

LCQ7: Opportunities for tourism industry brought about by development of cities in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area

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Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, in the Legislative Council today (June 21):

Question:

In March this year, the Premier of the State Council put forward in the Report on the Work of the Government the formulation of a development plan for a city cluster in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (the Bay Area). The governments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) and the Guangdong Province are working on the planning of the Bay Area, which is expected to be finalised within this year and submitted to the State Council for approval. In reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council on the 17th of last month, the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs pointed out that regarding tourism, the city cluster in the Bay Area had a strong potential to be developed into a world-class tourist destination cluster as it was located at the southern gateway of China and possessed abundant tourism resources. The HKSAR Government would continue to support the Hong Kong Tourism Board to establish co-operation platforms with Bay Area cities so as to jointly develop more "multi-destination" tourism products, as well as encourage the Hong Kong travel trade to seize the development opportunities in the Bay Area and develop more tourism products featuring the Bay Area for Hong Kong people and "multi-destination" visitors. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the authorities have conducted a study and collated relevant information on the key tourism resources in various Bay Area cities; if so, of the tourism resources in the area with potential to be developed into a world-class tourist destination cluster; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the authorities have, in the light of the characteristics of the tourism resources in various Bay Area cities, set the positioning and development targets of HKSAR in the context of the tourism industry in the area; if so, of the details;

(3) given that the Government will submit its views on the planning of the Bay Area to the National Development and Reform Commission by the end of this month, whether the submission will include a separate chapter on the planning for the tourism industry; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) of the details of the tourism projects implemented in the past three years by the authorities in collaboration with other Bay Area cities; regarding the future development of the Bay Area, of the authorities' specific plans to promote the tourism industry in collaboration with the governments of the Guangdong Province and MSAR; and

(5) whether it will allocate additional resources to support the local travel trade in tapping the Bay Area market; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the questions raised by Hon Yiu Si-wing is as follows:

(1) to (3) The successful development of a world-class city cluster in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (Bay Area) requires not only the capability of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao to fully leverage and organically integrate their different yet complementary advantages, but also a clearly defined role for each city in the co-ordinated development to avoid any adverse competition, so as to further enhance the global competitiveness of the Bay Area as a whole. In accordance with the principle of "one country, two systems", the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, together with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Macao Special Administrative Region Government, is participating in the development work for the Bay Area led by the National Development and Reform Commission.

As regards tourism development, the Bay Area city cluster possesses abundant tourism resources with distinctive appeals, such as Guangdong's traditional Lingnan culture and Macao's entertainment and leisure resources. Hong Kong will highlight and play to the strength of our city's culture, charm as an international metropolis, the appeal of East-meets-West, as well as our vibrancy and diversity, with a view to attracting more overseas visitors to travel to Hong Kong and the Bay Area.

In this connection, Hong Kong will further collaborate with the Bay Area cities to develop more "one-trip multi-destination" ("multi-destination") tourism products and conduct joint promotions overseas. In fact, in recent years, many visitors travelled to Hong Kong on a "multi-destination" basis. About 50 per cent of the visitors from short-haul markets travelled on a "multi-destination" basis while the corresponding figure for long-haul markets is over 90 per cent. With Hong Kong's enhanced external transport network, "multi-destination" itineraries from Hong Kong will be able to cover more Mainland provinces and cities. The plentiful tourism products in the region will help attract more overseas visitors to travel to Hong Kong and other Bay Area cities, thereby enabling the potentials of tourism resources of the Bay Area to be fully developed.

In addition, the HKSAR Government will continue to enhance Hong Kong's attractiveness and uniqueness. Our tourism development strategy and planning are to promote the diversified characteristics of Hong Kong in order to keep pace with the new market trend of pursuing in-depth and unique travel experiences.

As regards short and medium term development planning, in recent years, the HKSAR Government has been developing cultural and creative tourism, including revitalising historical buildings into creative and cultural landmarks. The HKSAR Government is now revitalising the Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail by incorporating artistic elements to the Trail. The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) has also launched the "Old Town Central" promotion project recently. In tune with the former Central Police Station Compound (commonly known as "Tai Kwun") which will be opened in future, the Central and Western District will be transformed into a community filled with an "art-across-time" ambience. The HKSAR Government is also actively promoting green tourism, including Hong Kong's hiking trails, Geopark and island tours. At the same time, to attract new visitor segments, we endeavour to develop Hong Kong into an events capital through, for instance, the introduction of the brand new FIA Formula E Hong Kong ePrix and the first e-Sports and Music Festival Hong Kong. As regards tourism attractions, the Ocean Park and the Hong Kong Disneyland are both taking forward the expansion and development plans.

In the long run, the HKSAR Government is taking forward the Kai Tak Tourism Node project at the area adjoining the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, with a view to developing another premium attraction for local citizens and visitors from around the world.

(4) and (5) In the past three years (i.e. from 2014 to 2016), the HKTB has been actively working with tourism organisations of the Bay Area on conducting joint promotions, including working with the Tourism Administration of Guangdong Province, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Administration of Shenzhen Municipality, the Zhuhai Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, and the Macao Government Tourism Office to promote "multi-destination" itineraries and products featuring Hong Kong through trade briefings, travel missions, exhibitions, roadshows and advertising in various long-haul and short-haul markets, including Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Korea, India, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, etc.

To strengthen regional tourism co-operation in the Bay Area, in April 2017, the HKTB joined hands with the Macao Government Tourism Office, the Tourism Administration of Guangdong Province, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Administration of Shenzhen Municipality, the Zhuhai Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, the Zhongshan Municipal Tourism Bureau, the Qingyuan Municipal Tourism Bureau, the Nansha Region Tourism Bureau and other tourism organisations to conduct briefings in Indonesia. Collaborative travel products and the unique tourism resources of the Bay Area cities were promoted to the Indonesia's travel trade. In 2017-18, to fully leverage the opportunities brought by the tourism development in the Bay Area, the HKSAR Government will continue to support the HKTB to strengthen co-operation with the Bay Area cities, so as to attract more travellers from the region to visit Hong Kong, and to jointly promote to consumers the "multi-destination" itineraries and products of the region.

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