

## Sports Commission increases resources for promoting sports development

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The Sports Commission met today (August 18) and endorsed several new initiatives to tie in with the development of Hong Kong's athletes.

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said after the meeting that new initiatives would include -

- Increasing incentive awards for medallists at major games;
- Providing more resources for the training of junior athletes; and
- Giving more direct financial support to elite athletes.

To encourage athletes to achieve better results in major games, the Sports Commission agreed to increase the incentive awards for Hong Kong medallists at the Olympic, Paralympic, Asian, and Asian Paralympic Games. (see Annex)

To sustain the long-term development of elite sports in Hong Kong, the Sports Commission agreed to provide additional funding of \$3 million annually to the Hong Kong Sports Institute to enhance the training of junior athletes.

The Sports Commission also agreed to allocate \$15 million to the Hong Kong Sports Institute for strengthening direct financial support for elite athletes. These additional resources will expand the elite squad and allow more athletes to receive full-time training.

The Sports Commission noted that the Government has earmarked \$50 million from the Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation for the implementation of the "Selected Sports in Selected Districts" Scheme to help National Sports Associations (NSAs) improve sports facilities and equipment at the district level. The Government has also earmarked \$10 million in 2009-2010 to help NSAs to train more outstanding young athletes.

Mr Tsang said that in addition to public funding, sponsorship from the commercial sector is vital to sports development. "The Government is encouraging the business sector to sponsor people from less privileged groups to watch major sports events.

“We have received a good response from the business sector. So far 12 organisations have provided sponsorship totalling some \$130,000 to purchase more than 2,500 tickets for people from less privileged groups to watch the forthcoming East Asian Games,” he added.

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