

11th Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Co-operation Meeting held in Macao today

Cultural officials from Guangdong Province, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) signed an agreement to establish a network of cultural exchange and co-operation points at the 11th Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Co-operation Meeting in Macao today (June 25).

Among the participating officials were the Director General of the Department of Culture of Guangdong Province, Mr Fang Jianhong, the Secretary for Home Affairs of the HKSAR, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, and the President of the Macao Cultural Affairs Bureau, Mr Ung Vai Meng.

"The Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Exchange and Co-operation Development Plan 2009-2013, signed by the three parties at the 10th Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Co-operation Meeting last year, set the direction for the three parties to deepen co-operation in priority areas. Under the framework of the Development Plan, we have made progress in areas such as talent exchange, sharing of cultural resources and brand building," the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said in his concluding remarks.

To further co-operation, Mr Tsang, representing the HKSAR, signed an agreement to establish a network of cultural exchange and co-operation points with Guangdong Province and the Macao SAR at the meeting this afternoon. Under the agreement, the three parties agreed to make available the relevant infrastructure such as performing venues, libraries and museums, for establishing a platform for exchange and co-operation, and put in place a co-operation mechanism for nurturing talent and jointly organising large-scale cultural events.

Mr Tsang said: "The new arrangement will help promote roving performances and exhibitions of excellent arts and culture, and encourage talent exchange and creativity among the three places. It will also generate synergy to showcase the culture of the Greater Pearl River Delta Region in the country and beyond."

He said he was pleased with the agreement of the three places to strengthen exchange of cultural information, and upgrade the Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Information Website as a ticketing platform for the convenience of audiences in the three places.

On the part of Hong Kong, it is hoped that a new service will be rolled out this year whereby URBIX outlets will accept payment by credit cards widely used on the Mainland to facilitate Mainland tourists to attend cultural events in Hong Kong.

Cantonese opera has become the first world intangible cultural heritage through the joint efforts of the three places. More resources will be allocated to preserve, promote and develop Cantonese opera, so as to bring this artistic genre to the international arena through cultural exchange.

The three places take turns to host the Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Co-operation Meetings. Six working group sessions were held yesterday afternoon to discuss specific topics, namely, "exchange on performing artists and co-organisation of cultural programmes", "mutual exchange of cultural information", "co-operation in museum services", "co-operation and exchange of public libraries", "intangible cultural heritage", and "research on development of cultural and creative industries".

Since November 2002, the Department of Culture of Guangdong Province, the Home Affairs Bureau of the HKSAR and the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao SAR have established a framework for strengthening cultural co-operation within the Greater River Pearl Delta region. An agreement on cultural co-operation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao was signed in August 2003 with meetings held in the three places. Six working groups have been set up to implement and follow up on the co-operation recommendations in different areas.

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