

Mega Events Fund to support two mega events

The Government announced today (May 31) that the Mega Events Fund (MEF) Assessment Committee has decided to support two mega events to be held in Hong Kong.

"After careful deliberation, the MEF Assessment Committee has earmarked a maximum of \$6.75 million to support two mega events, namely the 2013 Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival and the Dragon and Lion Dance Extravaganza 2014. These two events played a pivotal role in our events calendars in the previous years, which helped enhance Hong Kong's international profile and raised our status as the events capital of Asia. They will continue to add colour and vibrancy to Hong Kong and attract more visitors to our city," a Government spokesman said.

"It is expected that over 280 000 visitors and local people will participate in these two events.

"Moreover, the MEF Assessment Committee has in principle supported another event to be held in Hong Kong, and the relevant funding terms and conditions are being discussed with the event organiser. The Committee will grant the funding if a consensus is reached and announce the details," he added.

Details of the two selected events are as follows:

(1) 2013 Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival

The event is jointly organised by the Hong Kong China Dragon Boat Association and the Hong Kong Tourism Board, and will be staged at Victoria Harbour along the Tsim Sha Tsui East promenade from June 21 to 23. This year, the Carnival will comprise various exciting events including the Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races and a BeerFest. The Carnival is expected to attract more than 215 000 participants, including 51 000 visitors. A maximum of \$5.25 million has been earmarked for this event.

(2) Dragon and Lion Dance Extravaganza 2014

This event organised by the Hong Kong Dragon and Lion Festival Preparatory Committee will be held in Tsim Sha Tsui on New Year's Day next year (January 1,

2014). The theme of this event is "Happy Buddha", which will lead the lion dance. Among the various activities will be large-scale performances by the "Happy Buddha" and a dragon and lion dance parade, as well as a dragon and lion dance performance. Altogether over 530 mascots of auspicious beasts will feature in the performance. The Dragon and Lion Dance Extravaganza will fully showcase the traditional culture and festive ambience of Hong Kong, bringing our traditional Chinese dragon and lion dance into direct contact with visitors and sharing the joy of the New Year. The event is expected to draw over 65 000 participants, including around 15 000 tourists. A maximum of \$1.5 million has been earmarked for this event.

The MEF Assessment Committee, chaired by Mr Jeffrey Lam and comprising members from the relevant fields, is responsible for considering the applications and monitoring the progress of the funded events. In assessing the applications, the Committee has taken into account a number of factors, including economic, publicity 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 events; and the reasonableness of the budget.

The MEF was established in 2009 for a term of three years. An allocation of \$150 million was made in 2012-13 to extend the operation of the MEF for five years 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 is 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 third round of applications under Tier 2 will commence in the second half of 2013. For details of the fund, please visit the MEF dedicated website (www.tourism.gov.hk/english/mef/mef_tier2.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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