

New initiatives to promote development of elite sports

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said today (March 22) that the Government would introduce new initiatives to promote the development of elite sports.

Mr Tsang said during the ground-breaking ceremony of the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) Re-development Project this morning that the Sports Commission had just endorsed new initiatives to promote the development of elite sports in Hong Kong. These initiatives include:

(1) Priority target sports

The Sports Commission has endorsed the selection of four elite sports, namely badminton, cycling, table tennis and windsurfing, as priority target sports, with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's chances of competing for medals in the National Games and the East Asian Games this year, as well as the 2010 Asian Games and the 2012 Olympic Games. Additional funding of about \$6 million will be allocated to the HKSI each year to strengthen training programmes for these priority target sports.

(2) "Up-and-coming" sports

The Sports Commission has also agreed to select judo, karatedo and snooker as "up-and-coming" sports for intensive development.

(3) Feeder programmes for budding athletes

The Government has earmarked no less than \$10 million in 2009/10 to consolidate and enhance various training programmes for young athletes in phases with a view to identifying and nurturing budding athletes.

"The Financial Secretary has just announced in the Budget that we have earmarked \$50 million in the Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation to finance new facilities and equipment for the National Sports Associations and district sports associations in the next three to four years. We encourage the community to develop 'selected sports in selected districts' so as to identify potential young athletes. Each successful application will be granted up to \$3 million," Mr Tsang added.

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