

Controversy Surrounds Singapore Subsidies for Taylor Swift Concert

Description

The glitzy city-state of Singapore is buzzing with excitement as its streets prepare for the arrival of the international music sensation, Taylor Swift. As preparations for Swift's Eras tour reach a crescendo, with sequins sparkling, limousines gleaming, and hotel pillows being meticulously plumped, there's a sense of anticipation that has taken over the city. However, behind the glitz and glamour, lies a heavier burden that the city has had to bear.

Hosting the famous singer's Eras tour has been a matter of great honour for Singapore, but the laurels didn't come without a hefty price. Initial reports indicated that the cost for the six exclusive shows could be as eye-watering as S\$24 million (£14m; \$18m). Singapore's Culture Minister, Edwin Tong, has since downplayed these costs, asserting they were "nowhere as high", although he refrained from revealing the exact figure.

The disclosure of any expenditure took the limelight only after an uproar from Thailand's Prime Minister, who claimed Singapore paid concert organisers between US\$2-3m per night. This ignited criticisms across the region, with a legislator from the Philippines condemning the move and demanding a formal protest against the grant. Despite governments being perturbed, the fans are the ones bearing the brunt - quite literally.

Taylor Swift's music reverberates across South East Asia, reaching the ears of approximately 700 million inhabitants - from alleyways in Ho Chi Minh to taxi cabs in Bangkok. Therefore, the announcement that all six shows would be held in the region's most exorbitant city felt like a blow to the gut for many adoring fans. Despite Singapore's strong currency often posing a deterrent, many 'Swifties' demonstrate willingness to make sacrifices to see their idol in person.

Numerous fans have jetted into Singapore's Changi Airport throughout the week, most arriving from China and its territories. For these fans, Singapore is an appealing alternative, considering Swift's tour excludes China. Yet, the costs are eye-watering - one woman revealed she and a friend spent S\$1,200 each on tickets alone, resorting to camping at a friend's house due to skyrocketing hotel rates.

Luxury packages are also in demand, with the city's landmark Marina Bay Sands hotel selling out its S\$50,000 Swift packages, offering four VIP tickets and a three-night stay in a suite. It's clear that fans are deeply committed to experiencing their favourite star live, regardless of the cost.

However, critical questions about the ethics and financial benefits of this high expenditure remain unanswered. Whilst the invitation to an international superstar such as Swift might enhance Singapore's reputation as a premier destination, one must scrutinise the need for such substantial public spending, particularly when made known only through the statements of foreign governments. Especially in a country where welfare benefits are relatively scant, this expenditure may be perceived as extravagant.

While governments worldwide offer subsidies and tax breaks for large events, the reported cost for Swift's concerts surpasses all previous public expenditures in Singapore. Nonetheless, the lure of an economic



boost and international acclaim apparently outweighed the potential controversies.

It cannot be ignored though, that a significant chunk of Swift's fan base in the region may feel aggrieved due to the financial strain. Still, from a strategic point of view, if Singapore's gamble pays off, the city-state could profit not only from the immediate windfall but also from a boosted reputation as an unrivalled venue for world-class events.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Glitzy** // (adjective): Characterized by showy glamorous or high-profile features.
2. **Sensation** // (noun): An event or person or thing that causes great excitement or interest.
3. **Sequins** // (noun): Small shiny discs sewn onto garments as decoration.
4. **Crescendo** // (noun): The loudest or highest point reached in a gradually increasing sound.
5. **Laurels** // (noun): Honors or awards given for achievement.
6. **Exorbitant** // (adjective): Unreasonably high in price or value.

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What is the term for unity or agreement of feeling or action especially among individuals with a common interest?

- Option: Renowned
- Option: Solidarity
- Option: Lurative
- Option: Imax

2. What word would be used to describe something extremely large or impressive?

- Option: Whopping
- Option: Sensational
- Option: Array
- Option: Glitzy

3. Which term would best describe someone who has achieved success or is very skillful?

- Option: Anomaly
- Option: Accomplished
- Option: Dormancy
- Option: Exorbitant

4. Who is responsible for investigating deaths in certain circumstances like accidents or suspicious



circumstances?

- Option: Critics
- Option: Coroner
- Option: Whopping
- Option: Imax

5. What term is used to describe something causing great public interest and excitement?

- Option: Renowned
- Option: Sensational
- Option: Array
- Option: Crescendo

6. What word would describe something ostentatiously showy or flashy?

- Option: Glitzy
- Option: Sequins
- Option: Kickstarted
- Option: Array

7. Which term would describe something typically a price that is unreasonably high?

- Option: Dormancy
- Option: Exorbitant
- Option: Surrounded
- Option: Solidarity

8. Which word would refer to a wide range or variety of something?

- Option: Convoy
- Option: Procured
- Option: Helmed
- Option: Array

9. What term is used to describe a state of inactivity or a period of quietness?

- Option: Glitzy
- Option: Laurels
- Option: Dormancy
- Option: Sequins

10. Which term would describe something mysterious puzzling or difficult to understand?

- Option: Imax
- Option: Enthralling
- Option: Influx
- Option: Enigmatic



Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. The _____ artist's works are sought after by collectors worldwide.
12. The crowdfunding campaign successfully _____ the business idea.
13. Investing in real estate can be very _____ if done wisely.
14. The scale of the project was truly _____; it exceeded everyone's expectations.
15. The current CEO aims to surpass the achievements of his _____.
16. The sudden temperature drop in mid-summer was an _____ according to weather experts.
17. The news of the company's _____ came as a shock to the employees.
18. The mood at the funeral was very _____ reflecting the sadness of the occasion.
19. The suspect had an _____ tattoo on his neck making identification easy.
20. The strict safety protocols _____ that all participants were secure during the event.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The movie received rave reviews from both fans and alike.
22. The peaceful cottage was by towering trees and a serene lake.
23. The display of fireworks lit up the night sky during the festival.
24. The renowned director the award-winning film that captivated audiences worldwide.
25. The rare artifact was carefully by the museum to add to its collection.
26. The dazzling gown was adorned with shimmering that sparkled under the lights.
27. The successful Kickstarter campaign the ambitious project allowing it to come to life.



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| 28. After winning multiple awards the actress could rest on her knowing she had achieved great success. |
| 29. The sudden of tourists during the holiday season caused traffic jams in the small town. |
| 30. The company made the difficult decision to the production of the outdated model. |

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Solidarity 2. Whopping 3. Accomplished 4. Coroner 5. Sensational 6. Glitzy 7. Exorbitant 8. Array 9. Dormancy 10. Enigmatic

Gap-Fill: 11. renowned 12. kickstarted 13. lucrative 14. impressive 15. predecessor 16. anomaly 17. demise 18. sombre 19. unmistakable 20. ensured

Matching sentence: 1. critics 2. surrounded 3. impressive 4. helmed 5. procured 6. sequins 7. kickstarted 8. laurels 9. influx 10. discontinue

CATEGORY

1. Entertainment - LEVEL6

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Author

aimeeyoung99

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