

Address by Guest of Honor



The Hon Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBS, JP
The Chief Secretary for Administration

J P (Chairman of the Agency for Volunteer Service, Mr Lee Jark-pui), distinguished speakers, distinguished fellows, ladies and gentlemen,

It is really my great pleasure to join you here today at the inauguration ceremony of the Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers, and to witness the launching of this new institution of the Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) to advance volunteerism and promote excellence in volunteering.

Volunteerism is indispensable in any civil society. Through offering our time and our effort to help those in need, we are showing love and care for the less privileged in society, and contribute to building a caring and harmonious community. These contributions are unpaid, yet priceless. As the saying "the more we share, the more we have" goes, volunteering brings huge benefits to the volunteers themselves at the same time. No matter if it is learning new skills, making new friends or feeling the sense of achievement and fulfilment, volunteerism can definitely enrich one's life in ways more than one can imagine.

I am very delighted to learn that people of Hong Kong are getting more passionate towards voluntary service in recent years. Of course as a former Director of Social Welfare, I hope I have made a little bit of contribution in those days, in chairing a committee to promote volunteering in Hong Kong. Last year, the number of registered volunteers in Hong Kong passed the 1 million mark, representing an increase by three-fold as compared to 10 years ago. In 2011, our volunteers provided more than 22 million hours of voluntary services. I believe this is the perfect illustration of the spirit of mutual help among ourselves and our love for this city.

**Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers
Inauguration Ceremony**
cum
Forum on Building Impact in Volunteering
2013.3.21

Having served the community for more than four decades, the Agency for Volunteer Service has played a proactive and pivotal role in the development and promotion of sustainable volunteerism in Hong Kong. From referral service for volunteers and organisations requiring volunteer service, to strengthening volunteers' competence and encouraging volunteering, the Agency has made substantial contributions to all aspects of volunteerism, and enhanced the quality and professionalism of volunteer service over all these years.

Building on its success, the AVS is now launching the Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers to further promote excellence and sustainable development of volunteering in Hong Kong, and hopefully through its network internationally. The Institute shall build on a membership system of recognition, standards setting and accreditation in order to encourage volunteers to continuously develop their skills and share their knowledge in volunteerism. Today's Forum will be the perfect opportunity for our distinguished overseas speakers, local leaders and our enthusiastic volunteers from all sectors of society to exchange views on creating greater impact in volunteering.

We all love Hong Kong. I believe what Hong Kong needs now is some more positive energy to help build social cohesion and restore public confidence and hope in our home. Those most in need should feel the concern and care of the community, just as all of you have done throughout the years. So the Government is now organising or planning to organise a city-wide campaign to promote positive social values such as care, mutual help and solidarity in the community. And I have been told by J P that the AVS will be one of our staunch supporting organisations in this particular campaign. I am certain our selfless and devoted volunteers will lend your staunch support to this campaign as well.

In the coming years, the Government will continue to work hand in hand with all of you to provide opportunities and continuous encouragement to our volunteers. Last but not least, I wish to congratulate the Agency and in particular to J P, who has become the icon of volunteerism in Hong Kong, on the launching of the Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers and wish the Institution every success in its future endeavours. Thank you very much.

Source from Press Releases:

<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201303/21/P201303210428.htm>