

LCQ3: Leveraging technology to promote tourism

Following is a question by the Hon Ma Fung-kwok and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (June 4):

Question:

There are views pointing out that Hong Kong's efforts to digitalise tourism services have failed to keep pace with development. It is learnt that the Mainland, Macao, Korea and Singapore have all leveraged technology to promote their tourism industries. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that the Government earlier on announced the deployment of augmented reality (AR) technology for the City in Time tourism project in the Kowloon City District, what further plans the Government has in place to apply AR and virtual reality (VR) technologies to tourist attractions, particularly sites commemorating the War of Resistance and historical attractions, and set out in a table the attractions where these technologies have been introduced and the number of users to date;

(2) whether it will draw on the experiences of cities in Asia and the Mainland and make better use of the information available on the Hong Kong Tourism Board website to launch an all-in-one mobile travel application providing services such as travel guides, attraction recommendations, real-time traffic information, and discounts on accommodation and dining, while also analysing visitors' behavioural patterns; if so, which government department or organisation will be responsible for designing, updating and maintaining the application, and of the implementation timetable; and

(3) as it is learnt that the Immigration Department (ImmD) currently does not collect data on travellers' arrival and departure patterns, their length of stay in Hong Kong, the provinces from which Mainland visitors came and the types of endorsement they held, etc, whether the Government will consider enhancing ImmD's systems to obtain more traveller information for analytical purposes?

Reply:

President,

With the advancement of information technology, smart tourism has become a new trend for visitors to plan their itineraries and to enhance visitors' experience. "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" proposed the establishment of an inter-departmental Working Group on Smart Tourism (the Working Group) to formulate and implement measures to promote smart tourism.

The Working Group has completed the formulation of relevant strategies and measures, with details covering two strategic directions and 19 specific short, medium and long-term measures incorporated into the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 promulgated by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau in December 2024.

In consultation with the Security Bureau, our reply to the question raised by the Hon Ma Fung-kwok is as follows:

(1) The Government has kept promoting the use of technology by tourist attractions to enhance facilities and transmission of information with a view to providing visitors with a more diverse and enriching experience. Currently, many major attractions in Hong Kong have already adopted technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), interactive experiences and QR codes to facilitate visitors and enrich their experience. For example, Hong Kong Ocean Park has launched a new giant panda-themed attraction "Panda Wonders: An Illuminated Journey", where giant pandas make appearances as cartoon characters through 3D projection technology and visitors may interact and take photos with AR giant pandas; the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort makes use of AR technology to blend physical scenes with digital storytelling experiences to enhance visitors' interaction with Disney characters and immersive participation; the two museums in the West Kowloon Cultural District also incorporate AR and VR technologies into cultural and artistic activities, for instance, M+ interactive media room offers innovative VR and digital artworks, which are well received by visitors. Many exhibitions flexibly utilise elements such as VR, projection and interactive devices, such as the "FLASH! The Palace Museum – A Pop-Up Digital Experience" held at Tai Kwun in January 2025 which made use of these elements to vividly recreate the essence of the Palace Museum's cultural treasures.

Besides, the "City in Time" project taken forward by the Tourism Commission and many museums under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, including the Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH) and the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence (MWRCD), have adopted the AR or VR technologies. Further details are as follows:

The "City in Time" project makes use of AR and creative media art through mobile application to bring back to life the history of individual landmarks. Phase I of the project was completed in 2021 at 28 locations around Central, Jordan, the Peak, Sham Shui Po, Tsim Sha Tsui and Yau Ma Tei. Phase II of the project has been launched in stages from 2024 onwards and the project has now been extended to Lei Yue Mun and Tai Hang. Preparations are underway for expanding the project to Kowloon City in 2025. As at April 2025, the cumulative number of page views on the project website exceeded 152 000, while the cumulative number of downloads of the project's mobile application exceeded 31 000.

The HKMH is hosting "The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: The Great Unity – Civilisation of the Qin and Han Dynasties in Shaanxi Province" exhibition, which features an interactive zone with AR exhibits to enhance visitors'

understanding of the history and cultures of the Qin and Han dynasties. The HKMH recorded over 940 000 visitors in 2024-25.

The permanent and thematic exhibitions currently presented at the MWRCD give an account of the history of Japan's aggression against China and Hong Kong's participation in the War of Resistance, as well as the missions and contributions of guerrillas after the fall of Hong Kong. The MWRCD complements the exhibitions with interactive installations, videos and oral history from veterans, and employs technologies such as VR in events from time to time, allowing visitors to engage with history through various media. The MWRCD recorded over 160 000 visitors in 2024-25.

(2) The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) has been striving to advance Hong Kong to be a smart tourism destination. In terms of information dissemination, the Discover Hong Kong platform of the HKTb currently adopts a web application (Web App). In fact, Web Apps have developed into a new trend in recent years. Compared to mobile applications (Mobile App), which require downloading, updating, and occupy storage space, Web Apps are more convenient to users as visitors can simply access them through the web browser of their mobile phones. In addition, the HKTb constantly enhances and enriches the content of the Discover Hong Kong, providing visitors with comprehensive, reliable and up-to-date travel information. For example, riding on the recent Tuen Ng Festival long weekend of the Mainland, the HKTb featured dedicated pages on the Discover Hong Kong, consolidating useful travel information such as citywide events, exclusive offers, transportation updates and operating hours of attractions to attract and help visitors travel to Hong Kong.

The HKTb is currently developing a "Live Travel Map" and kick-starting the preliminary development of "Smart Itinerary Planner" on the Discover Hong Kong, to assist visitors in obtaining real-time travel information in different parts of Hong Kong and provide them with personalised itinerary suggestions.

(3) The Immigration Department (ImmD) controls all entries into and exits from Hong Kong, examining passengers arriving and departing by land, sea and air. The visitor statistics collected and maintained by the ImmD during daily immigration control operations are also provided to relevant Government departments and organisations in support of their statistical and research work. For instance, the visitor statistics that the ImmD currently provides to the HKTb on a regular basis include: foreign visitor statistics by nationality, mode of entry/exit, gender, age, and length of stay, arrival statistics of Mainland visitors by type of endorsement/travel document and mode of entry/exit etc. In addition, during specific festive periods, the ImmD also provides, at the HKTb's request, relevant information on departing visitors' age, gender, nationality and arrival time on a daily basis.

The ImmD does not maintain statistics on provinces that Mainland visitors were from as mentioned in the question.

Thank you, President.