

Government's initiatives to increase passenger flow and encourage spending in Wanchai and Causeway Bay

With the generous support from different stakeholders, the Government will shortly introduce a series of initiatives listed below, with a view to encouraging more visitors and local residents to participate in the events and boosting consumer spending in Wanchai and Causeway Bay –

(1) The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) will operate a free shuttle bus service (circular route) terminating at Golden Bauhinia Square connecting Wanchai and Causeway Bay between December 22, 2005 and January 2, 2006, with a view to enhancing, thereby stimulating more business activities and consumer spending in the area. The service will run between 11am to 8.30 pm with bus stops placed along the route at Lockhart and Stewart roads, Lockhart and Marsh roads and 510-517 Hennessy Road;

(2) The MTR Corporation Ltd (MTRC) will provide fare discount of \$2 to passengers using Octopus card exiting Wanchai and Causeway Bay Stations on December 25 and 26, 2005 to attract more visitors to the district;

(3) The HKTB will arrange Santa Claus to appear along the streets in the vicinity of the shuttle bus-stops to distribute gifts on December 22 - 27, 2005, giving local residents and visitors surprises, and enhancing the festive ambience;

(4) The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong will provide 3,000 complimentary entry tickets of the 40th Hong Kong Brands and Products Expo held in the Victoria Park for distribution to the affected shops and restaurants in Wanchai District. Another 30,000 entry tickets will be distributed to visitors from key source markets and the local tourism sector through the HKTB, with a view to encouraging patronage as well as encouraging customers to visit the Expo and spend more in the nearby restaurants and retail outlets;

(5) There will be a series of events to be held in Wanchai and Causeway Bay in the coming month, including the 40th Hong Kong Brands and Products Expo, the Wanchai Book Festival, and the Causeway Bay Carnival etc. The Home Affairs Department will step up promotion of these events.

Event (Date, Venue)

40th Hong Kong Brands and Products Expo (December 24, 2005 – January 8, 2006, Victoria Park)

Wanchai Book Festival (Southorn) Playground (December 31, 2005 – January 1, 2006, Southorn Playground)

Causeway Bay Carnival (January 8, 2006, Paterson Street)

Wanchai Book Festival 2006 (January 14-15, 2006, East Point Road Pedestrian Precinct)

(6) In addition, the brand new version of "A Symphony of Lights" will be launched on December 23, covering 33 buildings on both sides of the Victoria Harbour. It is a daily show which starts at 8pm. The Show will be enhanced with specially designed pyrotechnic displays on the sea on December 23, 24 and 31. The promenade at Golden Bauhinia Square at Wanchai is one of the best viewing locations; and

(7) The HKTB will strengthen its promotion and recommend to visitors the above measures and the events being held in the area to attract visitors to visit these two districts and encourage spending.

According to the preliminary figures, the impact of the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Conference on the visitor arrivals was very mild. The Government hopes that the above measures can attract more visitors and local residents to Wanchai and Causeway Bay and hence encourage consumer spending.

"Thank you for the generous support and assistance rendered by different stakeholders in the community to these special initiatives, including the HKTB, the MTRC, Ocean Park, the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong and the sponsorship of gifts by other merchants," a Government spokesman said.

Tourism Commission

Economic Development and Labour Bureau

20 December, 2005