

Mega Events Fund to support five mega events in the fourth round

The Government announced today (December 24) that after careful deliberation, the Mega Events Fund (MEF) Assessment Committee had earmarked a maximum of \$17.8 million to support five mega events to be held in Hong Kong in the fourth round of applications.

"The five events, namely Record Breaking Dragon and Lion Dance Extravaganza, Hong Kong Well-wishing Festival, Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival, Hong Kong International Jazz Festival 2011 and UBS Hong Kong Open Championship 2011, will all take place next year. They will add colour and vibrancy to Hong Kong and will certainly enrich our events calendar. Apart from attracting more visitors to our city, these events will also help enhance Hong Kong's international profile and raise our status as the events capital of Asia," a Government spokesman said.

"It is expected that over 220,000 visitors and local people will participate in these five events," he added.

Details of the five selected events are as follows:

(1) Record Breaking Dragon and Lion Dance Extravaganza

This event will be held in Tsim Sha Tsui on January 1, 2011. It is organised by the Hong Kong Dragon and Lion Festival Preparatory Committee. The highlights of the event include a lion dance show involving 1,111 "lions" at Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, with the aim of breaking the Guinness record, as well as a dragon and lion dance parade along Canton Road, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Avenue of Stars and Centenary Garden. These activities will bring traditional Chinese dragon and lion dance culture into direct contact with visitors to Hong Kong. The event is expected to draw more than 48,000 participants, including over 8,100 tourists. A maximum of \$1 million has been earmarked for this event.

(2) Hong Kong Well-wishing Festival

Lam Tsuen Wishing Square Development Ltd. will organise this Festival in Lam Tsuen Wishing Square, Tai Po, from February 11 to 17, 2011. This event comprises a variety of activities featuring traditional Chinese culture and local rural village customs. The Festival aims to promote traditional Chinese culture in the festive ambience of the Lunar New Year. The event is expected to attract more than 26,000 participants, including 5,200 tourists. A maximum of \$1.8 million has been earmarked for this event.

(3) Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival

The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association and the Hong Kong Tourism Board will stage this Carnival again along the East Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade from June 17 to 19, 2011. The event will involve over 160 local and overseas dragon boat teams and is expected to grow in scale in 2011 with new race categories to be introduced. Supporting activities such as a beer garden will also be organised to highlight the carnival element. The event is expected to attract more than 84,000 participants, including over 30,000 tourists, and will be broadcast worldwide. A maximum of \$4 million has been earmarked for this event.

(4) Hong Kong International Jazz Festival 2011

The Hong Kong Jazz Association is planning to hold this jazz-themed musical festival from late September to early October 2011. The Festival will comprise a series of indoor and outdoor concerts, workshops, seminars and band competitions. Featuring world-renowned musicians and local performers, the event is expected to attract more than 28,000 participants, including over 3,600 tourists. A maximum of \$3 million has been earmarked for this event.

(5) UBS Hong Kong Open Championship 2011

The Hong Kong Golf Association will organise this golf championship from December 1 to 4, 2011. This international golf tournament will strengthen its line-up by inviting leading professional golfers from around the world to participate and step up the publicity about Hong Kong internationally. It is expected to draw more than 33,000 participants, including over 5,100 tourists, and the tournament will be broadcast worldwide. A maximum of \$8 million has been earmarked for this event.

The Assessment Committee, chaired by Mr Jeffrey Lam Kin-fung and comprising members from relevant fields, made the above decisions after carefully considering all the applications received in this round. The assessment took into account a number of factors, such as the economic, publicity and other benefits of the event; the scale of the event; the capability and track record of the applicants; and the technical feasibility and budget of the proposals.

The \$100 million MEF was established in May 2009 to implement the Financial Secretary's 2009-10 Budget initiative to assist local non-profit organisations to host more attractive arts, cultural and sports events up to March 31, 2012, in order to further promote Hong Kong as the events capital of Asia. In the first four rounds of applications, a total of 14 events have been approved by the MEF, involving a maximum funding of \$53 million.

The fifth round of applications will commence in the first half of 2011. For details of the fund, please visit the MEF dedicated website (www.tourism.gov.hk/english/mef/mef.html). Interested parties are also welcome to contact the MEF secretariat (Tel: 2810 2500; Fax: 2121 8791; Email: mefsecretariat@cedb.gov.hk).

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