

Transcript of remarks of press conference on promoting mega-event economy (with video)

The Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong, today (January 26) held a press conference to announce details of the mega events to be held in the first half of 2024 and the work of the Government in promoting the mega-event economy. The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung; the Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), Dr Pang Yiu-kai; the Executive Director of the HKTB, Mr Dane Cheng; and the Chairman of the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Committee, Dr Adrian Cheng, also attended. Following is the transcript of remarks:

Reporter: Mr Wong, you mentioned that the Government will be more proactive in trying to attract mega events to Hong Kong and that the HKTB will be like the first window. Can you explain how this will work better, and how this is different from efforts in the past? How is the Board's role going to enhance the whole situation? Another question is for Dr Adrian Cheng. You mentioned about the Chubby Hearts and also the Jin Yong events coming up. Can you give more details about it, and how successful do you think they can be in terms of attracting tourists and helping the vibes of local Hong Kong people? Thank you.

Deputy Financial Secretary: Thank you for the question. If you recall, one of the slides in my presentation deck is we will reach out more proactively. I will emphasise the word "more". It is not that we are not proactive at this stage, but it is just that the efforts could be better organised. For example, when I talked about reaching out, we will co-ordinate the efforts of HKTB, the HKTDC (Hong Kong Trade Development Council) and the ETOs (Economic and Trade Offices) of the Hong Kong Government in approaching different event organisers and intermediaries. When we have identified events with potential, we will talk to them to see if they are interested in organising and having their events in Hong Kong. Once this is done, and let's say a case is shown to have potential, it will then be referred back to the HKTB team. The HKTB team will then work on the project, do the necessary evaluation, and let's say a project requires broad interdepartmental co-ordination, then the group chaired by me with Kevin (Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung) as Vice-Chairman will come in. At this stage, various departments will also be helpful and facilitating as much as possible, but we do think that there is room for the culture to be improved. We believe that the increased co-ordination will be a big help. I think that is my short answer to your questions.

Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board: I think it is also about strengthening not only the co-ordination, but also the speed of response. Because (for) these mega events and performances, they often approach several cities at the same time. If we are able to co-ordinate our efforts better, speedier and respond more efficiently, then they will come to us rather than

go to somebody else. So the co-ordination, response and friendliness of Hong Kong to them would make a difference in them selecting Hong Kong as their preferred location.

Chairman of the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Committee: For Chubby Hearts and also for Jin Yong's event, what we are focusing on is to incubate the cultural landscape in Hong Kong. You can see that, for Jin Yong's event, we have an interdisciplinary collaboration on lots of Hong Kong creatives. For example, we have Chang Suk-ping, a very famous fashion designer. We have Lee Chi-ching, a very famous comic illustrator, and also musician Chen Jie. These are all creatives that we are collaborating and helping Hong Kong in the creative industry. All the three events we just mentioned, hopefully, we can attract around 600 000 visitors to come. And the nine events that are coming to Hong Kong this year, we are expecting more than 1.5 million visitors coming to Hong Kong.

Reporter: Could you talk a bit about the Chubby Hearts event?

Chairman of the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Committee: For the Chubby Hearts event, we are working with Hong Kong Design Centre, as I said, we are going to cover more than 10 locations around Hong Kong. The biggest heart will be at Central for 11 days. The rest will be "pop-ups" across 10 different locations in Hong Kong.

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