

PSHA joins youngsters on Beijing Olympic tour (with photos)

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The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, today (March 25) joined about 800 youngsters in the 2008 Olympics Youth Programme to meet the Vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Mr Du Qinglin, in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Mrs Yau said: "The hosting of the Olympic Games in Beijing has provided an unparalleled opportunity for HK youngsters to visit the capital and the various Olympic competition venues. We can sense the enthusiastic ambience here and many people are eagerly awaiting the Games. Through taking part in these activities and recording what they have learnt on the trip, all of my younger friends here would deepen their knowledge of the Olympic Games, Mainland's latest developments in different spheres as well as the Olympic team spirit."

Apart from this programme, the Hong Kong Youth Sector's Organising Committee for Pre-Olympic Games Celebration and other groups had organised two other activities during the Easter holidays to welcome the staging of the Olympic Games. These activities, each with distinctive characteristics, had given a good impression to young participants, especially those who had never been to the Mainland. Some participants also found the experience of taking a long-haul train from Hong Kong to Beijing interesting and educational.

About 3,000 youths from Hong Kong, Beijing/Qingdao, Macau and Taiwan took part in the three events, with 1,600 of them coming from Hong Kong.

Mrs Yau attributed the success of the three activities to the joint efforts of members of the organising committee as well as other supporting bodies. She also thanked the All-China Youth Federation and the Qingdao and Zhongshan municipal governments for their support.

"The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has been actively supporting activities in the promotion of the Olympic Games as well as national education. We have been trying our best to work with the organisers in terms of resources. While the Government has allocated around \$2 million to the organising committee to help finance the three activities, generous sponsorships were also received from the community," Mrs Yau said.

The 2008 Olympics Youth Programme is being held in Beijing and Hong Kong from March 22-29. Youngsters of the programme spoke with the designers of the Olympic Torch and the National Stadium (The Bird's Nest) to better understand the importance of creativity. Members also visited a number of Olympic facilities in Beijing as well as talking with the first Chinese astronaut, Yang Liwei, and other athletes. Earlier in Zhongshan, participants joined to break a world record for making the heaviest Chinese almond cake. Delegation members also saw how Beijing put the "Green Olympics" and "Hi-Tech Olympics" into practice.

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