre and building of a large theatre, a small theatre and practising facilities in the Xiqu Centre in the WKCD so as to provide permanent Cantonese opera performance venues of international standard for professional performances.

4. We will continue to invest in developing cultural programmes and public arts projects, making them more visible and accessible for appreciation locally, regionally and internationally. Apart from sustaining our support to the major performing arts groups to put up quality programmes, outreach and cultural exchange activities, we will continue our investment in the small and medium sized arts groups and budding groups/ artists. Hong Kong has a rich year-round programme of cultural activities and thematic arts festival, for example the Hong Kong Arts Festival held in February and March every year and thematic arts festival in fall. In partnership with arts groups and district organisations, we will continue to enrich our cultural programmes, present high calibre performers and commission new works by local artists. Hong Kong is a metropolis where East meets West. We will continue to encourage and facilitate arts and cultural exchanges with the Mainland and overseas so that Hong Kong can be a melting pot of cultural endeavours. We will also draw up a scheme for displaying artworks at Government premises and launch more public art activities and programmes to bring arts to the community.

5. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department will collaborate with the Education Bureau to promote the participation of youngsters in arts and cultural activities. Arts will be promoted in schools through the new senior secondary school curriculum. Efforts will also be made to enhance opportunities for internship as arts administrators and curators.

6. The first priority for the WKCD is the preparation of the Development Plan. Stage 1 Public Engagement exercise of the WKCD has been rolled out. Apart from views on the planning of the WKCD, the WKCD Authority will also collect public views on the expectation of the future programme and activities of the WKCD. These views will serve as a reference for the future management of the WKCD for them to plan various arts and cultural activities next year.

Sports Development

7. In December this year, we will host the 2009 East Asian Games (EAG). This will be first large-scale multi-sports event hosted by Hong Kong. We are making good progress with the preparations, and most of the competition venues are now ready. The new Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground was opened in May and improvements to 13 existing government venues have been completed. Tickets for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies and all competitions have been available since 31 August 2009, and as of now more than 60% of the

tickets have been sold.

8. In the next month, we will conduct drills and test events, and step up our publicity and marketing efforts. In this connection, we will increase city dress-up work, arrange school torch relays, announce the names of the participating athletes and medal designs, highlight Hong Kong athletes' readiness for the Games and conduct a volunteer pledging ceremony. Apart from the sports sector and schools, we will continue to liaise with other sectors such as the tourism, hotel and transport sectors to encourage them to help promote and support the EAG. The Government will continue to press ahead with the remaining preparation works for the EAG with a view to making the event a resounding success and enhancing the community's involvement in and enthusiasm for the EAG. After the Games, we will review how best to build on the experience of hosting the EAG in order to strengthen Hong Kong's profile as a sports events capital.

9. As for overall sports development, we will continue to build on the initiatives that we have launched in the past two to three years to encourage more local people to take part in sport, to enhance the Hong Kong athletes' prospects of winning medals in international competitions and to facilitate the staging of more major sports events in Hong Kong.

10. With regard to sport in the community, the Community Sports Committee of the Sports Commission (SC) has recently presented its study on "Sport for All - Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities". The study findings suggest that the benefits of regular participation in physical activities should be more frequently and widely conveyed to the public, and that we should aim to provide more diversified sports activities and facilities to increase public participation. We have earmarked \$50 million from the Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation to subsidise the building of new facilities or the purchase of new sports equipment by National Sports Associations (NSAs) and District Sports Associations.

11. In May this year, we organised the 2nd Hong Kong Games, in which over 2,300 sportsmen and sportswomen competed. In preparing for the 3rd Hong Kong Games we will aim to attract more competitors. To enable people from less privileged groups to attend sports events, the Major Sports Events Committee of the SC has secured ticket sponsorship (including more than 2,000 tickets to the EAG events) from member companies in its "Core Sponsor Group".

12. In the past year, we have implemented the following initiatives to help improve our elite athletes' chances of performing at the highest level in international competitions -

- Increasing annual recurrent funding for supporting elite athletes to \$50 million with effect from 2009-10;
- Earmarking \$10 million in 2009-10 to support 21 NSAs and the sports associations for athletes with a disability in developing their feeder systems for talent identification and enhanced training at the junior level.
- Allocating an additional \$3 million to the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) for junior squad training on a recurrent basis;
- Allocating an additional \$5.6 million per annum for four years for training athletes in sports designated as "Priority Target Sports" (i.e., badminton, cycling, table tennis and windsurfing) so that they can have a better chance of competing at the highest levels in the 2012 Olympic Games; and
- Increasing incentive awards for Hong Kong medalists at the Olympic, Asian, Paralympic and Asian Paralympic Games to encourage Hong Kong athletes to achieve better results in major international competitions.

13. In addition, the Legislative Council has approved the funding of the re-development of the HKSI to enhance its position as a base for elite sports training and development in Hong Kong. Work on the project started in March this year and is scheduled for completion by late 2013. Upon completion of the project, the HKSI will provide a better environment and more advanced facilities for training elite athletes.

14. To ensure that Hong Kong will have suitable venues for staging international sports events, we will continue planning the development of a Multi-purpose Stadium Complex in Kai Tak, in consultation with key stakeholders in the sports community and the wider public. We will also continue to promote the "M" Mark System and Support Package to help sustain existing major events that have the support of NSAs.

Youth Development

15. Young people are the hope of Hong Kong's future. We will continue to work closely with the Commission of Youth in planning and implementing youth development projects in order to develop the full potential of young people, to encourage youth organisations to actively participate in youth development work, to promote positive core values among young people and to instil a positive outlook on life, thus enhancing their whole person development and moral development and making them become responsible good citizens. We will strengthen our support to youth uniformed groups which will assist in encouraging the youth and their families to uphold family values.

Anti-youth drug abuse community programmes

16. The 18 District Offices of the Home Affairs Department (HAD) have launched anti-youth drug abuse community programmes in their respective districts. Under the programmes, non-government organizations are reaching out to identify youths-at-risk and youths who have abused drugs, and various supporting organizations are organizing healthy activities to engage them and cultivate positive values amongst them to steer them away from drugs.

17. In addition, publicity and public education activities, including seminars and sharing sessions, are being organized in the districts for parents and teachers to enhance their understanding of the causes of the youth drug problem, help them identify the symptoms of drug taking and ways to tackle the problem.

Promotion of National Education

18. It is an established policy directive of the Government to promote national education. We will continue to work with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE), the COY, 18 District Councils (DCs), community organisations, national education bodies and youth organisations in promoting national education outside schools so as to encourage the public to understand and care for the country. We will continue to provide funding to these organisations for launching more promotional activities on national education. We will engage the wider community in further promoting national education.

19. The HKSARG will step up publicity and promotion work on national education through various means such as TV APIs, web page and publications of CPCE, etc, so that the public will know more about our

country, including its developments, geography, people, history, culture, etc and hence deepen their understanding of the country.

District Administration

20. We will continue to work closely with DCs to strengthen communications with the local communities, with a view to facilitating effective implementation of policies at district levels. The Government will continue to render full support to District Officers to help them foster closer cooperation with local organisations and sectors in the district. We will also continue to consult DCs on policy proposals and other territory-wide issues that may affect people's well-being.

21. We will also strive to form partnerships with different organisations and sectors with a view to building a caring, harmonious and supportive community. District Offices and DCs, in collaboration with various organisations, will continue to promote community involvement projects.

Rural Affairs

22. The Heung Yee Kuk (HYK) has all along been an important partner of the Government on New Territories affairs. We have been maintaining close contact and collaborating with HYK on rural affairs and other issues affecting residents in the New Territories.

23. On village representative (VR) election, the Rural Elections Review Working Group jointly set up by HAD and HYK has reviewed the arrangements for VR election and drawn up a set of improvement measures. The Village Representative Election Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2009 to implement those measures will resume second reading on 21 October 2009. After its enactment, the improvement measures will be implemented in the next village ordinary election in 2011. HAD has started the preparatory work.

Home Affairs Bureau
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