

HAB's response on Sunbeam Theatre

A spokesman for the Home Affairs Bureau said today (February 18), the Government welcomes that the lease of Sunbeam Theatre has been renewed for continuing its operation.

The Home Affairs Bureau in 2009 allocated \$3.6 million to the Hong Kong Arts Development Council for implementing the "Sunbeam Theatre Venue Subsidy Scheme" during a three-year lease period. However, it is not suitable for the Government to subsidise commercial operations in the long run, and hence, the focus of our current work is to ensure that adequate public venues are available for use by the Cantonese opera sector. The Government will continue its communication with the Cantonese opera sector, listen to their views, and join hands with them in the promotion of Cantonese opera.

Ko Shan Theatre, which has 1031 seats, is a dedicated venue for Cantonese opera. An annex to it is being built to provide a new theatre of 600 seats. The project is expected to be completed in 2013. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department reserves time slots at Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Hong Kong City Hall, Kwai Tsing Theatre, Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan Town Halls for priority hiring by professional Cantonese opera troupes. From 2012-13 to 2014-15, the "Venue Partnership Scheme" covers Sha Tin and Tuen Mun Town Halls, Yuen Long Theatre and Yau Ma Tei Theatre, which will be open in mid-2012, with local Cantonese opera organisations as venue partners. In addition, a Xiqu Centre in West Kowloon Cultural District with a large-scale theatre of 1100 seats is being planned and expected to be completed in 2015-16.

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