

Latest relief measures of Arts and Culture Sector Subsidy Scheme under Anti-epidemic Fund

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) announced today (January 18) that the Government has allocated \$34.8 million under the fifth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF) to the Arts and Culture Sector Subsidy Scheme with a view to supporting performing arts groups, individual arts practitioners and freelancers who have been affected by the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The HAB will provide a one-off subsidy of \$40,000 to each of the over 100 performing arts groups which are affected by the epidemic. These groups include the major performing arts groups, arts groups funded by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), venue partners of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme grantees. The HAB will also entrust the HKADC and the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong to provide a one-off subsidy of \$5,000 to each eligible individual arts practitioner and freelancer who had earlier benefited from the Arts and Culture Sector Subsidy Scheme. The number of beneficiaries is estimated to reach 6 000.

At the same time, the HAB announced that \$4 million will be allocated from the AEF to provide a one-off subsidy of \$50,000 to each eligible company of the performing industry through the Performing Industry Association (Hong Kong) Limited. About 80 companies are expected to benefit from this measure.

A spokesperson of the HAB said, "To safeguard public health and in accordance with the anti-epidemic requirements, the Government has tightened social distancing measures with effect from January 7. We understand that these measures have affected programme arrangements and operations of arts groups, the livelihood of individual arts practitioners and freelancers as well as those companies organising pop concerts in the performing industry. We hope that these measures will provide some relief to the groups and persons concerned."

The HAB expects that the disbursement of the above subsidies will be in batches and start before end-January.