

## Remarks by CE at media session before ExCo (with photos/video)

Following are the remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (October 15):

Reporter: Good morning Mr Lee. Almost 1.4 million visitors came to Hong Kong during the Golden Week holiday. What do you make of this year's tourism business performance? And also, as a prelude to tomorrow's Policy Address, can you tell us a little bit about what the public can expect from your annual blueprint? Thank you.

Chief Executive: I'm very glad that the Golden Week was full of happiness. It was full of enjoyment; both people of Hong Kong and also a lot of visitors visited Hong Kong, and they enjoyed a good time. I thank my colleagues for organising a lot of activities, and I also thank a lot of different representatives from organisations and districts that organised a lot of activities. There were altogether over 400 activities for people to enjoy and there were a lot of offers as well, so as to allow everybody to have a good time.

The visitors from the Mainland actually showed a good increase. There were altogether, during the seven days of the Golden Week, a total of 1.22 million visitors from the Mainland, which means, on a daily average, there were over 170 000 Mainland visitors, and this was up 27 per cent compared with the Golden Week last year. And it was also an increase of 13 per cent compared with the Golden Week in May. Some figures actually showed how intensive the activities have been. There were, first of all, over 1 000 Mainland tourist groups visiting Hong Kong. The actual figure is 1 050. Eighty per cent of these tour groups actually stayed overnight. The firework display attracted over 330 000 people and everybody had a good time, and all those who attended were very complimentary of the display and also the arrangement.

Of the major events in which the Government sponsored, cinema-goers paid half price so that they can enjoy a good time. It attracted about 190 000 people who visited the cinema, which was an increase of 22 per cent compared with last time.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department's museums and also art spaces were opened to people for free so there were 60 000 visitors. A lot of public transport also offered free rides or discounted rides. The people who enjoyed all these special offers and took traffic transportation amounted to 4.43 million. The catering business was doing quite well because the associations have indicated that there were about \$2 billion in business over the Golden Week, which was a 5 per cent increase. A lot of representatives from different sectors and businesses have indicated that during the Golden Week, there were a larger number of visitors, customers, and also there was an increase in the business turnover.

I thank my colleagues, particularly those involved in the boundary control points, transportation arrangement, crowd management, and all the different activities they organised. These collective efforts between the Government and different sectors of the community, they did very well to ensure that this special National Day and the Golden Week was a very enjoyable time for everybody. I'm glad to see that this enjoyment was shared by both local Hong Kong citizens and also visitors from different parts of the world. Although the whole thing has gone smoothly, and a lot of activities have been enjoyed, we will, of course, still look at the whole arrangement to see whether we can make it an even bigger success next time.

As regard to the Policy Address, I thank you for the interest. I know that everybody's very keen to know about the content of the Policy Address. I have told you the theme of the Policy Address, which is, we will reform for enhancing development and building our future together. I think that is the sum up of the Policy Address which I will announce tomorrow in the Legislative Council. Thereafter, there will be a series of media interviews, there will be a press conference in the afternoon of tomorrow, and there will be also some collective media interviews the same day tomorrow thereafter. I thank you for the interest and attention. You will know everything when I announce it tomorrow. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)

