

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HAB453**

**(Question Serial No. 3910)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Heritage and Museums

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

- (a) Regarding the setting up of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Office in May 2015, please provide information on its duties, manpower resources and annual expenditures.
- (b) Will the Government examine the possibility of introducing legislation on intangible cultural heritage in 2016-17? If so, what are the details and estimated expenditures? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Member Question No. 438)

Reply:

- (a) The Intangible Cultural Heritage Office (ICHO) was set up in May 2015 for the purpose of intensifying the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). At present, the ICHO is staffed by 16 civil servants. In 2016-17, an annual recurrent expenditure (excluding staff salaries) of \$15 million has been earmarked for the operation of the ICHO in safeguarding and promoting ICH. The ICHO will organise regular exhibitions on ICH and set up an ICH resource centre at the Sam Tung Uk Museum (STUM), and will step up its efforts to collaborate with bearer organisations of ICH items to promote public awareness of and interest in ICH. Activities/programmes scheduled for 2016-17 include -
  - (i) research and survey: Following the promulgation of Hong Kong's first ICH inventory in 2014, in-depth research is being conducted on items on the ICH inventory and items of higher cultural value for drawing up the first Hong Kong's representative list of ICH.
  - (ii) exhibitions and displays: Since November 2015, the ICHO has started using the STUM in Tsuen Wan to house regular exhibitions and a resource centre for the promotion of ICH. The first exhibition on "The Oral Legacies - Intangible

Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong”, which features 10 local items being inscribed on China’s national list of ICH<sup>Note</sup> and the bearer organisations of these items, has been on show at STUM since February 2016. ICH items and ICH bearers will also be introduced in displays of paper craftworks by local masters at the coming urban lantern carnivals.

- (iii) education and promotion activities: Since its establishment, the ICHO has stepped up its collaboration with bearer organisations of ICH items, community organisations and other stakeholders to promote public awareness of and interest in ICH, through a wide array of programmes such as festivals, exhibitions, displays, talks, workshops, seminars and field trips. For example, riding on the success of last year’s partnership with the Federation of Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community Organizations and Intangible Cultural Heritage Earthpulse Society, the ICHO plans to collaborate with them again to organise the “Yu Lan Cultural Festival” and “Hong Kong Culture Festival” respectively in 2016.
- (b) The Government has no plan to introduce legislation on ICH, and reckons that ICH items are best safeguarded and promoted through collaborations with the identified bearers and community organisations. An ICH Advisory Committee comprising experts, academics and people with experience in community service has been set up to help ICHO identify and select items for preservation and draw up a representative list on local ICH. The list will form the basis for the Government to prioritise resources and safeguarding measures on selected ICH items.

---

**Note**

The 10 local items on the national list of ICH include Cantonese opera, herbal tea, the Cheung Chau Jiao Festival, the Tai O dragon boat water parade, the Yu Lan Ghost Festival of the Hong Kong Chiu Chow community, the Tai Hang fire dragon dance, the arts of the Guqin (the craft of qin making), the Quanzhen temples Taoist ritual music, the Hakka unicorn dance in Hang Hau, Sai Kung and the Wong Tai Sin belief and customs. Cantonese opera has become a world ICH item since 2009.

- End -