

## PSHA continues visit to Seoul (with photos)

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The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, continued her visit to Seoul today (April 7). She called on the 1st Vice-Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kim Jang-sil, this morning to share with each other the general programmes and latest information on the development of culture and the arts in the two places.

Mrs Yau also took the opportunity to introduce to the Korean side the latest cultural development in Hong Kong, including the progress of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). She also invited Korea's Culture Minister to attend the Asian Cultural Co-operation Forum in Hong Kong in October this year. The theme of the forum, as introduced by Mrs Yau, will focus on contemporary life and society and its relationship with culture and the arts.

“Both Hong Kong and Seoul are Asia's world cities. Hong Kong has a solid foundation in cultural development and the Hong Kong SAR Government has put in place extensive planning and initiatives for future cultural development. However, facing the cultural development in neighbouring regions and the future opening of the WKCD, Hong Kong has to enhance the collaboration and exchanges with other countries, in particular its neighbouring areas, to prepare for the challenges ahead. The Asian Cultural Co-operation Forum is a good opportunity for Asian countries to strengthen their cultural networks and co-operation for further promotion of creative thinking,” Mrs Yau said.

During her meeting with Mr Kim, Mrs Yau commended the Korean Government for promoting a strategic development in Korea's culture. Both sides agreed that they could make reference to each other in various areas and look forward to an enhanced partnership and co-operation in areas such as performing arts, visual arts, films and animated comics. Mr Kim agreed that Korea would attend the Asian Cultural Co-operation Forum. He also pledged support for the East Asian Games to be held in Hong Kong in December and would arrange Korean cultural activities for this grand sports event.

“During today's meeting I have proposed to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism the exchange of our exhibits. The ministry promised to actively arrange for loan of precious artefacts from museums in Seoul for display in Hong Kong, as well as bringing exhibitions from Hong Kong to Korea, to enhance cultural exchanges

between the two places,” Mrs Yau said.

Mrs Yau then visited the renowned Leeum Samsung Museum of Arts, which consists of three buildings designed by three top architects – Mario Botta from Switzerland, Jean Nouvel from France, and Rem Koolhaas from the Netherlands. One of the buildings is a cultural education centre specially designed for children, with emphasis on both contemporary and traditional arts to provide a balanced arts education for children.

In the afternoon, Mrs Yau visited the famous Heyri Art Valley and Book City in Paju City, and the cultural complex of Goyang Cultural Foundation. Heyri Art Valley is a large-scale integrated cultural district comprising about 40 museums, exhibition centres, auditoriums and theatres. The district, with its architectural design integrated with the surrounding environment, helps to preserve the natural ecological environment with the provision of a greening network. The Book City is a large scale book centre providing one-stop service in publication, design, production and marketing. The cultural complex of Goyang Cultural Foundation consists of two newly established cultural centres. The Book City is an industry-led development project. With active collaboration of the printing industry and support by publishers, the project is capable of meeting market demand and social development and serves as a successful example of sustainable development.

“The museums and cultural districts we visited today all have distinct features. The Book City is a successful project with the support and participation of creative industries. Hong Kong can further explore this area. At present, Hong Kong has embarked on an initial stage of developing various arts villages in different districts, such as the Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre in Shek Kip Mei and the artist studios in Fo Tan industrial buildings. The development of the 40-hectare WKCD also aims to revitalise the community through culture and the arts. The visit has provided opportunities for us to make reference from various modes of planning and design in Korea, in particular on how to utilise natural resources and connect with neighbouring regions, for our future cultural facilities including the WKCD,” Mrs Yau said.

Ends/Tuesday, April 7, 2009

Issued at HKT 18:51

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