

LCQ4: Incorporating elements of the National Day celebrations into cultural tourism projects

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Yung and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (July 10):

Question:

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. There are views that incorporating elements of the National Day celebrations into various cultural tourism projects will not only enhance the overall atmosphere of the National Day celebrations in HKSAR, but also help Hong Kong develop quality tourism and become an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) how it will incorporate elements of the National Day celebrations into various cultural tourism projects;
- (2) whether it will seek the loan of more grade-one national treasures and more precious cultural relics from the Central Government to the Hong Kong Palace Museum under special arrangements, so as to organise a special exhibition for the National Day celebrations; and
- (3) how it will focus its publicity efforts among tourists from the Mainland and overseas on cultural tourism projects incorporating elements of the National Day celebrations?

Reply:

President,

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and is an important historical milestone. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government celebrates the National Day with the public every year and promotes patriotism and national pride through a series of activities and publicity programmes. This year, more celebratory events which are rich in content and diversity will be held to create an intense festive ambience of the National Day and promote patriotism. We celebrate this special day with the public and allow visitors to experience a joyful atmosphere and share the joy of the National Day.

In respect of the questions raised by the Hon Chan Yung, in consultation with the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, the consolidated reply is as follows:

The Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) is leading various bureaux and departments to actively prepare for various tasks to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. In this connection, the CS has given instructions at the previous meetings of the Steering Committee on District Governance and the Task Force on District Governance, asking all bureaux and departments to make concerted efforts to plan and take forward the preparatory work for the National Day celebrations on all fronts, with a view to creating a colourful and enthusiastic National Day atmosphere and cultivating people's sense of patriotism at different levels of the community. Apart from the key programmes such as the annual large-scale National Day reception, flag-raising ceremony, variety show and fireworks display, all bureaux and their departments will also organise an array of celebratory activities under their respective areas, with a view to enabling more members of the public from different backgrounds and age groups to take part and share the joy of the National Day.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) will arrange a series of cultural and tourism programmes with elements of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, enabling the public, including both citizens and visitors, to come together and celebrate the National Day. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is organising the exhibitions "Brothers in Arms: War of Resistance Activities of the East River Column in Shenzhen and Hong Kong Areas" (tentative title), the "Auspicious Fullness and Togetherness – Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greater Bay Area" (tentative title) and other exhibitions to celebrate the National Day. The LCSD will liaise with different organisations in the Mainland to borrow suitable exhibits. In addition, the LCSD will organise the "75th Anniversary of the Founding of the PRC" exhibition (tentative title) to showcase the major developments and achievements of New China since its founding 75 years ago from social, cultural, scientific and technological perspectives. After conversion, the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence will hold the "Flag Raising Ceremony cum Drill Performance on the National Day" with three youth uniformed groups. On the National Day, admission to all museums under the LCSD will be free. There are also special activities at museums. For example, the Hong Kong Museum of History has jointly organised with the Henan Provincial Administration of Cultural Heritage "The Ancient Civilisation of the Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties in Henan Province" exhibition from April to July this year. Through over 150 sets/items of cultural relics, the exhibition introduces important archaeological sites in Henan Province, as well as the political, social, rituals and etiquette, and cultural landscapes of the three dynasties so as to give members of the public an understanding of the civilisation and history of ancient China. The Hong Kong Museum of Art has organised the "Fragrance of Time – In Search of Chinese Art of Scent" exhibition until 16 October. Featuring historical artefacts and artworks, the exhibition showcases the significance of Chinese fragrance culture in different periods, and enhances public awareness of fine traditional Chinese culture. The Hong Kong Heritage Museum will also organise traditional Chinese costumes activities and the public libraries will celebrate the National Day by specially holding thematic book displays on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC in some libraries.

Hong Kong Palace Museum will stage a special exhibition in late September this year, showcasing approximately 110 precious sets/items from the Neolithic period to the Xia dynasty, including jades, ceramics, bone objects, stone sculptures, and bronze vessels, etc. The exhibition aims to illustrate the origins and evolution of the Chinese civilisation and enhance visitors' understanding of the remarkable achievements and the unified development with diversity of Chinese civilisation, and is one of the celebration activities marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC.

Moreover, the celebration of National Day is adopted as the theme of the annual Mid-Autumn Lantern Carnival to be held at Victoria Park this year. Primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong will be invited to design dazzling lanterns with the theme of National Day. At the same time, the LCSD will present uniquely curated traditional Chinese costumes catwalk shows in which members of the public will be invited to participate by dressing in traditional Chinese costumes.

As regards performances, we have invited the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra to present the "Resounding Chimes. Magnificent works in a Prosperous Age" National Day concert. Featuring the centuries-old traditional musical instrument bianzhong, this concert comes with free pre-performance guided appreciation sessions and live demonstrations. With Hong Kong hosting the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival for the first time this year, its opening programme "Sound River" will be one of the highlights of the celebration programmes.

In addition, "A Symphony of Lights" light and sound show will launch a special edition for celebration of the 75th National Day in October. At the Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races co-organised by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) and Hong Kong China Dragon Boat Association earlier in June, three races of PRC 75th Anniversary Celebration Trophy were staged and decorations with the theme of the National Day were displayed at the event venue.

The Government is actively promoting "tourism is everywhere". Nowadays, many tourists are keen on in-depth local tourism to experience local culture and characteristics. In view of this, the 18 District Offices under the Home Affairs Department will organise National Day celebratory events with local characteristics in each district, with a view to enabling more members of the public and tourists from different backgrounds and age groups to participate and share the joy of the National Day. At the same time, the events will also showcase to visitors the unique advantages and attractions of Hong Kong in terms of the staunch support we receive from the Motherland and our global outlook.

The CSTB will continue to collaborate with the HKTB and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong to introduce and promote cultural programmes marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC to Mainland and overseas tourists, including uploading the related information onto the websites of the HKTB as well as the Mainland and overseas Economic and Trade

Offices of the HKSAR Government, dedicated webpages and Instagram accounts as well as Mainland social media platforms to promote local programmes celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. In addition, we will also encourage the trade to roll out National Day special offers and programmes and carry out promotion through cross-sectoral efforts, thereby allowing members of the public and tourists to celebrate the National Day.