

Mega-events to boost Year of the Rooster

A full house of distinguished guests attending a 'Year of the Rooster' in London today (February 15) learned that a range of "mega-events" in the next 12 to 18 months would help Hong Kong return to its usual economic boom and its affirmation as Asia's world city.

Mrs Carrie Lam, Director General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (HKETO), said the highlights would include the opening of Hong Kong Disneyland on the 12th of September this year.

Hong Kong would host the World Trade Organisation's 6th Ministerial Conference in December, signifying its commitment to free trade, she said.

Mrs Lam was addressing a reception in London's historic Banqueting Hall, hosted jointly by the HKETO, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

The 700 guests included leading parliamentarians, government ministers, diplomats, prominent businessmen, financiers and the news media.

Mrs Lam also noted that the International Telecommunications Union would hold its ITU Telecom World 2006 conference in Hong Kong next year – the first time that the Telecom World would be hosted outside ITU's home base in Geneva.

Members of the Hong Kong team at ITU Telecom World – led by the Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry & Technology (Communications and Technology), Ms Marion Lai – joined the London reception to promote the event and displayed information banners about it.

Earlier, the team hosted a promotional lunch in London to publicise the event.

(Note to Editors: For team information and contacts, see the Host City Web Site www.world2006.hk).

Mrs Lam said Hong Kong's robust economic situation – as the Chief Executive, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, recently outlined in his annual policy address – was enhanced by a range of "feel-good factors" including growth rate of 7.5 per cent in 2004, the best economic performance since the Asian financial crisis.

The Director General also highlighted Hong Kong's unique links with the Pearl River Delta, the world's fastest-growing region, and Hong Kong's substantial role enhanced in the dynamic China market by the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA).

Major receptions will be held in Birmingham, Edinburgh, Warsaw, Prague, Moscow, St Petersburg, Zurich, Oslo and Budapest to keep government, business and media contacts updated on Hong Kong's burgeoning prospects.

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