

Mega Events Fund to support 2012 Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival

The Government announced today (June 13) that the Mega Events Fund (MEF) Assessment Committee has recommended allocating a maximum of \$6.5 million to support the 2012 Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival scheduled to be held from July 2 to 8.

The event is jointly organised by the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association and the Hong Kong Tourism Board, and will be staged at Victoria Harbour along the Tsim Sha Tsui East promenade. It is one of the highlights of the celebration programmes to mark the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

This year, the Carnival will comprise various events including the Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, the 8th International Dragon Boat Federation Club Crew World Championships, and a BeerFest. The Carnival is expected to attract more than 200 000 participants, including 64 000 visitors.

The MEF Assessment Committee, chaired by Mr Jeffrey Lam and comprising members from the relevant fields, made the recommendation after carefully considering the outstanding applications brought forward from the previous MEF scheme, which had been put on hold pending the review of the Fund. The assessment has taken into account a number of factors, such as the economic, public relations and other benefits of the events; the scale of the events; the background, governance structure, resources, capability and track record of the applicants; the feasibility of the proposals; and the reasonableness of the budget.

The MEF was established in 2009 for a term of three years. In his 2012-13 Budget, the Financial Secretary proposed to allocate \$150 million to the MEF and extend its operation for five years. Funding approval was subsequently obtained from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council to extend the operation of the Fund under a modified two-tier scheme.

Under the new scheme, Tier 1 aims to attract internationally acclaimed mega events to Hong Kong, and Tier 2 will be an enhanced version of the previous scheme which aims to provide funding support to local non-profit-making organisations to host mega arts, culture, sports and entertainment events in Hong Kong. The MEF is

inviting applications under Tier 2 until July 6. Details are available from the MEF's website (www.tourism.gov.hk/english/mef/mef_tier2.html).

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