

SHA's opening remarks at LegCo Finance Committee special meeting

Following is the English translation of the opening remarks by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, at the special meeting of the Legislative Council Finance Committee today (April 7):

Mr Chairman,

I would like to brief Members about the key areas of our work on home affairs in 2020-21.

Arts and culture

Since its inception in 2016, the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme (ADMGS) has been well received by different arts groups. It has also helped foster a culture of private donations to the arts and cultural sector. To ensure the sustainability of the ADMGS and to encourage arts groups to seek non-government resources and support in a more active manner, the Government will inject an additional \$900 million into the ADMGS.

The West Kowloon Cultural District has formally entered its operational phase. The Xiqu Centre, the Art Park and Freespace, among others, have been commissioned last year. Other arts and cultural facilities in the district will also be completed in the next few years.

To continue its support for District Councils to promote arts and cultural activities at the district level, the Government will, starting from 2020-21, regularise the additional "dedicated allocation" of \$20.8 million for the promotion of arts and cultural activities under the community involvement (CI) programmes. In this connection, the total annual amount of funding for CI programmes will be maintained at \$461.6 million.

Sports

Supporting Hong Kong athletes to prepare for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games

Despite the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, we will continue to give our full support for Hong Kong athletes to achieve outstanding results at the Games. As at the end of March this year, Hong Kong athletes have qualified for 30 and 17 events in the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games respectively. The Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) has implemented anti-epidemic measures to help safeguard the health of our athletes, and will make flexible arrangements to adjust training programmes and competition plans in order to help our athletes continue with their intensive preparation.

Enhanced funding support to the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) and "national sports associations" (NSAs)

To further promote the development of sports in Hong Kong, we will substantially increase the annual subvention provided for the SF&OC and 60 NSAs progressively from the existing level of about \$300 million to over \$500 million. The additional subvention will be used to enhance the promotion of sports for all and community participation in sports, step up the training for youth and squads, provide more opportunities for athletes to participate in overseas competitions and improve the manpower and governance of NSAs.

Special measures in response to social incidents and the epidemic

Last year, some major sports events were cancelled. We will provide a special direct grant of up to \$2 million to each of the "M" Mark events affected. We are also actively considering providing appropriate support to those "M" Mark events affected by the epidemic.

New facilities building project of the HKSI

We will continue to take forward the new facilities project of the HKSI and commence its pre-construction activities as soon as possible to provide local athletes with world-class training and support facilities.

Transformation of public play spaces

The Government plans to transform more than 170 public play spaces managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department across the territory over the next five years in order to provide innovative, challenging and interesting play spaces. The total estimated expenditure for the entire project is about \$686 million.

Youth development

Around \$100 million under the Youth Development Fund will be allocated to provide subsidies to nearly 200 young entrepreneurs and to render start-up support and incubation services to about 4 000 young people. Besides, in order to provide more opportunities for young people to participate in policy discussions, the Government has regularised the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth. So far, more than 250 posts are held by young people who have been appointed to advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs) directly or indirectly through "self-recommendation". The proportion of appointed youth members in ASBs has increased from 7.8 per cent in 2017 to 11.6 per cent at present, gradually approaching the target of 15 per cent within the current-term Government.

District administration

District-led Actions Scheme

The annual recurrent provision for District-led Actions Scheme will be

increased from \$63 million to \$80 million from 2020-21 onwards to further address long-standing problems and capitalise on opportunities in districts.

Building management

In 2020-21, we will regularise the Building Management Professional Advisory Service Scheme to strengthen our support for owners of "three-nil" buildings and encourage them to form owners' corporations.

My colleagues and I are happy to answer questions from Members. Thank you.