

Smooth arrival of giant pandas gifted by Central Government in Hong Kong (with photos)

The two giant pandas gifted by the Central Government to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) arrived smoothly in Hong Kong today (September 26) from Dujiangyan, Sichuan. The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, officiated at the Welcome Ceremony to greet the two giant pandas.

The two giant pandas left the Dujiangyan Base of the China Conservation and Research Centre for the Giant Panda at 3.05am today. They then left Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport this morning and arrived at the Hong Kong International Airport at 11.05am.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Chan said that it doubled the happiness to welcome the two recently matured and energetic giant pandas, which were again gifted to the HKSAR by the Central Government, to join the Hong Kong family in the run-up to the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

He said, "I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the National Forestry and Grassland Administration, the China Conservation and Research Centre for the Giant Panda, and the Sichuan Provincial Government for their time and tremendous effort in arranging the transfer of the giant pandas to Hong Kong over the past few months. This fully demonstrates the Central Government's care and support for the HKSAR and recognises our efforts in conservation, caring and rearing of giant pandas, which is of great significance to Hong Kong."

Mr Chan also thanked Cathay Cargo for arranging and sponsoring the entire transportation of the giant pandas from Sichuan to the Ocean Park Hong Kong (Ocean Park); and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for their contribution in enhancing the new giant panda facilities at the Ocean Park, as well as their support for the Park's conservational education work related to giant pandas.

Upon their arrival in Hong Kong, the giant pandas were immediately transported to the Ocean Park. They will undergo a one-month quarantine period, followed by approximately one month to adapt to the new environment. The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) will maintain close communication with experts from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and Ocean Park, and subject to the health and adaptation conditions of the giant pandas, arrange them to meet the public as early as possible.

The two giant pandas have already had names in the China Conservation

and Research Centre for the Giant Panda. The male giant panda is named "An An" and the female giant panda "Ke Ke". To welcome these two giant pandas to the Hong Kong family, the CSTB will soon hold a citywide naming competition, inviting all Hong Kong citizens to exercise creativity and suggest meaningful new names for the giant pandas that highlight their characteristics. Besides, the CSTB will organise a large-scale painting competition, inviting all citizens to vividly depict the adorable nature of the giant pandas through their artwork. Details of the two competitions will be announced shortly.

In collaboration with the Ocean Park and Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), the CSTB is also organising various promotional and marketing activities. The Government will seize the opportunity brought by the arrival of the giant pandas to connect different sectors of the society to actively plan and launch related promotional initiatives and create a joyful atmosphere to welcome the giant pandas in Hong Kong, thereby generating business opportunities for different sectors and boosting the economy.

â€‹To provide citizens and visitors with more information, the HKTB has launched a one-stop "Giant Panda Special Page" on its tourism information platform "Discover Hong Kong". The Ocean Park has also established a "Hong Kong Giant Panda Fans Page" to provide update on the living condition of the two new giant pandas after their arrival in Hong Kong.

