

Hong Kong and Mainland sign agreement to enhance tourism exchange and co-operation

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, on behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, today (August 9) signed an Agreement on Further Enhancement of Tourism Co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong with Vice Chairman of the China National Tourism Administration Mr Du Jiang in Beijing.

Building on the existing basis, the agreement aims to further strengthen exchange and co-operation between the two sides in tourism development.

The agreement reached by the two sides covers areas including:

- jointly developing Maritime Silk Road tourism products, conducting joint publicity in Belt and Road markets, and enriching multi-destination travel itineraries;
- promoting collaboration in cruise tourism between the Mainland and Hong Kong, supporting regional homeport co-ordination for mutual benefit, and strengthening co-operation in cruise tourism in areas including itinerary development, promotion and publicity, as well as personnel training;
- enhancing co-operation in tourism regulation by working together to eradicate unreasonably low-priced group tours and combating other illegal businesses or violations for the healthy and orderly development of tourism markets in the two places;
- allowing more Hong Kong solely owned travel agents to operate outbound travel business for Mainland residents under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement on a gradual basis; and
- setting up a regular communication and co-ordination mechanism to study and discuss issues on regional tourism co-operation and regulation.

At present, many international visitors travel to Hong Kong on multi-destination itineraries. About 50 per cent of the visitors from short-haul markets are using this kind of itinerary while the corresponding figure for long-haul markets is over 90 per cent. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government hopes to continue to strengthen co-operation with the China National Tourism Administration in this area.

Several major infrastructure projects in Hong Kong will be completed in the near future. Developing multi-destination travel itineraries helps to attract more visitors to travel to Hong Kong and then to other cities, and also complements the nation's Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area.

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