

LCQ4: Kai Tak Sports Park

Following is a question by the Hon Paul Tse and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

It has been reported that at the Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP) Grand Opening Ceremony, some self-proclaimed "insiders" charged a fee of \$1,000 per person to lead people without tickets to enter the venue "through the back door", and they even claimed that there were ways to bring reporters to the scenes of other activities without tickets. Subsequently, at the World Snooker Grand Prix 2025 held in the KTSP, the word "curfew" appeared on the screen of the venue before the end of the competition, requesting the audience to leave the venue. Some foreign media reported the incident, and the foreign players in the venue also thought that Hong Kong had imposed a curfew. There are views that the incident has brought Hong Kong's international image into disrepute. Moreover, it is learnt that a businessman lost his way when leaving the venue but did not receive any assistance from the staff. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of stress tests conducted by different government departments before the opening of the KTSP; the number of staff members involved, as well as the contents, objectives and public expenditure of each stress test;
- (2) whether it has examined why the aforesaid incidents of "passage without tickets", "midnight curfew" and "nobody showing the way" still occurred after public money has been spent on stress tests; and
- (3) without incurring substantial public money, of the measures in place to ensure that the aforesaid mistakes will not recur when organising the concerts by the band Coldplay and major competitions such as the National Games in the future?

Reply:

President,

Being the largest sports infrastructure project in Hong Kong's history, the Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP) will boost sports development and inject impetus into related industries such as recreation, entertainment and tourism, and mega-event economy. The KTSP provides Hong Kong with the largest and state-of-the-art venues, including a 50 000-seat Kai Tak Stadium, a 10 000-seat Kai Tak Arena and a 5 000-seat Kai Tak Youth Sports Ground.

With its official commissioning on March 1, the KTSP becomes a new hub for hosting major sports and entertainment events, creating favourable

conditions for further promoting the mega-event economy. A series of mega events have been scheduled to take place in the KTSP, including the Hong Kong Sevens at the end of this month, followed by concerts of renowned bands and singers in Asia and around the world at the Kai Tak stadium. Competition events of the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games will also be held in the KTSP towards the end of this year. Mega sports and entertainment events, one after another, will bring to the audience an exciting experience.

My consolidated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Paul Tse is as follows:

Since late October last year until February this year, the Government and the Kai Tak Sports Park Limited (the Operator) conducted almost 20 test events and stress tests of different nature and scale across the three major venues in a gradual and orderly approach, with a view to evaluating different operation and contingency arrangements of the KTSP to better prepare its official commissioning. Both sport and non-sport test events took place in the three major venues with particular objectives, allowing relevant departments, the Operator and all participating parties to familiarise themselves with the preparatory work of both the hardware and software of the Sports Park, such as entry and exit arrangements, transportation, stage setup and backstage facilities.

In addition, to assess the maximum capacity of the KTSP and better understand the patterns of spectator flow after its full opening, the Government organised five large-scale stress tests involving civil servants, district personalities, youth groups, and stakeholders of the Operator, among which were two stress tests with 63 000 participants each and one with approximately 50 000 participants. The costs associated with these stress tests were covered by the construction cost of the KTSP, recurrent expenditure of the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) and other participating departments and hence, cannot be quantified separately.

The Operator is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the KTSP after its opening. It has the duty to oversee the security, optimise operational arrangement, as well as maintain close liaison and co-ordination with event organisers to ensure a pleasant experience for visitors. Both the Operator and event organiser attach high importance to security checks and ticket verification. With respect to earlier reports of suspected unauthorised entry to the venue without valid tickets, the Operator has retrieved its records and referred the case to law enforcement agency for follow-up. We note that signage within the precinct and training for front-line staff have been improving during the test events and stress tests over the past months, which will be further enhanced taking into account the needs of different events upon commissioning, so as to provide the most appropriate assistance to visitors.

The World Snooker Grand Prix 2025 concluded recently was the first major sport event staged at the KTSP after its commissioning. It was also the first time that the event organiser hosted the event in Hong Kong. There was

obviously room for improvement in terms of internal and external communication, as well as event co-ordination and arrangements between the Operator and the event organiser, with a notable example being the spectators were asked to leave before the match concluded on the first day. As I have said earlier in public, the incident was highly undesirable. Having reviewed the arrangements on the day, the Operator and the event organiser responded immediately and revised the match arrangements afterwards to accommodate the needs of the match and spectators. Subsequent matches were completed smoothly and successfully, with both spectators and players commending the arrangements of the venue.

The CSTB attaches great importance to ensuring a good experience for visitors attending events at the KTSP. Being the party responsible for day-to-day operations, the Operator must put in place a sound response and contingency mechanism for handling emergency matters to ensure effective internal communication of accurate information, allowing the team (including front-line staff) to execute directives accordingly. External communication of official information should also be sufficient and timely to avoid confusion. The CSTB has expressed serious concerns to the Operator's management of the Sports Park thus far and has directed the Operator to make prompt adjustments to its structure, including improvements to its mechanism in decision-making, communication and crisis management. The CSTB has also requested the Operator to provide further training to its staff on their sensitivity and arrangements for external communication, including assigning a dedicated spokesperson, so as to enhance public knowledge and build their confidence in the operation of the KTSP.

As the KTSP has officially commenced its operation, the Operator must learn from every experience and strive to improve operations, as well as maintain close communication with all stakeholders to ensure an enjoyable experience for visitors. The CSTB will continue to monitor the performance of the Operator and maintain close liaison with both the Operator and relevant stakeholders to realise the opportunities presented by this world-class infrastructure in joint hands, with a view to unleashing the potential of the KTSP to promote the development of sports and mega-event economy.