

LCQ21: Facilities of Kai Tak Cruise Terminal

Following is a question by the Hon Paul Tse and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, in the Legislative Council today (April 13):

Question:

It has been reported that the world's largest cruise company has for the first time included Hong Kong in its annual world voyage route, and the company's three mammoth cruise liners have recently visited Hong Kong and berthed at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal (KTCT). The regional director of the company pointed out that, as the three cruise liners had brought about 17 000 visitors to Hong Kong, the external ancillary transport facilities for KTCT were of paramount importance. She further pointed out that the view of the Victoria Harbour was highly attractive to overseas visitors. She hoped that more restaurants would enter KTCT in future to "warm up" the terminal. On the other hand, the managing director of a famous cruise company in the United States relayed the views of some visitors that the lack of entertainment facilities in the vicinity of KTCT had caused much inconvenience to them. He considered that the vicinity of KTCT should be livened up in order to attract visitors. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will, after taking into account the aforesaid views:

(1) and given that the vibrant ambience anticipated by visitors is totally absent at KTCT during night-time, coupled with the fact that the grass park adjacent to KTCT is always void of visitors with an extremely low utilisation rate, explore ways to enhance the night-time entertainment facilities at KTCT, maximise the use of the grass park and the areas surrounding KTCT, and organise activities which are attractive to visitors and members of the public, e.g. music and multi-media art festivals and carnivals such as Clockenflap, etc., so as to liven up KTCT;

(2) seriously reconsider the proposal of establishing "a bar street" in KTCT's open-air roof garden, in particular the proposal of converting the space in the garden currently occupied by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, which enjoys a 360-degree panoramic sea view, into an area for accommodating bars or eateries, as well as extending the opening hours of the garden at night, so as to provide overseas visitors with the unforgettable travel experiences of enjoying the magnificent day and night views spanning over the Victoria Harbour while savouring a multitude of culinary

delights, and to improve KTCT's financial position by increasing its rental income;

(3) assess if the provision of kaito ferry service linking Kwun Tong and KTCT (available on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays only), which is awaiting vetting and approval by the authorities, can satisfy the demand of visitors for enjoying the view of the Victoria Harbour at sea, and improve the existing situation of inadequate external road transport facilities for KTCT (i.e. relying on one single link road to and from Kowloon Bay); and

(4) and in the light of a significant rise in the number of ship calls at KTCT from 90 this year to more than 160 next year, consider extending the kaito ferry service to link up KTCT with Lei Yue Mun, Hong Kong Island East (Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence), the town centres such as Tsim Sha Tsui and Central, etc.?

Reply:

President,

The Kai Tak Cruise Terminal (KTCT), which is located within the Kai Tak Development Area, is an important tourism infrastructure. Since its commissioning in 2013, various Government bureaux and departments have all along been committed to enhancing its supporting facilities and operation arrangements to ensure that both the passengers using the terminal and the visitors going to the facilities in its vicinity will have satisfying experiences. The business of the KTCT is also on steady increase, its number of ship calls in 2016 is 90 (involving 100 days); the figure in 2017 will increase to 162 (involving 163 days). Since its commissioning, over 30 events had been held inside the KTCT. My reply to the four parts of Member's question is as follows:

(1) The Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) of the Development Bureau and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) have all along been actively promoting and assisting relevant organisations in holding different activities in the vicinity of the KTCT and at the Kai Tak Runway Park. Also, many events are held inside the KTCT. These activities have added vibrancy to the area along the Kai Tak runway tip.

The activities recently held in the vicinity of the KTCT included "HONGKONG STREETATHON@kowloon east", "Tung Wah Charity Carnival", "Kwun Tong Dragon Boat Day" and "Kwun Tong Water Sports Festival", etc. On the other hand,

events held inside the KTCT include fashion show, pet product expo, car shows, charity film screening, cruise holiday expo, and large-scale activity such as "Slide the City", etc. If any organisation is interested in organising activities in the vicinity of the KTCT and at the Kai Tak Runway Park, the relevant departments would provide suitable assistance. Event organisers may also approach the terminal operator to discuss issues relating to renting the venues inside the KTCT for hosting events.

In the medium to long term, the EKEO will continue to forge ahead with the "Kai Tak Fantasy" project to develop the areas around the KTCT into a world-class tourism node.

(2) The KTCT has an ancillary commercial area of 5 600 square metres, including three shops on the rooftop of the terminal building. There are Chinese and Western eateries as well as wedding service company, etc. operating in the ancillary commercial area. As for the three shops on the rooftop of the terminal building, two are still available for leasing. Parties interested in operating eateries or bars may consider renting these two premises.

Regarding the proposal of establishing a "bar street" at areas designated within the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Park (the Park) on the rooftop of the terminal building (i.e. not a part of the ancillary commercial area of the KTCT), we have already pointed out previously that this would reduce the recreational space available for public enjoyment and would affect the recreational activities of or the viewing of the Victoria Harbour by the public. Any change in the use of the Park is subject to the agreement of the local community, including the District Council concerned. Other considerations include whether the proposal could integrate with the KTCT and other local facilities, its impact on the environment and public order, and the planning restrictions on land use within the KTCT. We recommend that parties interested in operating eateries and wine bars at the KTCT may consider renting the vacant premises.

At present, the Park is open daily from 7am to 11pm. If the shops on the rooftop of the terminal building consider it necessary to operate beyond the Park's opening hours, the LCSD will, having regard to the relevant circumstances, consider facilitating.

(3) and (4) Located in the proximity of the KTCT, the Runway Park Pier (the Pier) completed its refurbishment works last month and is now open for public use. The Pier can promote marine transportation to the area around the KTCT and facilitate the cruise tourism trade in providing a wider variety of shore excursion programmes for its

passengers. We understood that the operators providing shore excursion services to cruise passengers are also interested in using the Pier for arranging excursions to outlying islands and the Victoria Harbour by water transport.

For public water transport services, the Transport Department (TD) has approved the application from a kaito ferry service operator to use the Pier for running kaito services plying between Kwun Tong and the areas around the KTCT on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. The operator has started providing services along such route to the public since last weekend (i.e. April 9 and 10). The services at the first weekend were in general smooth and were well-received by the public (including the athletes and crew of the "HONGKONG STREETATHON@kowloon east"). TD will study any other proposals received from operators for running ferry services plying to and from the Pier.

For land transportation, the Government has completed detailed planning for the transport infrastructure in the Kai Tak Development Area. The relevant road projects will be implemented in stages to cope with the demand and dovetail with the completion schedules of the development projects in the area. Of these projects, the Civil Engineering and Development Department has commenced the works for widening the existing single 2-lane carriageway (including Shing Fung Road, Shing Cheong Road and part of Cheung Yip Street) connecting the KTCT and Kowloon Bay to a dual 2-lane carriageway in late 2015. The works are expected to be substantially completed by 2019 to serve the developments at the southern tip of the former runway. TD will also review the demand for public transport services in the area near the KTCT from time to time.

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