

## **LCQ1: Yau Ma Tei Theatre**

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Following is a question by the Hon Timothy Fok and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, in the Legislative Council today (April 18):

Question:

The Government is planning to convert the former Yau Ma Tei Theatre into a Cantonese opera centre, and the project concerned is expected to commence in 2008 for completion in 2011. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether:

- (a) it will speed up the completion of the project concerned; if not, of the reasons for that; and
- (b) it will invite members of the Cantonese opera sector to give their views on the scope and the scale of the project; if not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

Madam President,

(a) We are finalising a funding proposal on the conversion of the former Yau Ma Tei Theatre ("Theatre") and the nearby Red Brick Building ("Building") into a Cantonese opera centre. Subject to resource availability and approval by the Legislative Council Finance Committee, we estimate that the project covering detailed design and conversion works of the Theatre and the Building would commence in 2008 and take about three years to complete.

The project involves the adaptive re-use of two historical buildings, namely the former Yau Ma Tei Theatre (a Grade II building) and the Red Brick Building (a Grade I building). Since all the new alterations and additions to the Theatre and the Building for conversion into the Cantonese opera centre have to be carried out carefully in compliance with a prescribed series of heritage conservation requirements, the project would be technically more complicated than any ordinary public works project. While

we would endeavour to speed up the completion of the project, it is very unlikely that it could be completed much earlier than scheduled.

(b) In November 2006, we sought the views of the Cantonese opera sector through the Cantonese Opera Advisory Committee ("Committee") on the proposed conversion and the facilities to be included into the project. The Committee was supportive of the project. We would continue to work closely with the Committee and the sector to seek their views on the project, including its future operation.

Ends/Wednesday, April 18, 2007

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