

Russian football team to visit HK to strengthen sporting ties between HK and Russia
(with photo)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, and the Minister of Sport, Tourism and Youth Policy of the Russian Federation, Mr Vitaly Mutko, announced today (September 27, Moscow time) after a meeting in Moscow, Russia, that the Russian National Youth Football Team will visit Hong Kong in mid-November this year to strengthen sporting ties between Russia and Hong Kong.

"Hong Kong is excited to host the Russian National Youth Football Team as we are keen to promote the long-term development of football in Hong Kong," said Mr Tsang. "We look forward to enjoying the matches between young players from Russia and Hong Kong."

Mr Mutko said, "The visit of the Russian National Youth Football Team is an invaluable opportunity in sports as well as youth exchanges between the two places. We hope our players' visit to Hong Kong will mark the beginning of more co-operation in the future."

The visit of the Russian National Youth Football Team stems from the visit of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr Dmitry Medvedev, to Hong Kong in April this year. At a meeting with the Chief Executive, Mr Donald Tsang, he responded positively to Mr Tsang's suggestion to invite a Russian football team to play in Hong Kong.

The Russian National Youth Team will visit Hong Kong in mid-November and will play two friendly matches with Hong Kong youth teams. One of the matches will mark the official reopening of the popular Mong Kok Stadium upon completion of its renovation work. The team will also visit the Hong Kong Sports Institute and train with football clubs in Hong Kong.

Mr Mutko and Mr Tsang agreed that the visit of the Russian National Youth Team to Hong Kong will open the door to further mutual exchanges, not just in football but also in other sports. Both sides will explore further opportunities for such exchanges.

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