

LCQ16: Promoting overnight attractions to tourists

Following is a question by the Hon Yang Wing-kit and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (January 24):

Question:

There are views that the Government should promote to tourists local overnight attractions (particularly those on major festivals such as the New Year's Eve, the Lunar New Year and Christmas) so as to encourage tourists to stay in Hong Kong and have fun. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will publicise and promote to tourists local overnight activities (including watching midnight movies, enjoying acupuncture and massage, singing in karaokes, eating at late-night on-street cooked food stalls and late-night diners, shopping at morning bazaars and supermarkets operating 24 hours a day, spending leisure time at Lan Kwai Fong, watching sunrise and having morning tea and dim sums); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will discuss with the operators of entertainment and catering establishments such as cinemas, bars and chain restaurants measures to be implemented on major festivals such as introducing overnight movie screenings, extending the operating hours of restaurants and distributing bar vouchers to tourists, so as to offer more late night attractions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) whether it will enhance the support for and the promotion of local morning bazaars and allow hawkers to hawk legally when holding festive or time-limited temporary bazaars; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) as it is learnt that theme parks in Japan and South Korea introduce overnight packages and organise overnight parties from time to time, whether the Government will, by drawing reference from such practices, discuss with local theme parks the introduction of overnight packages and organisation of overnight parties on major festivals, with a view to enriching overnight entertainment activities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) whether it will study the organisation of large-scale overnight music events on major festivals, such as overnight music festivals, disc jockey music parties as well as concerts with firework displays, with a view to attracting tourists to come to Hong Kong to participate in these events; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In respect of the question raised by the Hon Yang Wing-kit, having consulted the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the reply is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) consolidated a series of Nightlife Hotspot on its DiscoverHongKong.com website, introducing nighttime activities in Hong Kong, including visiting photogenic bars, late-night shopping, stargazing in rural areas, to visitors.

Beside, riding on the Government's launch of Night Vibes Hong Kong in September 2023, the HKTB has introduced a number of promotions to create a vibrant nighttime atmosphere in town in the past few months. These include intensifying local ambience with city-wide decorations during the Mid-Autumn Festival and Halloween; organising a number of flagship events in the evenings such as the Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival, Hong Kong WinterFest and Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations, as well as launching the International Chinese New Year Night Parade on the first night of the Chinese New Year. The HKTB also offers to visitors Hong Kong Night Treats visitor dining vouchers and visitor-exclusive special offers on open-top sightseeing buses evening tours; and launching new Temple Street promotion to enhance the nighttime ambience and encourage locals and visitors to experience the city's vibrant nighttime appeal. Details of mega events and promotions are as follows:

Mega event/ promotion	Details
Promotion support for Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance (September 28-30, 2023)	The event was held over three nights during the Mid-Autumn Festival, with a glowing fire dragon carried by performers dancing through the streets of Tai Hang.
Promotion of "Hallo" Hong Kong Halloween campaign (October 2023)	From mid to late October 2023, Halloween-themed decorations were added to Visitor Centres, MTR stations, sightseeing vehicles and various tourism hotspots throughout the city, inviting visitors and the public to enjoy the rich Halloween ambience while showcasing Hong Kong's unique festive charms to the world.

<p>Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival (October 26-29, 2023)</p>	<p>The event was held for four consecutive days at the Central Harbourfront Event Space, with about 300 wine and food stalls. The first three days of the event were open until 11pm, attracting about 140 000 members of the public and tourists.</p>
<p>Hong Kong Night Treats dining vouchers (From November 2023)</p>	<p>Starting from November 2023, the HKTB has been distributing one million visitor dining vouchers worth \$100 each to inbound visitors to encourage them to enjoy Hong Kong's dining experience and bar scene after 6pm at participating bars and Quality Tourism Services Scheme-recognised restaurants. In addition, to encourage local consumption, the HKTB started a similar giveaway of a total of 200 000 Hong Kong Night Treats for Locals dining vouchers to be used after 6pm in two batches starting from December 2023, with a view to enhancing the appeal of local consumption, creating business opportunities for the food and beverage sector continuously and stimulating the economy.</p>
<p>Hong Kong Night Bus Tour visitor-exclusive offer (From November 2023 to January 2024)</p>	<p>From November 2023 to January 2024, the HKTB introduced the Hong Kong Night Bus Tour visitor-exclusive offer. For only \$20, visitors could travel on one of the three designated routes and explore famous attractions and landmarks on Hong Kong Island and Kowloon at night, enjoying the fascinating night view of Hong Kong.</p>
<p>Hong Kong WinterFest (November-December 2023)</p>	<p>A giant Christmas tree was once again set up in the West Kowloon Cultural District, adorning Victoria Harbour. Together with eight Winter Harbourfront Pyrotechnics shows at 8pm, the event attracted a total of 1.2 million visitors.</p>

<p>Whole-new Temple Street promotion (From mid-December 2023)</p>	<p>A new six-month Temple Street promotional campaign has been launched in mid-December 2023, giving a new energy through "A taste of Temple Street" (food stalls) and the Street decor lights. Illuminated arts installations, distinctive signages and light projections adorn the Street to bring together the unique characteristics of Temple Street and inspire a sense of novelty to attract visitors and locals to visit Temple Street for sightseeing and in-depth discovery of its authentic experiences. "A taste of Temple Street" (food stalls) is open daily from 2pm to 11pm, while the Street decor lights light up daily from 5pm to 11pm.</p>
<p>Hong Kong New Year Count-down Celebrations (December 31, 2023)</p>	<p>The Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations was the largest countdown fireworks and music show ever held in Hong Kong, attracting 480 000 visitors on both sides of Victoria Harbour.</p>
<p>International Chinese New Year Night Parade (February 10, 2024)</p>	<p>Nine floats and 29 local, Mainland and overseas performing teams will take to the stage, presenting a series of spectacular performances incorporating Chinese New Year elements from 8pm to 9.45pm.</p>

As to whether merchants will extend the operating hours, it is their commercial decision. It has been a usual practice for some Hong Kong cinemas located in busy districts to schedule midnight/late night screenings until 3am during major festive holidays such as New Year, Chinese New Year and Christmas. For Chinese New Year Eve, some may have screenings overnight until 5am to 6am.

(3) According to the Environment and Ecology Bureau, bazaars can be organised for various purposes and in different forms, such as promoting local economy, festive celebration, and can be held during daytime or nighttime. The Government occasionally organises or supports bazaars to achieve policy or specific objectives, and adopts an open attitude towards festive or time-limited bazaars proposed by organisations. To ensure that bazaar activities do not affect public safety and order, food safety and environmental hygiene etc, the organisers need to obtain relevant licences/permits and should consider local opinions. If the bazaar activities have the required licences/permits, stalls operating in the venue are not required to hold

hawker licences.

On the other hand, illegal hawking on street, even during late-night or early-mornings hours, may cause obstruction to emergency services, environmental and noise nuisance, or hygiene and fire risks. It is also unfair to the businesses of shops nearby. Last year, the Government has received around 8 500 complaints about illegal hawking. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to regulate and take enforcement actions against unlicensed hawking activities.

(4) For theme parks, we have all along been encouraging the Ocean Park Corporation (the Park) to actively formulate and launch various types of events, including night events with extended opening hours of the Park. Examples of night events organised by the Park last year include Ocean Park Halloween Fest 2023, New Year countdown event, and programmes with education elements such as Grand Aquarium Overnight, Starry Summit Glamping, Eco Night Exploration and stargazing programme. Of them, Grand Aquarium Overnight and Eco Night Exploration were in-park overnight programmes.

For Hong Kong Disneyland Resort (Resort), in addition to the nighttime spectacular "Momentous" newly launched in 2022, the Resort held a New Year's Eve countdown earlier on for the first time in 15 years, which were all popular with guests. The Resort has been promoting packages integrating theme park tickets and overnight hotel stays at the three themed resort hotels, and it will continue to enrich its various offerings with a view to attracting more visitation.

(5) When deciding on the staging of large-scale events, event organisers, be they Government departments or commercial organisations, will consider many factors apart from the operating expenses. For example, the estimated number of participants, their experiences, the impacts to nearby residents and the environment such as whether the events will create noises to nearby residents, and the availability of transportation facilities at the time of the events, and in particular whether the overnight activities will bring nuisances to the neighbourhood. As commercial organisations will in particular consider the cost-effectiveness of the staging of events, the event organisers will be prudent when deciding on the staging of overnight events.

Nevertheless, there are also some entertainment venues in Hong Kong, such as bars, which are open overnight. Interested local residents or visitors may go to these venues for enjoyment. For visitors who are going to join large-scale events in Hong Kong, they may, depending on their need, arrange hotel reservations in advance to rest after the events and continue their itineraries and other activities in Hong Kong.