

# CE's speech in delivering "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address" to LegCo (7)

## VI. Promote Integrated Development of Culture, Sports and Tourism and Foster Economic Diversification

### (A) Eastâ€™meetsâ€™West Centre for International Cultural Exchange and Integrated Development of Culture, Sports and Tourism

121. The currentâ€™term Government set up the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) to consolidate the integrated development of culture, the creative industry, sports and tourism. To enhance Hong Kong's role as the Eastâ€™meetsâ€™West centre for international cultural exchange, the Government strives to deepen the institutional reform of our cultural system, improve the cultural and economic policies, and further enhance our cultural confidence.

### Enhance Cultural Soft Power and Promote Development of Cultural and Creative Industries

122. The CSTB consulted the arts and cultural community last year on the formulation of the Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development. The blueprint will cover four major development directions: promoting the development of diverse arts and culture with an international perspective, promoting Chinese culture, fostering arts and cultural exchange between China and the rest of the world, and driving industry development. The CSTB will consult the Culture Commission shortly and promulgate the blueprint later this year.

123. Established in June, the Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency adopts an industryâ€™oriented approach to promote the development of the cultural and creative industries. Relevant measures include:

(i) incubating more cultural and creative projects with potential for industrialisation through the CreateSmart Initiative and strengthening crossâ€™sectoral collaboration and leveraging market resources, facilitating the industries to explore business opportunities;

(ii) facilitating more registration of local and nonâ€™local cultural and creative products on the Asia IP Exchange Portal to foster crossâ€™sectoral exchange, collaboration and business matching, and promoting transactions and transformation of cultural IP; and

(iii) making the new flagship Hong Kong Fashion Design Week an annual signature event to develop Hong Kong into a fashion design hub in Asia.

### Strengthen Long-term Industry Development in the West Kowloon Cultural District

124. The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is one of the largest arts and cultural projects in the world. The WKCD Authority will take a leading role in establishing an industry chain for the arts and culture and creative industries of Hong Kong, driving cultural and creative tourism, and enhancing its financial sustainability through diverse and innovative industrialisation measures, including:

(i) further building Hong Kong's strengths in arts trading—Promote the creation of a comprehensive arts trading ecosystem, and build storage, restoration and exhibition facilities for high-end private art collections;

(ii) promoting the WKCD as a prime destination for major international cultural, creative and commercial events—With more than 20 venues for different kinds of mega events, the WKCD Authority will step up efforts to host more major international cultural, creative and commercial events, attracting more inbound visitors and stimulating local spending;

(iii) exporting more arts, cultural and creative projects—Organise and curate performing arts programmes and exhibitions to be staged as long-run events locally, in the Mainland and overseas on a commercial basis, and expand the sales channels for cultural and creative merchandise; and

(iv) branding the WKCD as a must-visit landmark for cultural and creative tourism—Roll out more special experience activities, and step up worldwide promotion in collaboration with the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) to bring in more tourists.

#### Promote Sports Development and Build Hong Kong into a Centre for Mega International Sports Events

125. In recent years, Hong Kong athletes have achieved outstanding results in international competitions. Hong Kong has abundant resources and support. With our soon-to-complete new landmark Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP), and our co-hosting of the 15th National Games with Guangdong and Macao late next year, our city has unrivaled advantages for developing itself into a platform for international sports activities. The Government will continue to foster sports development by promoting sports in the community, supporting elite sports, maintaining Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events, enhancing professionalism, and developing sports as an industry. Relevant measures include:

(i) enhancing the development of elite athletes and coaches—The Government has invited the Hong Kong Sports Institute to review the mechanism of direct financial support for athletes (including athletes with disabilities) to enhance the training system, and has set up a committee to oversee the development of sports medicine and sports science. The Government will also strengthen training for coaches, and explore the feasibility of establishing a standardised accreditation system for coaches;

(ii) boosting sports promotion in the community—Provide more sports and recreational facilities, including building a swimming complex suitable for hosting international competitions and a sports arena with fencing training

and competition facilities. We will also regularise the Pilot Scheme on Subvention for New Sports;

(iii) reforming the governance of national sports associations (NSAs) – The Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China will conclude its review on the governance and operation of NSAs, and make recommendations, ensuring the NSAs are operating effectively so that athletes (including athletes with disabilities) can realise their potential in a fair and professional environment; and

(iv) developing a host city economy in the sports industry – The Government will continue to support athletes to participate in different large-scale international competitions. We will make full use of the KTSP and other existing venues to host large-scale international competitions so that Hong Kong teams can compete on home soil, building their own audience. These will be conducive to the long-term development of the sports industry.

126. The Government will review the redevelopment plan for the Hong Kong Stadium to ensure its synergy with the KTSP.

#### Develop Kai Tak Sports Park into a Sports and Mega Event Landmark

127. Opening in the first quarter of 2025, the KTSP is the largest sports infrastructure project ever commissioned in Hong Kong. It will boost sports development and inject impetus into related industries such as recreation, entertainment and tourism, and also mega-event economy.

128. The inter-departmental Task Force on KTSP, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, will ramp up efforts in overseeing the smooth completion and commissioning of the KTSP and its publicity work, fostering the synergistic development of major sports events, innovative entertainment, dining, conventions and exhibitions, as well as tourism activities. The task force will also formulate thorough plans and conduct comprehensive drills on security deployment, crowd management, emergency response, and other areas.

#### Enhance Cultural Confidence and Revitalise Hong Kong's Tourism Industry

129. We will develop Hong Kong into a premier tourism destination through innovative thinking and making better use of our rich and unique resources such as the Victoria Harbour, outlying islands, rural areas, cultures, cuisines, lifestyles and historic buildings. These elements, combined with our edges in technology, animation and comics, the performing arts, film and television culture, and more, will help to instill the concept of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong".

130. The CSTB will publish the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0) later this year, with the focus on promoting culture, sports, ecology and mega events, covering such areas as:

(i) developing eco-tourism – We will explore more itineraries with characteristics related to the countryside and coastal routes, such as island-hopping tours in Yan Chau Tong, and enhance related amenities;

expedite the development of the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor; develop the ex-Lamma Quarry site into an area for resort and outdoor recreational uses; and develop Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai into eco-tourism nodes;

(ii) developing visitor sources from the Middle East and ASEAN – We will actively encourage various sectors of the community to enhance tourism support measures for creating a friendly environment for visitors. They include providing information at the airport in Arabic and encouraging taxi fleets to provide fleet service information in Arabic; compiling a list of restaurants offering halal food; encouraging more commercial establishments to provide appropriate facilities, such as worship facilities in hotels; and stepping up staff training to strengthen their knowledge on receiving visitors from different cultural backgrounds;

(iii) developing tourism products with characteristics – We will promote yacht tourism in the expansion area of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, the ex-Lamma Quarry area and the development of the waterfront site in the vicinity of the Hung Hom Station. We will also promote panda tourism, horse racing tourism, and the like. The CSTB will promote cultural and eco-tourism itineraries and products at Sha Tau Kok. The Security Bureau (SB) will increase the daily visitor quota under the Sha Tau Kok opening up plan to 3,000 by the end of this year. Facial recognition technology will be adopted to enable people living or working at Chung Ying Street to enter and leave the street unimpededly via a "contactless" mode on a pilot basis. The SB will explore the application of relevant technology to complement the future opening up of Chung Ying Street for tourism;

(iv) developing mega-event tourism economy – The Mega Events Coordination Group, led by the Deputy Financial Secretary, will continue to take a proactive role in attracting different mega events to Hong Kong with emphasis on quality and quantity, boosting the retail and hotel industries. We will drive the development of the site above the Exhibition Station in Wan Chai North, as well as the waterfront and pier sites in the vicinity of the Hung Hom Station, into new landmarks providing additional event venues;

(v) strengthening the appeal of traditional tourism – The HKTB will draw up a gourmet guide covering the 18 districts, organise gastronomic events, and promote gourmet food in different districts. The CSTB will publish the action plan on the development of cruise tourism, alongside the Blueprint 2.0, to enhance the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal's role as a homeport and a venue for conventions, exhibitions and other events; and

(vi) promoting smart tourism and enhancing service quality of the tourism industry – The HKTB will strengthen its efforts in developing and promoting tourism products with Hong Kong characteristics to both locals and visitors, making use of technologies such as AI to provide one-stop assistance and attraction recommendations. We will also launch a new outstanding services award scheme to consolidate our hospitable culture.

Develop New Tourist Hotspots

131. The Government will set up a Working Group on Developing Tourist Hotspots. Led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, it will strengthen cross departmental co-ordination and leverage community efforts, identifying and developing tourist hotspots of high popularity and with strong appeal in various districts.

#### Increase Tourist Arrivals

132. The HKSAR Government has proposed to the Central Government further enhancements on Mainland residents' tourism visit endorsements to Hong Kong, including resuming the "multiple-entry" Individual Visit Endorsements for Shenzhen residents and expanding the coverage of pilot cities for implementing policies on the "one trip per week" Individual Visit Endorsements. The Central Government has advised that relevant departments are studying the expedited implementation of the proposal proactively.

133. To foster closer people ties with ASEAN countries, starting today, the Government will relax the criteria for nationals of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar applying for multiple-entry visas for travel and business, and extend the validity period of multiple-entry visas for these countries from two years to three years. The arrangement also applies to Vietnamese, who have benefitted from the relaxation of the visa policy since last year. Under a fast-track arrangement, we will expedite the processing of visa applications from group visitors of ASEAN countries submitted via local travel agents. In addition, we will provide self-service immigration clearance for invited persons participating in business, development and related activities from the 10 ASEAN countries, and provide one-stop handling of their applications for self-service immigration clearance and visa through a dedicated desk. Various bureaux will provide assistance in drawing up the list. Effective today, the requirement for visitors to furnish an arrival or departure card is cancelled, facilitating a faster and more convenient immigration clearance.

#### (B) Foster Economic Diversification

##### Support Small and Medium Enterprises

134. To address the challenges commonly encountered by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) during economic restructuring, the Government will introduce the following support measures:

(i) re-launching the principal moratorium-Borrowing enterprises under the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme (including the existing loans already granted under the 80%, 90% and special 100% guarantee products as well as new loans under the 80% and 90% guarantee products) will be allowed to apply for principal moratorium for up to 12 months. The maximum loan guarantee periods of the 80% and 90% guarantee products will be extended to ten years and eight years respectively, while the partial principal repayment options will be offered to new loans under the two guarantee products. The HKMA is also actively considering to provide flexibility in banks' capital requirement to facilitate their lending to SMEs;

(ii) injecting \$1 billion into the BUD Fund—Support will be provided for SMEs to upgrade their business operations and develop new markets through the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (the BUD Fund), including expanding the geographical coverage of e-commerce Easy to the 10 ASEAN countries, and providing targeted funding support for enterprises to implement green transformation projects;

(iii) supporting digital transformation of SMEs and capitalising on e-commerce opportunities—The scope of Cyberport's Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme will be expanded to cover the retail and food and beverage sectors, as well as industries such as tourism and personal services, subsidising SMEs for digital transformation on a one-to-one matching basis. The Hong Kong Shopping Festival is to be relaunched in the next two years to help SMEs tap into the Mainland e-commerce sales market, and will be held in the ASEAN market in due course;

(iv) strengthening brand development of SMEs—The HKTDC will formulate plans for setting up more Hong Kong Pavilions in Mainland and overseas exhibitions to further promote Hong Kong brands. The Trade and Industry Department and the HKTDC will also enhance support for SMEs in developing brands and expanding the sales network of e-commerce;

(v) enhancing the services of the Hong Kong Design Centre—The organisation and functions of the Hong Kong Design Centre will be re-structured, so as to assist SMEs in the design industry to enhance their services in product and brand design, and strengthen collaboration and interface with start-ups and Mainland enterprises operating in Hong Kong;

(vi) enhancing incentives for recurrent exhibitions—An additional provision of \$500 million will be allocated for launching the Incentive Scheme for Recurrent Exhibitions 2.0, targeting new and international exhibitions of large scale, in order to further promote mega-event economy and the development of the convention and exhibition industry;

(vii) supporting participation in government procurement—The HKHA will refine the application procedures for admission to the list of maintenance works contractors, providing more tendering opportunities for contractors; and

(viii) enhancing security of payment in the construction industry—The Government has introduced the Construction Industry Security of Payment Bill, which prohibits the use of unfair payment terms such as "conditional payment" in contracts and introduces an adjudication mechanism to resolve payment disputes.

## Develop Silver Economy

135. Given the rapid expansion of the silver market, there is growing demand for products and services catering to the elderly. Developing new products and services to meet the needs of the elderly will help enhance their quality of life, and also generate business opportunities.

136. The Government will set up a Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy, led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration. The working group will implement measures in five areas:

(i) boosting "silver consumption" – We will work with all sectors to foster elderly-friendly consumption, and encourage incorporation of silver economy elements into their business, for example, by offering discounts to the elderly. Efforts will also be made to safeguard the rights and interests of elderly consumers;

(ii) developing the "silver industry" – We will promote marketisation and industrialisation of products catering to the elderly by consolidating funding resources to support product provision and market expansion by the business sector;

(iii) promoting "quality assurance of silver products" – We will promote the certification of products catering to the elderly to enhance their recognition and appeal. Standards adopted will be aligned with those of the Mainland and overseas to facilitate sales network expansion;

(iv) enhancing "silver financial and security arrangements" – We will assist the elderly in making proper financial arrangements and strengthening their financial security. Relevant measures include promoting retirement financial planning products offered by the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited, and providing investor education for the elderly; and

(v) unleashing "silver productivity" – We will help unleash the productivity of the elderly through retraining, re-employment and other measures.

#### Promote Sustainable Development of the Agriculture and Fisheries Industries

137. The Government will continue to take forward the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries. Relevant work includes developing deep sea mariculture at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay new fish culture zones, conducting preparatory work for the Agricultural Park Phase 2 development, implementing urban farming strategy in NDAs, facilitating the livestock sector to construct modernised and environmental-friendly multi-storey livestock farms and promoting leisure farming and fisheries.

(To be continued.)