

Speech by PSHA at Riding for the Disabled Association Annual Ball 2012 (English only)

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Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Raymond Young, at the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) Annual Ball 2012 today (February 24):

Mr (Brian) Stevenson, Mr (K K) Yeung, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. Thank you for inviting me to the Riding for the Disabled Association Annual Ball 2012. First of all, I would like to congratulate the RDA for staging this glamorous event. It warms my heart to see so many of you turn up for this charitable occasion year after year.

Horseback riding is a challenging yet immensely enjoyable sport. It gives the riders a sense of achievement, independence and confidence, regardless of their physical abilities. It allows disabled riders to regain mobility and stay active, and its therapeutic benefits have also been well established by medical professionals.

Over the past few decades, the RDA has been dedicated to the promotion of rehabilitation through therapeutic riding among disabled children and adults. These riding programmes allow the participants to grow their inner strength, realise their true potential and take control of their lives. The RDA's efforts go a long way towards creating one of the world's most diverse and inclusive communities.

I would like to express my gratitude to the RDA for its involvement and contribution to the training of Para-Equestrian athletes and securing for Hong Kong one of the two slots in Asia for the London 2012 Paralympic Games. The Government is committed to the promotion and development of sports in Hong Kong and we work closely with the sports sector to live up to our commitments. The Government will provide funding for athletes to train for and take part in the Paralympic Games to be held in August this year. I am sure our Paralympic athletes will be a force to be reckoned with in the Games.

Finally, I wish to give special thanks to all members, instructors, volunteers and sponsors of the RDA. Your support over the years has been and continues to be a source of inspiration for the community. I wish you all greater success in the years to come, and to all of you a most memorable evening.

Ends/Friday, February 24, 2012

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