

LCQ10: Mega events

Following is a question by the Hon Jeffrey Lam and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (December 11):

Question:

As indicated in the Budget announced in February this year, more than 80 mega events in a variety of themes and genres will be staged in Hong Kong in the first half of this year, and the Government has set up a Mega Events Coordination Group (the Coordination Group) to reach out proactively for more mega events to be staged in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) among the mega events held in the first half of this year, of the respective numbers and proportions of exhibitions, conferences/seminars, trade events, sports games, arts and cultural events, as well as festive events, and the number of visitors attracted by various mega events, the duration of stay of these visitors in Hong Kong, as well as their spending;

(2) whether the Coordination Group has developed strategies focusing on popular mega events and improved the supporting arrangements such as venues and transportation, so as to further enhance the attractiveness of such mega events and the economic benefits brought about by them; if so, of the details; for less popular mega events, how the Government steps up its publicity efforts and enhances the attractiveness of these events; and

(3) given that it is also proposed in the aforesaid Budget to earmark \$100 million to boost mega event promotions over the next three years, of the details and progress of such work, and the expected benefits to be brought about?

Reply:

President,

Mega events bear strategic significance. Mega events in Hong Kong not only bring business opportunities and economic benefits to different industries, including hotel, catering, retail, transportation, but also generate positive publicity for Hong Kong in the globe to showcase the city's position as a liberal cosmopolitan with rich cultural heritage. We will continue to strive for mega events with both quality and quantity to attract tourists to experience Hong Kong, understand the diversity and vitality of Hong Kong, and make them the best ambassadors to tell the good stories of China and the city in their places.

In consultation with the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Security Bureau, the Information Services Department (ISD) and the Radio Television

Hong Kong (RTHK), my reply to the question raised by the Hon Jeffrey Lam is as follows:

(1) The Government compiles and continuously updates the calendars of mega events taking into account the readiness of mega events. The calendar of the first half of 2024 consists of 110 events of various areas, amongst which 31 are cultural, arts and creative events (28 per cent); 14 are sports events (13 per cent); 38 are conventions and exhibitions (34 per cent); 15 are finance, economy, innovation and technology related events (14 per cent); and 12 are festivals, celebrations, galas and carnivals (11 per cent). According to estimates, the mega events in the first half of 2024 attracted around 550 000 tourists to participate. They brought around \$2.4 billion of spending and a value add of about \$1.4 billion.

(2) and (3) The Mega Events Coordination Group (the Group) chaired by the Deputy Financial Secretary, with the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, as deputy, is responsible for the high-level steer in relation to mega events, strengthening the communication and collaboration amongst relevant bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and statutory bodies, and enhancing the culture of promoting, supporting and facilitating mega events to successfully take place in Hong Kong. The support required for different mega events varies. Relevant B/Ds and statutory bodies would closely communicate and co-operate in respect of mega events, and provide interdepartmental assistance depending on the actual situation and need.

For example, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) serves as the first point of contact for mega events, and liaises with stakeholders, especially event organisers, to render various kinds of support, including reviewing and assessing proposals from organisers, helping organisers to search for venues, arranging site recces, advising on event planning such as date and content and assisting in publicity. On crowd management and traffic arrangements, relevant government departments, including the Police and the Transport Department (TD), will perform estimates and risk assessments, with regard to the information provided by the organisers of large scale events and/or the relevant responsible B/Ds, as well as the nature and scale of the event, to formulate appropriate special crowd management and traffic arrangements, such as routes for crowd dispersal, road closures and traffic diversions, accordingly. With reference to the temporary traffic arrangements, the TD will also co-ordinate various public transport (PT) operators to arrange service enhancements or provision of special PT services, based on the anticipated passenger flow and travelling demand, to facilitate crowd dispersal. Adjustment or curtailment of the routes, service suspension, etc, will also be arranged. Information will be disseminated to the public through appropriate means and channels to facilitate their advance planning of journeys.

On the information and publicity of mega events, one of the Government's key purposes of compiling the calendars of mega events is to allow members of the public and tourists to learn about the various mega events in Hong Kong early, foster collaboration between different industries and mega events, and facilitate industries of tourism, hotel and catering to plan and design

promotional activities and tourism products early. The RTHK has launched the newly-produced multimedia magazine-style information programme "Mega Events Mega Hong Kong", which provides daily updates on events in town through TV, radio and online platforms to keep the public abreast of upcoming events in Hong Kong. "Mega Events Mega Hong Kong" is broadcast daily on RTHK TV 31 and TV 32, with announcements broadcast on Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3, Radio 5 and a Putonghua channel in different programmes daily. The hosts will introduce the event details to engage the entire community and the public to enjoy the joy and lively ambience brought about by the mega events. The ISD has set up a dedicated page titled Mega Events on the website for Brand Hong Kong, allowing the public to browse the calendars of mega events in Hong Kong and relevant information. The ISD also utilises the social media platforms for Brand Hong Kong and invites media from the Mainland and other countries to cover these events in Hong Kong. Efforts are made to promote the events on the Mainland's social platforms such as Xiaohongshu to enhance external publicity and promotion. Furthermore, the ISD produces monthly TV Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) and social media video clips to let a wider public learn about the mega events happening in Hong Kong.

The HKTB has leveraged the global network to carry out publicity in the Mainland and overseas. The HKTB shares information about mega events on social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and the Mainland social media accounts, such as Xiaohongshu, Douyin and other official channels. The HKTB also invites the trade, the media, influencers (KOL), etc, to experience Hong Kong's mega events in person to help establish the reputation and enhance publicity through their network. For example, riding on Art Basel Hong Kong and other mega arts events held in March this year, the HKTB stepped up global publicity through its Arts in Hong Kong year-round promotional platform, boosting the city's arts atmosphere and fervour. As for Hong Kong Sevens, the HKTB supported the organiser to bring in new elements and turn the event into a star-studded mega party with entertainment, food and beverage, and sports game all rolled into one. The HKTB and Hong Kong, China Rugby jointly invited Oliver Phelps and James Phelps, who played the twins in the "Harry Potter" films, to enjoy the rugby game in Hong Kong and promote the city. Representatives of seven top-tier sports media firms from Korea were also invited to watch the game, experience outdoor events like horse racing in Hong Kong, and immerse in Hong Kong's charm as the Events Capital.

The HK\$100 million is earmarked in the 2024-25 Budget for accommodating the Group's work in boosting mega event promotions over the next three years. The Government will review and, in response to ongoing developments and updates of the planning of mega event, optimise resources to enhance the publicity effort of mega events.