

Asian Games estimated to cost less than \$14.5 billion

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In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Home Affairs Bureau said today (September 22) that the total cost of staging the 2023 Asian Games would be in the region of \$13.7 billion to \$14.5 billion at the current price level, and not "\$40 billion plus".

According to the consultation document issued yesterday, the estimated costs of staging the Games comprise the capital costs of \$10.5 billion and an operating costs of \$3.2 billion to \$4 billion.

"The capital cost is for undertaking temporary works to existing facilities and upgrading works with a view to bringing already proposed new venues up to Games standards. These temporary and upgrading works would not be needed and implemented at all if we are not hosting the Games," the spokesman said.

On the contrary, the sites for the Kai Tak Multi-purpose Stadium Complex (MPSC) and other planned sports facilities have long been identified for development and redevelopment to meet long-term community needs irrespective of whether Hong Kong hosts the Games.

"These projects were already put on the drawing board a few years ago and are in the pipeline. They are not built for the purpose of the Games. Therefore their costs (estimated to be about \$30.17 billion) should not be counted towards hosting the Games. It would be misleading and unfair to include such costs in the 'price tag' for the Games.

"As stated in the document, regardless of whether we host the Games, the Kai Tak MPSC and other projects would still proceed because they will benefit long-term development of sport in Hong Kong and cater for the needs of the community," he said.

Noting that the expenditure of \$10.5 billion would be spread over the next 10 to 13 years, the spokesman reiterated the determination to ensure the facilities will be well utilised before and after the Games.

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