

Speech by SCED at sightseeing tram tour launching ceremony

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, at the sightseeing tram tour launching ceremony today (January 15):

Mr Vivant (Managing Director of Hong Kong Tramways, Mr Emmanuel Vivant), Mr Berti (Consul-General of France in Hong Kong & Macau, Mr Eric Berti), Dr Lam (Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Dr Peter Lam), Cathy (Commissioner for Tourism, Miss Cathy Chu), ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today to witness the launch of the TramOramic Tour - the sightseeing tram tour of the Hong Kong Tramways.

The tram is always a beloved heritage icon of our city. If we are to draw up a list of things that are representative of Hong Kong, the tram will certainly be on the list. Interestingly, ask a visitor and you will likely get the same answer. Nothing embodies more vividly the eclectic appeal of Hong Kong - the blend of the old and new, East and West. Whatever the hour, a ride on a double-deck tram gliding through the hustle and bustle of the city always promises an experience that is so uniquely Hong Kong.

But the sightseeing tram we see here today promises even more. The sightseeing tram, in the style of a vintage tram of the 1920s, transforms a tram ride into a living heritage experience. The old photos of Hong Kong, the old ticket punch, the old tram tickets, the uniformed tram captain and tram attendant - all these nostalgic twists seem to take us back to an old Hong Kong recreated in a modern setting. The word "recreate" comes from the core word "create". I am happy to see that the Hong Kong Tramways, with its imagination and creativity, has successfully turned a tram ride into a fun-filled and culturally enriching experience for the tourists.

Creativity is one of the keys for our economy to continue to thrive and flourish. We attach great importance to and have actively encouraged the development of creative industries in Hong Kong. I appeal to our tourism trade to continue to develop and diversify our tourism products with your creativity so as to maintain the attractiveness of Hong Kong.

Once again, may I congratulate the Hong Kong Tramways on the new launch. I am sure our visitors will enjoy the ride.

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