

LCQ2: 2009 East Asian Games

Following is a question by the Hon Lam Tai-fai and a reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council meeting today (January 14):

Question:

Regarding the preparatory work for the Fifth East Asian Games to be held in Hong Kong at the end of this year, will the Government inform this Council whether:

- (a) it knows the total amount of sponsorship committed by members of the public and the business sector, as well as the latest estimate of the deficit to be borne by the Government for the East Asian Games;
- (b) it has publicised and promoted among the school sector the East Asian Games; if it has, of the details of the publicity campaign; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (c) it has assessed the impact of the economic downturn on the attendance of the various events of the East Asian Games, as well as the number of jobs that the Games can create; if it has, of the assessment results; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) Thanks to the Hon Lam Tai-fai for raising the question on the preparatory work for the Fifth East Asian Games. The estimated expenditure for organising the Hong Kong 2009 East Asian Games (EAG) is around \$240 million. The Legislative Council has already approved a funding of \$123 million. Cash sponsorship amounting to \$64 million had been secured as at the end of 2008. The proceeds from admission tickets, sale of merchandise, and publicity and promotional programmes (e.g. concert) will provide additional revenue of \$43 million. As for the remaining sum of around \$10 million, some other supportive individuals and organisations have already expressed interest in providing it. The 2009 East Asian Games (Hong Kong) Limited (EAG

Company) is currently finalising the details with these individuals and organisations. We therefore believe that sufficient funds would be available for organising the EAG.

(b) The Government and the EAG Company have jointly formulated a set of comprehensive, diversified and cost-effective strategies to be rolled out in stages to publicise and promote the EAG extensively. The publicity and promotional programmes for the school sector mainly include:

- a series of school activities organised in collaboration with the Education Bureau, including the production of EAG learning and teaching materials for use by teachers to explain to students the meaning of the EAG and information related to the event.
- guided tours for students to watch EAG events, thematic talks, school roving exhibitions and seminars, 2009 EAG mascots colouring/drawing competition, the "school cheerleading programme", etc.

Apart from the above promotional programmes for the school sector, the Government will continue to work closely with the EAG Company to further launch various types of publicity activities.

(c) The EAG Company has started operation since August 2006 to organise the EAG. It plans to increase the size of its establishment from the current level of some 60 staff to about 100 staff this year. This plan will be implemented as scheduled and will not be affected by the economic situation. In preparation for the EAG, the Government has constructed the new Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground and is carrying out improvement works at 13 government venues. The main objective of the improvement works is to upgrade the facilities (including lighting, ventilation, etc.) to meet the standard for staging international multi-sports games and operational needs. All the works, which have created a total of some 1,000 jobs, are expected to be completed by mid-2009.

Moreover, the EAG Company will create about 1,000 temporary positions for the organisation of the Games through various service contracts. The positions will include security guards, drivers, executive staff, etc.

In respect of the attendance at the EAG events, given the considerable appeal of the events, the tickets will be sold at reasonable prices having regard to the affordability of the general public. In addition, we will conduct a whole array of local

and overseas promotional activities. We believe that the changes in economic conditions will not affect attendance at the games.

Ends/Wednesday, January 14, 2009