

## LCQ5: Venues and supporting facilities for holding mega events

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (May 29):

Question:

There are views that notwithstanding the consensus in society that Hong Kong should organise more mega events to consolidate its status as an "events capital", Hong Kong's venues and supporting facilities may pose a major obstacle. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will build the largest outdoor performance venue in Asia to attract top international superstars and groups to perform in Hong Kong;

(2) given that during the debate on the Member's motion on "Polishing Hong Kong's tourism brand" in this Council on February 22 this year, the Government indicated that it would be willing to explore the provision of recreational and entertainment facilities on the Sunny Bay reclamation site, including a multi-purpose venue or a motor racing circuit, of the relevant details and timetable; and

(3) given that the Development and Reform Commission of Guangdong Province issued the notice on "Guangdong Province 2024 Key Construction Project Plan" in March this year, and one of the proposed projects was the construction of an FIA Grade 1 circuit and supporting facilities in Guangzhou, together with the construction of an international comprehensive racing sports park around the circuit, whether the Government will discuss with the relevant Mainland authorities the collaboration to construct a top-class motor racing circuit and supporting facilities in Hong Kong which can represent the presence of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the sport, so as to create synergy effects; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Organising international mega events in Hong Kong means a lot to the city in various aspects. Not only do the events attract more tourists and generate more business opportunities to industries related to tourism and mega events, but also inject momentum to social development, bring joy to the public, create a positive atmosphere in the community and bolster Hong Kong's international image. Mega events of conventions and exhibitions can further foster the development of economy, finance, technology, healthcare and so on. Both the direct and indirect spending of tourists during their participation in the mega events will bring economic gains to Hong Kong. Our tourists will

also make the best ambassadors to tell the good stories of Hong Kong.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) has been promoting cultural, sports and tourism mega events, and actively attracting mega events to be held in Hong Kong. In the process of co-ordinating the smooth organisation of various mega events in Hong Kong, the CSTB proactively communicates and collaborates with bureaux and departments. In consultation with the Development Bureau, my reply to the question raised by the Hon Michael Tien is as follows:

(1) The Government welcomes more large-scale performances and concerts starred by internationally renowned celebrities and groups to be held in Hong Kong. Majority of the large-scale pop concerts are run on commercial principles, involving lots of complex commercial and practical considerations. We understand that, in addition to the size of venue, organisers take into account a number of factors which include singers' schedule, market response, financial feasibility, target audience group and size, and venue facilities, when choosing the location of a concert.

According to our information, on average, each month in 2023 there were about two internationally renowned singers holding large-scale concerts with an audience of more than 10 000, and most of them were holding more than one show. In respect of venues, taking the highly popular Hong Kong Coliseum and the Queen Elizabeth Stadium as examples, the two venues have enjoyed close to 100 per cent occupancy in 2023-24. AsiaWorld-Expo and the Central Harbourfront Event Space were also frequently used for organising pop music concerts. It demonstrates that there are many famous international and local singers staging large-scale pop concerts in Hong Kong.

The Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP), being the largest sports infrastructure project in Hong Kong's history, occupies an area of about 28 hectares in the core of the Kai Tak Development Area. It will provide modern and multi-purpose sports and recreation facilities upon completion, including a 50 000-seat Main Stadium, a 10 000-seat Indoor Sports Centre, a 5 000-seat Public Sports Ground and about 14-hectare landscaped open space and other ancillary facilities. The Main Stadium, being equipped with a retractable roof, offering different stage positioning and seating configurations as well as adopting a flexible pitch system design, provides more options for hosting different types of large-scale cultural and entertainment events such as concerts. The outdoor event space of around 1.4 hectares adjacent to the Main Stadium also allows the staging of fringe activities of the events held in the Main Stadium, or the hosting of different kinds of outdoor sports and entertainment events. As for the Indoor Sports Centre, its retractable seating system and flexible configuration of the play field facilitates the hosting of various kinds of sports or non-sports events. Together with the diversified, efficient and convenient transportation facilities and various kinds of catering facilities, the KTSP will become another appealing venue for large scale outdoor performance that attracts more major outdoor performances to be staged in Hong Kong, strengthening Hong Kong's status as an Events Capital. As a matter of fact, Kai Tak Sports Park Limited has so far made contact with over 200 local and international sports and non-sports

events' promotion bodies, organisations and agencies, amongst which around 50 of them have expressed interest in utilising the facilities at the KTSP and are learning about the leasing arrangements.

There are many considerations in considering the construction of large-scale outdoor performance venues. Besides the scale of venues, the suitability of locations, ancillary facilities and accessibility, financial feasibility, seasons of favourable weather for outdoor events in Hong Kong, market size and demand and so on, are also considered. We will closely monitor the use of the KTSP after its opening, continue to study the ongoing need of developing large-scale venues, and plan for site development for outdoor venues of even greater scale when necessary.

(2) and (3) The Government announced the preliminary proposals for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project at the end of 2022. It recommended to build the Hong Kong Island West to Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link, and reserve part of the area of the proposed Sunny Bay Reclamation to accommodate the related railway depot facilities. The Civil Engineering and Development Department commenced the engineering study for Sunny Bay reclamation in May 2023 for anticipated completion in mid-2025 to ascertain the extent of reclamation required and its technical feasibility. Once the extent of the reclamation is ascertained, the Government will explore the land use options. Apart from accommodating the railway depot facilities, the Government will also explore the provision of various recreational and entertainment facilities on the Sunny Bay reclamation site, including a multi-purpose venue and a motor racing circuit.

Hong Kong is a centre for major international sports events. We will continue to foster the exchange and collaboration in sports between Hong Kong and different cities in the Mainland, and continuously explore the possibility of the hosting of mega sports events in places including the Greater Bay Area. At present, we are proactively working with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to take forward the organisation of National Games and National Games for Persons with Disabilities to be held in 2025, and in the process strengthening the collaboration among the three places in organising major sports events. We believe that, after the National Games, more various types of mega events will commence one after another. As for considering undertaking major infrastructure projects, we will also take into account other projects in the Greater Bay Area.

Thank you President.