

LCQ9: Growing of plants of ornamental value

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (April 28):

Question:

Some members of the tourism industry have pointed out that quite a number of famous tourist hotspots around the globe have attractions showcasing spectacular scenery of beautiful blooms. During flower viewing seasons, the tourism sectors in those places launch promotional activities in a pro-active manner and have attracted tourists from various places (with quite a number of them being residents of Hong Kong) to visit those hotspots. Contrarily, local residents and visitors to Hong Kong in general have little knowledge of the growing of flowers and other plants of ornamental value in various districts of Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will compile a flora map to promote flower beds of a considerable scale across the territory to facilitate members of the public as well as tourists to visit them in the right seasons for appreciation and photo-taking;

(2) whether it will grow more flowers and plants of ornamental value in various districts of Hong Kong to increase the attractiveness of Hong Kong to tourists; if so, of the species of plants to be grown; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will deploy additional manpower to enhance efforts on planning and caring of the landscapes in various districts; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President:

In response to the questions raised by the Hon Yiu Si-wing, in consultation with the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Home Affairs Bureau, my reply is as follows:

(1) To facilitate public's appreciation of flowering plants, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has created a dedicated webpage "Blossoms Around Town" (<http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/green/blossoms.html>) to introduce common flowering trees and special ornamental plant species in LCSD parks as well as to provide timely information for locals and visitors to appreciate flower blossoms in different seasons. Besides, the Greening, Landscape and

Tree Management Section of the DEVB has published the "Tree and Landscape Map" (www.greening.gov.hk/en/knowledge_database/map.html) to introduce special trees and green spaces of each district, including information on flowering plants, with a view to providing a guide for the public to visit these attractions to enjoy the local green spaces and landscape assets.

The Tourism Commission (TC), in collaboration with the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) and the travel trade, has been promoting events and activities in local neighbourhoods with tourism appeal to visitors through various channels. As regards appreciation of plants and gardening in Hong Kong, apart from promoting the annual Hong Kong Flower Show on the DiscoverHongKong website, HKTB also makes use of its "Great Outdoor Hong Kong" platform to introduce natural scenery at various points of interest in different seasons, such as miscanthus (commonly known as silvergrass) at Sunset Peak, cherry blossoms at the Rotary Club Campsite on Tai Mo Shan, and Melaleuca leucadendra (commonly known as the paperbark tree) in Shing Mun Country Park. TC will, in collaboration with HKTB, continue promoting flowering appreciation events and activities arranged and organized by relevant departments to overseas visitors as appropriate.

(2) The Government is committed to promoting greening, landscape and tree management. In view of the growing interest of the public and visitors on flower appreciation in recent years, the Government has been identifying more appropriate locations for suitable planting in the 18 districts wherever possible. The introduction of plants in parks under the management of LCSD, such as cherry trees in Hong Kong Velodrome Park, Yellow Pui in Nam Cheong Park and water lilies in Shing Mun Valley Park, has attracted many visitors during their flowering seasons every year. In view of the growing public interest on and appreciation for autumn scenery, LCSD has also planted some seasonal trees in suitable parks. For example, species that can create autumn forest scenes such as Bald Cypress and Chinese Swamp Cypress are planted in Tsing Yi Park for public enjoyment. The Hong Kong Flower Show, held in March every year in Victoria Park, is an annual spectacular event in the city which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors.

(3) The Government has been rolling out various landscape and greening projects in an orderly manner, and will increase the manpower in accordance with the actual needs as appropriate, having regard to the new development projects of various departments as well as the progress of greening, landscaping and tree maintenance, to enhance the landscape planning and maintenance work in various districts.