

11th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum promotes cultural co-operation in Asian economies (with photos)

The highlight of the 11th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum (ACCF), the Ministerial Panel, was held this morning (December 12). Cultural ministers and senior officials of nine Asian countries came together in Hong Kong to attend the panel discussion session and exchanged ideas and shared views on boosting cultural co-operation to promote the development of culture and the arts.

The Director of the Palace Museum, Dr Wang Xudong, addressed today's panel discussion session while other participating cultural ministers and senior officials from Singapore, Cambodia, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Myanmar also took turns to speak. Among the participating countries, the Maldives and Bangladesh have joined the ACCF for the first time. Cultural representatives from Mainland provinces and Macao also attended the panel discussion session.

The ACCF is being held today and tomorrow (December 13) with a wide range of activities. The ACCF was launched in 2003 by the Home Affairs Bureau with an aim of fostering regional cultural co-operation, sharing good practices and promoting culture and the arts.

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, said in his opening speech at the panel discussion session that this year's ACCF marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and reflects Hong Kong's strategic location at the heart of Asia. He pointed out that Hong Kong has been and will continue to be an important place for bringing together cities and countries, providing a hub for different cultures to meet, influence one another and evolve.

Mr Lau added that while Hong Kong has been facing unprecedented difficulties in the past few months, we will remain resilient to overcome all challenges ahead. He expressed the belief that arts and culture transcend boundaries and differences, noting that co-operation and mutual support will always prevail in strengthening people-to-people bonds and building inclusive societies.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, hosted a Gala Lunch for the delegations and local cultural leaders. This year, performing groups were invited to give performances together with local musicians during the Gala Lunch of the ACCF for the first time, in order to let guests have a taste of the cultures of different places. The performers came from European and Asian cities with vibrant cultural scenes including Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Matera, Italy; and Incheon, Korea.

The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Cherry Tse, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Co-operation with the Secretary of State, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia, Mr Som Sokun, with a view to strengthening cultural co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and Cambodia.

In the afternoon, the participating delegations visited the Hong Kong Museum of Art, which reopened in November. The delegations will visit the Xiqu Centre and Tai Kwun tomorrow.



