

Inaugural Chinese Culture Festival's "Encountering Chinese Culture" carnival held today (with photos)

The "Encountering Chinese Culture" carnival of the inaugural Chinese Culture Festival (CCF), organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) was held this afternoon (June 9) in Sha Tin. Through an array of activities rich in Chinese culture characteristics, including stage performances, cultural booths, story-telling sessions, a Chinese music performance, an exhibition and a talk, members of the public were able to experience the colourful Chinese culture and arts up close. These fascinating free activities attracted an attendance of around 13 500.

The carnival kicked off with a dragon and lion dance performance. Addressing the kick-off ceremony, the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, said he hopes that through the CCF, the unique charm and diversified characteristics of Chinese culture would be demonstrated to local residents, arts and culture lovers and tourists from all over the world. The festival would also drive visitor arrivals and related business growth to implement the concept of "Tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong" by making good use of Hong Kong's tourism resources, bringing impetus into the city's economy. The carnival is a tripartite collaboration of the Government, the business sector and the community in which the mainstream values characterised by patriotism with affection for the country and Hong Kong can be promoted through Chinese culture activities and help build consensus in society to create a better Hong Kong.

Mr Yeung added that he hopes the carnival activities could shorten the distance between culture and arts and people's living, and enhance the public understanding of, interest in and resonance with fine traditional Chinese culture, thereby strengthening cultural pride among people, creating quality cultural values, and promoting the creative transformation and development of fine traditional Chinese culture.

Different activities of the carnival were held at the Foyer, Exhibition Gallery, Plaza and Lecture Room 1 of Sha Tin Town Hall and the Entrance Arena at L1, Phase 1 of New Town Plaza. Many visitors were attracted by the series of amazing dance, drumming and magic performances, which were mostly excerpts from this year's CCF programmes, presented by various outstanding local and Mainland arts groups, and gave them rounds of applause.

In addition, the carnival featured eight cultural booths and workshops covering a wide range of intangible cultural heritage items of traditional craftsmanship, including blown sugar technique, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese paper-cutting, guangcai (the Canton famille rose porcelain) making, Hong Kong cheongsam making and Cantonese opera headdress crafting. Booths for fragrant sachets making and paper folding of dragon boats and rice dumplings were specially set up, which attracted family visitors to join.

Mentees from the Strive and Rise Programme were invited to participate in today's carnival. Apart from watching live stage performances, they also took part in the workshops or joined the guided arts appreciation sessions at different cultural booths to experience the charm of Chinese culture.

The story ambassadors of the Hong Kong Public Libraries' Library-on-Wheels also attended the carnival and delivered stories from "The Romance of the Three Kingdoms" in a lively and easy-to-understand manner, so that children at the scene could learn about the classic characters and exciting stories in the book. Other Chinese classic novels and books on Chinese culture were available for visitors to borrow on-site.

Many visitors also joined the last day of the "Glowing Beauties – A Photo Exhibition on Ethnic Costumes" at the Exhibition Gallery of Sha Tin Town Hall, and enjoyed the Chinese instrumental performance by the Music Office trainees' ensemble. The "Talk on the Miao Embroidery and their Hidden Stories" held in the evening also attracted a sizable audience.

The CCF, presented by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and organised by the LCSD's Chinese Culture Promotion Office, aims to enhance the public's appreciation of Chinese culture and cultivate citizens' national identity and cultural confidence. The inaugural CCF is held from June to September. Through different performing arts programmes in various forms and related extension activities, including selected programmes of the Chinese Opera Festival, exemplary local arts projects recognised by the China National Arts Fund, performing arts programmes from arts and cultural organisations, film screenings, exhibitions, talks and more, the festival allows members of the public and visitors to experience the broad and profound Chinese culture with a view to promoting Chinese culture and patriotic education as well as enhancing national identity amongst the people of Hong Kong, making contributions to the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems". For details, please visit the CCF website www.ccf.gov.hk.

The LCSD has long been promoting Chinese history and culture through organising an array of programmes and activities to enable the public to learn more about the broad and profound Chinese culture. For more information, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html.



