

CHINA> Taiwan, HK, Macao

Hong Kong service firms set to receive more help

The Ministry of Commerce and the government of Hong Kong will soon sign a document to further help companies from the region's service sector operate on the mainland, Vice-President Xi Jinping said Monday.

"I hope the arrangement will provide new opportunities for the development of the service sector in Hong Kong," he said.



Vice President Xi Jinping (C) listens to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen (L Front) introducing the infrastructure work in Hong Kong, July 7, 2008. [Xinhua]

"The central government will continue to support all initiatives and endeavors aimed at developing the economy and improving people's lives in Hong Kong."

Xi made the comments during a speech ahead of a banquet dinner held by the Hong Kong government in his honor at the Island Shangri-La Hotel.

"Focusing on developing the economy enables Hong Kong to grow more prosperous, play a more important part in the country's overall development and occupy a more favorable position in global markets," he said.

Xi is in Hong Kong for a three-day inspection tour of the city's preparations for the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic equestrian events.

In his speech, he praised the regional government and all parties involved for their dedication and hard work.

"The government has led the preparatory work with a great sense of commitment," he said.

"The whole country, and indeed the whole world are deeply impressed by Hong Kong people's

enthusiasm, their level of participation and their passion for the Olympics."

Xi also expressed his thanks to the government and people for their support in the aftermath of the Sichuan quake.

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Reiterating the comments made by President Hu Jintao on March 6, during a meeting with NPC deputies and CPPCC members from Hong Kong and Macao, Xi urged the Hong Kong government to continue developing the economy and enhancing social harmony.

"Since its return to the motherland, the future of Hong Kong has been in the hands of our Hong Kong compatriots and has been closely linked with the future of the motherland. We believe with the support of the motherland and the efforts of the SAR government, Hong Kong can overcome all challenges," he said.