

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Recently, the issue of whether Hong Kong government should allow filming movies in the city centre has aroused wide concern among various circles and provoked a stir among the locals. The advocates conceive that filming in the city centre can attract tourists, boosting the tourism of Hong Kong in the long run, while the skeptics claim that filming in the city centre should not be allowed in order to maintain physical and mental health of the locals as filming may create severe noise pollution at night. In view of the heated debate in society, it is my firm belief that filming in the city centre should be allowed for the benefits of the society, citizens and economy.

The reasons behind my conviction can be viewed from a myriad of perspectives. Among all these, the first springing to my mind is that filming in the city centre can serve as a pearl-like role in stimulating the local filming industry in Hong Kong. In the past few years, it is undeniably true that Hong Kong is often criticized being a 'cultural desert', as its local filming industry has declined drastically since 1990s when the Hollywood movies entered Hong Kong's filming market, contributing to the fact that a range of Hong Kong people prefer Hollywood movies such as 'Marvel' and 'Ironman' than local ones. With this in mind, filming movies in the city centre can definitely alleviate such a thorny problem. Given that foreign filmmakers can make movies in the heart of Hong Kong, local filmmakers can have greater access to the production procedures of movie. Simultaneously, they can learn how a fascinating and entertaining movie can be produced in an international standard. For instance, local film companies can learn about the sound effects, background music setting and backstage arrangement, etc. Having a clear mindset of the production, locals' potential can be unleashed, thus production can be carried in a more advanced and modern way, consequently leading to the production of our own high-quality movies. As a result, locals will have more interest in watching local movies so that the development of our filming industry can be fostered in the long term, showing that we are living in a diverse city but not a money-centric one.

Aside from promoting local filming industry, I strongly believe that filming movies in the core of Hong Kong can let citizens loose up and let go of stress. In Hong Kong, such an international metropolitan city, many citizens lead a fast-paced lifestyle and suffer from tremendous pressure due to the significant amount of workload at school and workplace. In view of the alarming situation, it is of paramount importance that they

should be given the opportunity to relieve their mental stress and unwind. Provided that the government allows citizens to enter the filming scene, not only can they watch the filming progress in live, but they can also immerse themselves in the filming activities which is a completely new experience to them. Based on the fact that Hong Kong people are open-minded to explore different things, they will find it refreshing and innovative. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, locals are obsessed with foreign movie celebrities such as Robert Downey and Lily Collins. Connecting with them plays a vital role in relieving locals' pressure by granting them the opportunity to see them in real eyes. In views of this, it is inevitable essential, if not urgent for the government to allow filming in the city centre in order to satisfy locals' wants, which are enjoying moments of break from the hustle and bustle of the city, given that they have been suffering from psychological distress from work and studies since already a long time ago.

In addition to maintaining locals' mental health, it is my firm conviction that filming in the city centre serves as an indispensable role in boosting local tourism. In this day and age, some traditional tourist spots such as Ocean Park is no longer attractive to tourists owing to its dull and homogeneous services provided, resulting in a exponentially decreased visiting number, posing threat to Hong Kong tourism development. In light of this, it is beyond dispute that filming in the city centre can act as a new driving force injected into the local economy and enhance tourism. The recent research conducted by the University of Hong Kong revealed that a city where famous movies were filmed can attract one million of tourists. Take the past as an example. the classical scene in 'Ghost in the shell' were filmed near the Victoria Harbour. Not to mention that an influx of tourists had been attracted by such a wonderful and historical scene to visit our city at that time, the retail and catering industry could be stimulated and flourished as tourists would buy daily necessities or souvenirs for their families and friends. All in all, if the government allows filming in the city centre, it is foreseeable that a positive outcome of tourism development will be observed in the near future.

Taking all aspects into accounts, filming in the city centre can boost the development of local filming industry, facilitate locals' mental health and get tourism back on track. It is sincerely hoped that the government can allow filming in the city centre so that Hong Kong's whole development can eventually be amplified.

Yours faithfully

Chris Wong

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