

LCQ13: Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023

Following is a question by the Hon Ma Fung-kwok and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (July 12):

Question:

Regarding the "Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023" (the Festival), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following information on the various activities of the Festival: (i) the expenditure and income of the members/organisations of the industry or the arts sector participating in the performances or exhibitions (including whether they have sponsorships from the community), and (ii) the number of participants in the activities held (including the number of local and non-local residents);

(2) whether it has defined "pop culture" of Hong Kong, and of the criteria for inclusion in the programmes of the Festival; given that the website of the Festival indicates that the authorities will hold the "Festive Korea 2023 – K-Drama OST Concert" in November this year, whether the programme contents of the Festival include pop culture outside Hong Kong;

(3) how it will attract more non-local residents to come to Hong Kong to participate in the Festival, so as to achieve the authorities' objective of enhancing Hong Kong's attraction to visitors through the Festival, and further connect audience on the Mainland and in overseas countries (especially the Chinese-speaking community); whether the authorities have conducted any publicity for the Festival outside Hong Kong; if so, of the countries and cities involved, as well as the expenditure incurred;

(4) as the authorities have indicated that the activities of the Festival will be held until the end of this year, what publicity strategies the authorities have put in place to maintain the popularity of the Festival throughout the year; and

(5) as the authorities have indicated that they will explore the feasibility of setting up a "Pop Culture Centre" as a landmark for pop culture and a tourist attraction in the long run, of the progress of the relevant work?

Reply:

President,

The unique pop culture of Hong Kong is an important branding of Hong Kong's culture. As announced in the 2022 Policy Address, the Government plans to collaborate with industry practitioners to organise an annual Pop Culture

Festival, in order to showcase the uniqueness of Hong Kong's pop culture, feature Hong Kong's creativity and charisma in integrating diverse cultures, and stimulate the vitality of the younger generation. The Government will consider setting up a "Pop Culture Centre" as a landmark for pop culture and a tourist attraction in the long run.

The replies to the five parts of the question are as follows:

(1) The overall budget for the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023 is around \$20 million, in addition to regular exhibition expenses. More than 20 programmes have been confirmed. As at early July 2023, there were more than 320 000 attendances or ticket purchases for the programmes presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). The details are tabulated below:

Programmes presented/co-organised by LCSD	Estimated Expenditure	No. of Participants (attendance/ticket purchases as at July 5)
Performances (including Pre-Festival Programme: Pop Unplugged; Outdoor Music x Film Marathon; SENZA x Lucky 6: Pop Grooves, etc.)	around \$14 million	22 600
Film Screenings (including Opening Programme: When Leslie & Anita Meet Hei & Gin; Revisiting the Glory Days – The Legacy of Leslie and Anita; From Panel to Big Screen – Panorama of Hong Kong's Comics-Inspired Films, etc.)	around \$1.2 million	6 950
Other programmes (including Movie Tram; Busking Go Round; RTHK TV series-POP Hong Kong!, etc.)	around \$4.8 million	4 000 (View rate of POP Hong Kong! from RTHK is not included)
Thematic Exhibitions (including Pre-Festival Programme: Miss You Much Leslie Exhibition; Out of Thin Air: Hong Kong Film Arts & Costumes Exhibition; Cinderella and her Qipao Exhibition, etc.)	around \$11 million (Exhibition items to be absorbed by recurrent expenditure of Heritage and Museums Division)	287 000

We do not maintain the information on the expenses and number of participants of programmes organised by organisations other than the LCSD.

(2) The programmes of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival mainly promote local arts and culture that are well-received by the public, such as music and film. At the same time, they highlight the uniqueness of Hong Kong's pop culture as seen in its fusion of cultural elements of the East and West, of the South and North, and of the old and new. The programmes cover performances, thematic exhibitions, film screenings, educational and promotional activities, etc., with a view to presenting different aspects of Hong Kong's pop culture through various art forms.

"Festive Korea" is held in Hong Kong every October, and the 13th edition will be held this year. One of the Festival programmes, a concert which features original soundtracks of Hong Kong and Korean television series, is being curated for the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival in collaboration with the "Festive Korea 2023". The latest creative concept for this programme is that during the concert, local artist(s) will perform songs from Hong Kong films or television series to the accompaniment of a Korean orchestra together with the screening of the relevant film/TV clips. Local songs which are adapted from Korean pop music will also be presented by local artist(s). This will enable audience to appreciate the fascinating amalgamation of Chinese and Western cultures in Hong Kong's pop culture.

(3) In order to attract overseas and Mainland visitors to Hong Kong for the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival, we have incorporated elements that are attractive to those from the Mainland and other Asian regions, such as programmes (exhibitions, film screenings, etc.) on the megastars Leslie Cheung and Anita Mui, who are hugely popular in the Mainland and other Asian regions, when curating programmes.

With regard to publicity targeting the Mainland and other parts of the world, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) has assisted in promoting the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023 around the world, particularly in the Mainland and Southeast Asian markets, and has succeeded in securing extensive media coverage. The HKTB has also worked with the Mainland media to produce online video programmes on the Festival. Official Mainland media organisations, including China Central Television, People.cn and Guangzhou TV, as well as media organisations from the Greater Bay Area and Southeast Asia were also invited to the media tour of "Movie Tram", one of the programmes of the Festival to serve promotional purpose. As another effort of external publicity, the HKTB has also invited media practitioners and bloggers from Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam to Hong Kong for first-hand experiences of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival and related exhibitions, and provided them with the opportunity to interview the curators involved, so as to promote the Festival through the internet. The LCSD has also started arranging for promotion of the Festival to Mainland audience via social media platforms in the Mainland like Xiaohongshu. The above expenses are absorbed under the regular operating budgets of the HKTB and the LCSD, and cannot be accounted for separately.

(4) Since its launch in March this year, the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023 has received an overwhelming response. The Festival features a total of more than 20 programmes throughout the year, including some ongoing exhibitions/film screening series. The second half of the year will see another line-up of exciting programmes, including thematic exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, sharing sessions and television series.

We have formulated publicity and promotion strategy for the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival 2023, including setting up the Festival's dedicated website and a social media account on Instagram. The LCSD has also started arranging for promotion of the Festival to Mainland audience via social media platforms in the Mainland like Xiaohongshu.

Regarding the promotion of the remaining programmes of the Festival in this year, we will continue to publicise and promote the Festival through multiple channels, particularly social media platforms popular with young people. We will engage reputable online celebrities and key opinion leaders (KOLs), from various fields to introduce the programmes and activities of the Festival, and raise public awareness of the Festival and pop culture. At the same time, we will continuously update and enhance the content of the Festival's dedicated Instagram account with weekly posts on pop culture knowledge and information targeting young people. All these interactive platforms will serve to connect audience with local pop culture more closely, which will in turn help increase the number of followers of the social media account to sustain the publicity of the Festival.

(5) The Government will consider the feasibility of setting up a "Pop Culture Centre" as a landmark for pop culture and a tourist attraction in the long run, to appeal to a diversified audience including the younger generation and tourists. At the present stage, we will first conduct long-term planning for the facility in terms of its location and area. In the short term, we plan to set up an interim Pop Culture Gallery in an LCSD museum for holding relevant exhibitions and extension activities, so as to expand the collaboration network, and build up the collections on pop culture.