

Legislative Council

Agenda

Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 11:00 am

I. Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

19 papers to be laid on the Table of the Council set out in **Appendix 1**

Member to address the Council

Paper

Hon Paul TSE

Committee on Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Progress Report for the period October 2020 to October 2021
(Item 18 in Appendix 1)

II. Questions

Members to ask 22 questions (6 for oral replies and 16 for written replies)

Questions for oral replies to be asked by

Public officers to reply

1. Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG
(Households in inadequate housing)

Secretary for Transport and Housing
Under Secretary for Education

2. Hon WONG Kwok-kin
(Human resources planning for innovation and technology)

Secretary for Innovation and Technology
Under Secretary for Education

3. Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok
(Preparatory work for the 15th National Games)

Secretary for Home Affairs

4. Hon Vincent CHENG
(Sports facilities and competition events)

Secretary for Home Affairs

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| 5. | Hon Michael TIEN
<u>(Operation of flea markets)</u> | Secretary for Development
Under Secretary for Food and
Health |
| 6. | Hon Jimmy NG
<u>(Retirement protection system)</u> | Secretary for Labour and
Welfare
Under Secretary for Financial
Services and the Treasury |

Contents of 22 questions, Members to ask such questions and public officers to reply set out in **Appendix 2**

III. Government Bill

Second Reading (debate to resume), consideration by committee of the whole Council and Third Reading

<u>Film Censorship (Amendment) Bill 2021</u>	: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
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IV. Member's Motion

Valedictory Motion

Mover	: Hon Starry LEE
Wording of the motion	: <u>Appendix 3</u>
Public officer to attend	: Chief Secretary for Administration

Clerk to the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 27 October 2021

Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

Papers

1. Lotteries Fund
The Accounts of the Fund 2020-21 (including Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury)
2. Hong Kong Productivity Council
Annual Report, Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements 2020-21
(to be presented by Secretary for Innovation and Technology)
3. Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation
Annual Report 2020-2021 (including Independent Auditor's Report and Consolidated Financial Statements)
(to be presented by Secretary for Innovation and Technology)
4. Competition Commission
Annual Report 2020/2021 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)
(to be presented by Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development)
5. Travel Industry Authority
Annual Report 2020-21 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)
(to be presented by Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development)
6. Prisoners' Education Trust Fund
Report by the Trustee, Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)
7. Fire Services Department Welfare Fund
Report on the Administration of the Fund, Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2021
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)

8. Customs and Excise Service Welfare Fund
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, Report of the Director of Audit and Report by the Commissioner of Customs and Excise Incorporated
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)
9. Customs and Excise Service Children's Education Trust Fund
Report by the Trustee, Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)
10. Immigration Service Welfare Fund
Report on the Administration of the Fund, Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2021
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)
11. Police Welfare Fund
Annual Report 2020/2021 (including Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2021)
(to be presented by Secretary for Security)
12. Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund
Report 2020/21 (including Financial Report and Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by Secretary for Development)
13. Ocean Park Corporation
Report on the Corporation's Activities and Administration of the Ocean Park Trust Fund in Financial Year 2020-2021 (including Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements)
(to be presented by Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development)
14. Estate Agents Authority
Annual Report 2020/21 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)
(to be presented by Secretary for Transport and Housing)
15. Independent Police Complaints Council
Report 2020/21 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)
(to be presented by Hon Frankie YICK, Vice-Chairman of Independent Police Complaints Council)
16. The Legislative Council Commission
Report on the Activities 2020-2021 (including Statement of Accounts and Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by President of the Legislative Council)

17. Anti-epidemic Fund
Financial Statements for the period from 21 February 2020 (date of establishment) to 31 March 2021 (including the Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by Chief Secretary for Administration)

18. Committee on Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Progress Report for the period October 2020 to October 2021
(to be presented by **Hon Paul TSE**, Chairman of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, who **will address the Council** on this paper)

19. Report of the Bills Committee on Film Censorship (Amendment) Bill 2021
(to be presented by Hon MA Fung-kwok, Chairman of the Bills Committee)

22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 27 October 2021

		Subject matters	Public officers to reply
Questions for oral replies			
1	Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG	<u>Households in inadequate housing</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing Under Secretary for Education
2	Hon WONG Kwok-kin	<u>Human resources planning for innovation and technology</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology Under Secretary for Education
3	Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok	<u>Preparatory work for the 15th National Games</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
4	Hon Vincent CHENG	<u>Sports facilities and competition events</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
5	Hon Michael TIEN	<u>Operation of flea markets</u>	Secretary for Development Under Secretary for Food and Health
6	Hon Jimmy NG	<u>Retirement protection system</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Questions for written replies			
7	Hon Steven HO	<u>Certificates issued by the Marine Department</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
8	Hon YUNG Hoi-yan	<u>Instrumental music training courses and activities of the Music Office</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
9	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	<u>Courses and services commissioned by the Employees Retraining Board</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare
10	Hon YIU Si-wing	<u>Consumption Voucher Scheme</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
11	Hon LEUNG Che-cheung	<u>Teacher wastage problem</u>	Secretary for Education
12	Dr Hon Pierre CHAN	<u>Waste glass containers</u>	Secretary for the Environment
13	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan	<u>Anti-epidemic measures</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
14	Hon Alice MAK	<u>Development planning for the land along the alignment of the Northern Link</u>	Secretary for Development
15	Hon Paul TSE	<u>Understanding the real life of the middle class</u>	Chief Secretary for Administration
16	Hon Starry LEE	<u>Addiction of minors to online games</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
17	Hon Tony TSE	<u>Performance management of civil servants</u>	Secretary for the Civil Service
18	Hon LUK Chung-hung	<u>Employment support and training programmes</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare
19	Hon Elizabeth QUAT	<u>Evaluation, registration and introduction of new pharmaceutical products</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
20	Hon Frankie YICK	<u>Phasing out Euro IV and V diesel commercial vehicles</u>	Secretary for the Environment
21	Hon Starry LEE	<u>Incident of settlement in relation to the Central Kowloon Route project</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
22	Hon Elizabeth QUAT	<u>Trafficking of eels of endangered species</u>	Secretary for the Environment

Question 1
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Households in inadequate housing

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

The Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council indicated earlier his hope that by the time the Country's second centennial goal was achieved, Hong Kong would have bid farewell to subdivided units ("SDUs") and caged homes. There are views that apart from endeavouring to increase the supply of subsidized housing, the Government also needs to help households in inadequate housing such as caged homes, SDUs and cubicle apartments enhance their competitiveness, so that they can seize the opportunities for upward mobility, thereby moving out of inadequate housing through their own effort. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of households belonging to the following two categories currently living in inadequate housing: (i) low-income households who are not living in public housing, not receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") and have received one-off living subsidy, and (ii) households who are not living in public housing, not receiving CSSA, have waited for public housing for more than three years and are receiving the monthly cash allowance (not including non-elderly one-person public housing applicants);
- (2) whether it will, by drawing reference from the "targeted poverty alleviation" strategy adopted by the Mainland authorities, help households in inadequate housing enhance their competitiveness through the provision of student learning support as well as services such as employment training and counselling, so that they can seize the opportunities for upward mobility, thereby being able to afford housing with a better living environment; and
- (3) whether the Government will undertake that the development of transitional housing is only a temporary policy, and that it will not include that type of housing into the Long Term Housing Strategy as part of the housing ladder?

Question 2
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Human resources planning for innovation and technology

Hon WONG Kwok-kin to ask:

The National 14th Five-Year Plan puts forward supporting Hong Kong's development into an international innovation and technology ("I&T") hub. In the Policy Address delivered early this month, the Chief Executive proposes to develop a Northern Metropolis, which includes a San Tin Technopole with an estimated capacity of accommodating some 150 000 jobs in I&T industries. Regarding I&T human resources planning, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has conducted surveys and studies on Hong Kong's demand for and supply of I&T manpower for the coming two decades, so as to facilitate the formulation of relevant human resources policies; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will do so expeditiously;
- (2) whether it has formulated programmes for nurturing local I&T talents; if so, of the implementation timetables and other details; if not, whether it will do so expeditiously; and
- (3) whether it will assign the Human Resources Planning Commission led by the Chief Secretary for Administration to coordinate the surveys and studies as well as the formulation of policies in respect of I&T human resources; if so, whether it will let the non-official members of the Commission participate more actively in the formulation of the relevant policies, instead of only consulting them on those policies put forward by the Government?

Question 3
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Preparatory work for the 15th National Games

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok to ask:

The State Council has given consent for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao to host the 15th National Games in 2025. The Hong Kong Government has indicated that the hosting of the National Games, which is a comprehensive sports event of the largest scale and the highest level in the country, jointly by the three places of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao carries a significant meaning and the event will help promote sports development in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is expected that the Kai Tak Sports Park will not be completed until 2023, whether the Government will expeditiously conduct a review on how the Sports Park could complement Hong Kong's efforts in hosting some of the competition events of the National Games, including whether the scale and mode of operation of the facility will be commensurate with those needed by the competition events which the Government intends to bid for hosting in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given that the Government will allocate funding to the Hong Kong Sports Institute ("HKSI") for the construction of a new facilities building to replace the existing facilities on strength and conditioning, sports science and sports medicine in the HKSI sports complex as well as renovation of the vacated parts of the sports complex, whether the Government will expeditiously assess the impacts of the relevant works on athletes' training and preparation for the various competition events of the National Games and make corresponding arrangements to mitigate such impacts; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it has begun detailed discussions and coordination with the Guangdong and Macao authorities on issues relating to the National Games, including the roles of various parties and division of work among them, the estimated total expenditure and amounts of financial commitments to be made by various parties; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 4
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Sports facilities and competition events

Hon Vincent CHENG to ask:

Hong Kong athletes achieved brilliant results in both the Tokyo Summer Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games, rousing a craze for sports among the people of Hong Kong. It is reported that some members of the sports community, academics and Members of this Council have proposed that the Government should sustain such craze and improve the sports policy and facilities. In addition, the State Council has decided that Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will host the 15th National Games in 2025 (“the National Games”), and required the governments of the three places to fully utilize the existing venues and facilities as well as contain the costs for hosting the competition events. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective current shortfalls of venues for various sports across the territory, as calculated on the basis of the relevant standards stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines; the current number of those sports facilities that are below the relevant international standards;
- (2) given that the Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities put forward in 2017 included conducting technical feasibility studies on 15 sports and recreation facility projects, of the study outcome of the 11 sports facility projects among them as well as the respective anticipated commencement and completion dates of the works concerned; whether it will consider rolling out a second five-year plan for sports and recreation facilities; if so, of the details; and
- (3) of the National Games’ competition events that the Government plans to strive for hosting, and whether it will strive for the opening ceremony or closing ceremony of the National Games to be held in Hong Kong, as well as the sports facilities that it intends to use?

Question 5
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Operation of flea markets

Hon Michael TIEN to ask:

It was reported that in August this year, a major fire broke out at Siu Lam Flea Market in Tuen Mun, resulting in more than 100 stalls being burnt down. Regarding the operation of flea markets, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the licences and permits that operators of such type of markets are required to obtain; the legal liabilities in respect of land use, fire safety, insurance, etc. to be fulfilled by operators;
- (2) of the measures in place to ensure that operators will fulfill the aforesaid liabilities, and whether it regularly conducts inspections and requires operators to regularly submit reports in this regard; and
- (3) of the current number of markets of the same type in Hong Kong; whether the Government will comprehensively review the regulatory policies on such markets, including the requirement that operators should obtain licences and permits, and the measures to monitor operators' fulfillment of the relevant terms and conditions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 6
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Retirement protection system

Hon Jimmy NG to ask:

At present, an employer may use the accrued benefits of the contributions he made for an employee to a Mandatory Provident Fund (“MPF”) scheme to offset the statutory severance payment or long service payment payable by him to that employee (“the offsetting arrangement”). The Chief Executive has stated in the Policy Address just delivered that legislation will be enacted in the next legislative session to abolish such arrangement. The Government will also explore ways to encourage members of the public to convert, after retirement, their one-off MPF assets into annuities to be received regularly. Regarding the retirement protection system, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as the business sector has all along been concerned about the rise in operating costs after the abolition of the offsetting arrangement, of the measures put in place by the Government to allay its concern;
- (2) whether it will step up the publicity work on annuities to enhance public understanding about the concept and merits of annuities, so as to make good preparation for the implementation of conversion of MPF assets into annuities; and
- (3) as a study report has pointed out that it takes 40 years for a retirement protection system to become mature, and the MPF system has been implemented for only 20 years, whether the Government has any new direction for reforming the retirement protection system into one which provides comprehensive and timely retirement protection for the population of Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Certificates issued by the Marine Department

Hon Steven HO to ask:

In the light of the operational needs on the Mainland and in Hong Kong of mobile fishing vessels, the Marine Department (“MD”) currently issues local certificates of competency of coxswains or engine operators (“CoCs”) with restrictions to holders of Mainland Fishing Vessel Personnel Certificates (“Mainland Certificates”). CoCs will expire on the expiry dates of Mainland Certificates (i.e. when the holders reach the age of 65). Such an arrangement has resulted in quite a number of vessel personnel who are still physically fit losing their jobs upon reaching the age of 65, as well as a shortage in the manpower of coxswains and engine operators. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of persons (i) who held CoCs and (ii) whose CoCs expired due to the aforesaid reason, in each of the past five years, together with a breakdown by whether they were coxswains or engine operators;
- (2) as MD indicated in 2019 that on the premise of ensuring that the personnel operating a local vessel possess suitable safety knowledge, MD would be open-minded in exploring ways to assist holders of Mainland Certificates in meeting the required standards, so that they could obtain CoCs, of the progress and outcome of the exploratory work;
- (3) given that at present, when vessel personnel who have been issued with CoCs not by virtue of holding Mainland Certificates reach the age of 65, the validity period of their CoCs may be granted an extension provided that they are physically fit and pass the eyesight test, whether the Government will extend this arrangement to vessel personnel who have been issued with CoCs by virtue of holding Mainland Certificates; and
- (4) of the new measures in place to alleviate the problem of shortage in the manpower of coxswains and engine operators?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Instrumental music training courses and activities
of the Music Office

Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask:

The Music Office under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department currently enhances the music knowledge and appreciation ability of members of the public through instrumental and ensemble training as well as various music activities. The Instrumental Music Training Scheme (“IMTS”), implemented by the Music Office, comprises training courses on more than 30 Chinese and Western musical instruments. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of classes of training courses on Chinese and Western musical instruments offered as well as the number of activities organized by the Music Office, in each of the past five years, and set out the number of participants by course title and name of activity;
- (2) of the number of activities that have been postponed, cancelled or changed to be conducted online since January 2020 due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic and set out, by name of activity, the relevant details, including the changes in the arrangements for and contents of the activities, as well as the number of participants affected;
- (3) of the to-date number of classes of courses that have been changed to be taught online due to the epidemic; the impacts of online teaching on trainees’ learning progress, and the number of trainees who need to take more time than that of face-to-face classes to complete the courses; and
- (4) whether the Music Office has compared the results of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations with the exit qualifications of IMTS in terms of recognition; of the advantages of the qualifications awarded under IMTS, and the places in which the universities’ music schools recognize such qualifications?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Courses and services commissioned by
the Employees Retraining Board

Hon KWOK Wai-keung to ask:

Regarding the training courses and services offered by training bodies as commissioned by the Employees Retraining Board (“ERB”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the (i) number, (ii) total enrolment, (iii) total number of graduates and (iv) placement rate of graduated trainees of (a) the training courses offered by each training body, and (b) the total amount of funding granted to each training body for the purposes of offering such courses, in each of the past two financial years; set out a breakdown by teaching mode of the courses (i.e. full-time, half-day, evening and other modes);
- (2) whether it knows, among the trainees of the placement-tied courses offered in each of the past three years, the numbers and percentages of those trainees who were provided with employment counselling, referral and follow-up services by the training bodies; how ERB evaluated the effectiveness of such services;
- (3) whether it knows if ERB conducted, in the past three years, comprehensive surveys on and analyses of the labour market conditions of various industries, so as to commission training bodies to offer training courses which may cater better for market demands and are related to those industries with a more promising employment outlook; if ERB did, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether it knows, since 25 May last year (i.e. the date on which the maximum amount of monthly special allowance disbursable to each trainee under the “Love Upgrading Special Scheme” was raised to \$5,800), (i) the enrolment, (ii) the number and percentage of those trainees who completed the courses with an attendance rate of 60% or over, and (iii) the average amount of special allowance disbursed to each eligible trainee per month, in respect of the courses offered under each tranche; and

- (5) given that the service targets of the courses commissioned by ERB (except for those courses under the “Love Upgrading Special Scheme”) are persons with educational attainment at sub-degree or below, whether it knows if ERB will remove such a restriction on educational attainment, so that all eligible employees in Hong Kong (including new arrivals) may attend such courses and obtain the relevant services; if ERB will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Consumption Voucher Scheme

Hon YIU Si-wing to ask:

The Government is implementing the Consumption Voucher Scheme, which involves a total expenditure of about \$36 billion, to disburse by instalments electronic consumption vouchers with a total value of \$5,000 to each eligible and validly registered person, so as to encourage and boost local consumption as well as promote the application of electronic payment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the Government has set aside about \$600 million for meeting the administrative expenses of the Scheme, of the amount of expenditure committed so far and a breakdown of such amount;
- (2) of the current number of staff members of the Consumption Voucher Scheme Secretariat and, among such staff members, the respective numbers of those who are responsible for manning the telephone hotline and handling emails for answering enquiries; whether temporary positions have been created for the Scheme; if so, of the number, together with a breakdown by duty; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as there are comments that the occurrence earlier of the situation of a large number of eligible members of the public not being disbursed electronic consumption vouchers due to incomplete or incorrect particulars registered by them reflects the presence of a certain number of members of the public (especially the elderly) at present who lack the knowledge and skills of applying the technology needed for the registration, hence making it necessary for the Government to arrange for personnel to provide face-to-face consultation service for such members of the public, how the Government sums up this experience to avoid the occurrence of similar problems in the future?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Teacher wastage problem

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

An education group has indicated that some schools have encountered a teacher wastage problem, which may affect the quality of teaching. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective teacher wastage rates of (i) kindergartens/ kindergarten-cum-child care centres, (ii) primary schools, (iii) secondary schools and (iv) special education schools in the territory, in each of the past four school years and since the beginning of the current school year, as well as the relevant wastage rates of the schools in each District Council district;
- (2) of the top three subjects with the highest teacher wastage rates in the last school year and since the beginning of the current school year, as well as their respective wastage rates; and
- (3) whether it has assessed the impacts of teacher wastage on the quality of teaching, and what new measures are in place to retain teachers and maintain the quality of teaching?

Question 12
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Waste glass containers

Dr Hon Pierre CHAN to ask:

Regarding the disposal of waste glass containers, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that this Council passed the Promotion of Recycling and Proper Disposal (Product Container) (Amendment) Bill 2015 in May 2016 to amend the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance (Cap. 603) and the Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354), so as to provide a statutory regulatory framework for the Producer Responsibility Scheme on glass beverage containers, of the latest approach of levy collection and implementation timetable for the Scheme;
- (2) given that the Government has appointed glass management contractors (“GMCs”) to provide collection and treatment services for waste glass containers, of (i) the quantity of waste glass containers discarded at landfills and (ii) the quantity of waste glass containers collected by GMCs, in each of the past two years; whether such figures met (a) the targets originally set by the Government and (b) the targets set out in the glass management contracts with GMCs; if the targets were not met, whether it will take improvement measures; if it will, of the details; if it does not intend to take improvement measures, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the following details of the public expenditure incurred on the collection and treatment of waste glass containers in the past three years: (i) the total expenditure (including the fees paid to GMCs by the Government and other Government expenditure), with a breakdown by year and expenditure item, and (ii) the respective percentages of the expenditure on supporting the recovery of containers, treatment of the containers collected as well as publicity and education work in the total expenditure;
- (4) whether, apart from GMCs, there were community organizations/groups which assisted the Government in collecting and treating waste glass containers in the past three years; if so, of the names of such organizations/groups, and whether they received subsidies from the Government; if so, of the total amount of subsidies received and the quantity of waste glass containers recovered by them in the past three years; and

- (5) given that the Reverse Vending Machine Pilot Scheme encourages, through the provision of cash rebates, members of the public to return used plastic beverage containers, whether the Government will offer rebates to those members of the public who return waste glass containers, with a view to increasing the recovery quantity of waste glass containers; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and whether there are other ways to increase the relevant recovery quantity?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Anti-epidemic measures

Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan to ask:

On the 26th of last month, the Chief Secretary for Administration led a delegation to meet with Mainland officials to discuss the strategies on preventing and fighting the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) epidemic as well as the gradual resumption of normal traveller clearance between Hong Kong and the Mainland. A Hong Kong government expert consultant who had attended the meeting revealed that as the Mainland authorities had expressed worries about the strategies adopted by the Hong Kong Government for coping with the epidemic, which included the criteria for the discharge of confirmed patients from hospital, the quarantine exemption arrangements for targeted groups, as well as the arrangements for high-risk groups to undergo virus testing, they therefore had reservations about the resumption of normal traveller clearance. On the other hand, an Mainland expert is of the view that entry epidemic prevention measures may be fully relaxed when the COVID-19 vaccination rate on the Mainland reaches 80% or 85% by the end of this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will require people of higher-risk groups such as healthcare workers, staff of designated quarantine hotels and airport staff to undergo virus testing every alternate day; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will follow the arrangements implemented on the Mainland for confirmed COVID-19 patients as follows: those who have been tested negative for the virus twice consecutively may be discharged from hospital and then undergo medical observation at a designated venue for 14 days, during which they must be tested negative for the virus twice before they may go home; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it will tighten the quarantine exemption arrangements for air crew, sea crew as well as consular and diplomatic officers of foreign countries; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (4) as it has been reported that the Government will introduce a “cross-border code” as part of the arrangements for the resumption of normal traveller clearance between Hong Kong and the Mainland, of the difference between the use of this application and that of “Hong Kong Health Code”; the progress of the development of the “cross-border code”, and the time when the application will be available for public download and use; and
- (5) whether it will raise Hong Kong’s COVID-19 vaccination rate target to 80% or 85%, and introduce new measures to further boost the vaccination rate; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Development planning for the land
along the alignment of the Northern Link

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

The Northern Link (“NOL”), the construction of which is currently under planning, will run from the new Kwu Tung Station to be constructed on the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line of the East Rail Line to the Kam Sheung Road Station on the Tuen Ma Line, with three intermediate stations at San Tin, Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau to be provided. While the development planning for the land in the vicinity of San Tin, which is located within the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, falls within the scope of the ongoing Study on Phase One Development of the New Territories North, land use review studies of a smaller scale will be conducted for the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau. Regarding the development planning for the land along the NOL alignment, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the reasons why the Government will only conduct land use review studies for the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau, instead of including such land in a larger-scale new development area (“NDA”) development planning study;
- (2) whether the adoption of different approaches for development planning for land will result in differences in the arrangements for the development, provision of ancillary transport facilities, compensation for land resumption, etc. of the land concerned in future; if so, of the relevant differences between the aforesaid two approaches; of the criteria for the Government to determine the approach to be adopted for conducting planning;
- (3) whether it will consider including the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau in a more comprehensive NDA development planning; and
- (4) given that The Boxes in San Tin of a site area of about 40 hectares has closed down, and the site has the supply of fresh water and electricity and has been set up with sewage disposal facilities, whether the Government will consider discussing with the owner of the site the ways to optimize the use of the site, e.g. utilizing it for short-term uses of holding activities to boost the economy or developing transitional housing?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Understanding the real life of the middle class

Hon Paul TSE to ask:

Recently, the Director and various Directors-General of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("the Liaison Office") conducted personal visits to grass-roots families in caged homes and subdivided units, and inspected the operation of Chinese medicine clinics, border control, etc. Thereafter, being unwilling to lag behind, officials of the SAR Government visited the local communities. Some members of the middle class have queried why the Chief Executive and the principal officials of the Government were unwilling to lag behind, with "Central" (meaning the SAR Government) following the practice of "Western" (meaning the Liaison Office) and conducted visits to districts to understand the public sentiments only when the term of office of the current-term Government is approaching the end. Such members of the public also do not understand why government officials only visited the grass-roots but were indifferent to issues, such as those about emigration, childbearing decision, children's education, economic hardship amid the persistent epidemic, medical "inflation", worries over the "mandatory" transition of MPF into annuities, high rent levels, heavy tax burdens and financial difficulties, faced by those middle class families which have desperately been seeking to emigrate to other countries. Furthermore, the latest Policy Address does not say much about the hardship of the middle class and the emigration tide, making them feel neglected. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the principal officials of the Government will visit the middle-class districts and housing courts on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon, such as Laguna City in Kowloon East, to understand personally the own feelings of middle class members of the public and what they think about their personal prospects, the future of society and policy implementation by the Government; if so, of the details;
- (2) continuing from the above question, whether such officials will prepare reports after the visits to give an account of their understanding of the livelihood problems of the middle class, and ask the Liaison Office to forward the reports to the Central Authorities, so that state leaders may have a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the middle class as well as the various social classes of the entire society of Hong Kong;

- (3) whether it will squarely address the problem concerning the emigration of quite a number of members of the middle class recently, proactively analyze its causes and seriousness, as well as its impacts on Hong Kong's economy and talent wastage, and formulate corresponding population policies or take other measures to fill the talents wasted; and
- (4) as some members of the public are of the view that the latest Policy Address has ignored the aforesaid issues faced by the middle class, whether the Government will introduce short-term targeted measures to relieve the hardship of members of the middle class?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Addiction of minors to online games

Hon Starry LEE to ask:

The Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong conducted last month an online questionnaire survey on the situation of minors being addicted to online games. The findings revealed that, among the 463 parents of students of primary and secondary schools surveyed, respectively 33.4% and 18.3% indicated that their children spent three to five hours and more than five hours daily on online games. The parents surveyed held the view that their children's study, health and family relationship had been affected by their addiction to online games. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will, by studying and drawing reference from the relevant practices of the governments in places such as the Mainland, Korea and Japan, take measures to curb minors' addiction to online games, including (i) requiring real-name registration for online game accounts, (ii) capping the duration for which minors are allowed to play online games, and (iii) restricting the collection of game payments from minors; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will study (a) requiring developers and agents of mobile games, mobile application platforms and payment platforms to improve their trade practices and enhance information transparency, and (b) formulating a code of practice to provide (i) a maximum amount of in-game purchases to be made by minor gamers, a mechanism for refund, and a probability for winning in-game lucky draws through payment of fees, and (ii) a means for payment platforms to authenticate the age of gamers, so as to prevent minors from making excessive in-game purchases; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it will allocate additional resources to schools for (i) enhancing students' awareness of self-protection in the world of online games, (ii) nurturing in students a correct attitude towards online games, and (iii) providing parents of students with the required knowledge for early identification of their children's addiction to online games and for seeking assistance from professionals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Performance management of civil servants

Hon Tony TSE to ask:

As pointed out by the Government in its reply to my question raised on the 15th of last month, civil servants are subject to performance appraisal (“appraisal”) on an annual basis. Salary increment may be stopped or deferred for an appraisee whose performance during the appraisal period has been sub-standard. However, some comments and research reports have pointed out that as the appraisals for civil servants are overly generous and the salary increment system is too lenient, such appraisals have failed to achieve the objective of enhancing the performance of civil servants. For instance, an overwhelming majority of personnel have been given the best three grades on the six-grade performance scale; some personnel have received identical comments in their appraisal reports across the years; and cases in which salary increment has been stopped or deferred are rare. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers and percentages of civil servants who were given the grades of (i) outstanding, (ii) very effective, (iii) effective, (iv) moderate, (v) poor and (vi) very poor performance in their appraisals in each of the past five years;
- (2) of the measures in place to ensure that the grades given to civil servants truthfully reflect their work performance; whether it will consider, by drawing reference from the practices on the Mainland or in overseas countries, setting for each performance grade a cap on the percentage of personnel to be given the grade, so as to distinguish more effectively civil servants with outstanding performance from those who are incompetent;
- (3) of the number of civil servants whose salary increments were stopped or deferred due to sub-standard performance in each of the past five years, and the total amount of expenditure thus held back;
- (4) of the number of civil servants who were remunerated in accordance with the maximum pay points of their respective ranks in each of the past five years; given that the measure of stopping or deferring salary increments is not applicable to such personnel, of the Government’s alternative measures for managing such personnel’s performance; and

- (5) whether it will consider, by drawing reference from the practices on the Mainland and in overseas countries, conducting a comprehensive review on the appraisal and salary increment systems for civil servants, including the introduction of a more effective reward and penalty system, so as to establish a performance-related pay regime; if so, of the timetable for the review; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Employment support and training programmes

Hon LUK Chung-hung to ask:

Regarding the employment support and training programmes provided by the Labour Department (“LD”), other government departments and non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (i) the number of job seekers registered with LD, and (ii) the number of cases in which LD conducted proactive job matching for job seekers as well as their success rates, in each of the past three years;
- (2) of the number of job fairs organized by LD in the past three years, and set out, by (i) type of job and (ii) mode of employment (i.e. full-time or part-time), a breakdown of (a) the number of job vacancies offered and (b) the number of placements recorded at those job fairs;
- (3) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of job seekers in the past three years who had been unemployed for a long time and unable to find a suitable job through LD; whether LD actively followed up the cases of such persons and provided them with specific support services (including job matching, training course recommendations and employment scheme referrals);
- (4) whether LD conducted, from time to time in the past three years, comprehensive analyses and comparisons of the situations of the various industries and the qualifications of the job seekers, etc., with a view to more accurately grasping the situation of the labour market and properly utilizing human resources; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) as there are comments that the various support services for the unemployed and the training programmes to promote employment currently operated by the various government departments and NGOs are separately administered and do not come under a single chain of command, and are thus unable to provide comprehensive employment support and related ancillary measures for the unemployed, of the improvement measures and plans put in place by the Government to strengthen the synergy and coordination of such services and programmes?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Evaluation, registration and introduction of
new pharmaceutical products

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

Under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138) and the relevant regulations, pharmaceutical products must meet the standards of safety, efficacy and quality, as well as have been approved for registration with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong (“the Board”) before such products may be sold or distributed in Hong Kong. The Board currently adopts a “secondary evaluation” approach for vetting and approval of applications for registration of pharmaceutical products containing new chemical or biological entities (collectively referred to as “NCEs”), i.e. relying mainly on the registration approvals from competent drug regulatory authorities of designated reference countries (of a total of 32 countries, including Australia, Canada and the United States but excluding China) which have conducted the primary evaluation. Regarding the evaluation, registration and introduction of NCEs, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the Nation started to reform its drug review and approval system in 2015, that the National Medical Products Administration has joined the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (“ICH”) in 2017 and was/has been elected a member of the ICH Management Committee in 2018 and in 2021, and that the alignment of China’s drug registration regulatory regime and standards with the international regulatory regime has accelerated, whether it knows if the Board will, in vetting and approving NCEs, consider afresh accepting the documentary proof of evaluation and registration issued by Mainland drug regulatory authorities; if the Board will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will take measures to support the development of the departments of pharmacology/pharmacy of the faculties of medicine of two local universities into internationally recognized institutions for evaluation of NCEs, and to promote Hong Kong as Asia’s hub for NCE evaluations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (3) as it has been reported that some anti-cancer drugs independently developed by Mainland enterprises have been included on the national drug catalogue for basic medical insurance, whether it knows if the Hospital Authority (“HA”) will consider introducing such drugs; if HA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) given that the Chief Executive has, in the Policy Address just delivered, put forward vigorous development of life and health technology, and has asked the relevant departments to conduct a review on the complementing areas such as clinical data, clinical trials and drug registration as well as to tie in with the needs, of the details and timetable for the relevant work; and
- (5) as it has been reported that HA intends to procure Molnupiravir, a new drug developed by a pharmaceutical company in the United States for treating Coronavirus Disease 2019, whether it knows the progress of the relevant work?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Phasing out Euro IV and V diesel commercial vehicles

Hon Frankie YICK to ask:

To improve roadside air quality, the Government launched the Ex-gratia Payment Scheme for Phasing Out Euro IV Diesel Commercial Vehicles (“the Scheme”) in October 2020. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications received and approved by the Government since the launch of the Scheme; the respective percentages of the numbers of diesel commercial vehicles (“DCVs”) involved in such applications in the total number of eligible vehicles, together with a breakdown by vehicle class and year of first registration;
- (2) given that owners of those Euro IV DCVs which were first registered in 2006 are required to complete the procedure for cancelling their vehicle registration on or before 31 December this year (which is less than three months away from now) in order for them to be eligible for making applications under the Scheme, what measures the Government has put in place to remind such vehicle owners to complete the relevant procedure by the deadline and make applications under the Scheme;
- (3) as some owners of Euro IV DCVs have indicated that since their business has plunged due to the impacts of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, they can hardly afford the expenses on purchasing new vehicles, whether the Government will defer the deadline mentioned in (2) by one year, so that such vehicle owners may replace their vehicles after the business environment has improved; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether, in order to further improve roadside air quality, the Government will extend the Scheme to include Euro V DCVs, so as to encourage the vehicle owners concerned to switch as early as possible to Euro VI DCVs with much lower emissions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Incident of settlement in relation to
the Central Kowloon Route project

Hon Starry LEE to ask:

The Highways Department (“HyD”) announced on the 3rd of this month that in the course of carrying out the foundation works for the Kai Tak Ventilation Building and the Administration Building under the Central Kowloon Route project (“the project”), settlement readings exceeding the pre-set trigger level for works suspension (i.e. 25 millimetres) had been recorded at the nearby monitoring checkpoints on the 30th of last month. HyD then, pursuant to the mechanism, ordered the contractor to immediately suspend all works for conducting a holistic and comprehensive assessment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows when the contractor learnt of the settlement exceedance; when HyD received the relevant notification from the contractor;
- (2) whether there were communal facilities within the settlement monitoring area; if so, of the settlement readings recorded at the relevant monitoring checkpoints;
- (3) of the number of settlement monitoring checkpoints installed for the project and their locations; the settlement readings recorded at such monitoring checkpoints in the past three months;
- (4) whether mitigation measures need to be adopted for those buildings affected by the settlement; if so, of the details and the progress;
- (5) whether it will install more monitoring checkpoints for the project and increase the frequency of recording the readings; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (6) of the progress of the aforesaid assessment; whether it has identified the causes for the settlement exceedance;
- (7) whether it will request the contractor to review the works implementation methods, with a view to reducing the chance for recurrence of settlement exceedance; and
- (8) of the impacts of the works suspension incident on the works implementation progress of the project?

Question 22
(For written reply)

Trafficking of eels of endangered species

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

As pointed out by a report published by a conservation group in May this year, Hong Kong is a major consumer and global trading hub for critically endangered and endangered species of eels, and that Hong Kong is also a major trafficking hub for regulated eels from Europe, North America and Asia. The report also reveals that almost 90% of the eel samples collected in mid-2020 from restaurants across Hong Kong belonged to critically endangered or endangered species of eels. Besides, according to a local university's study, 45% of the eel samples collected in November 2017 and February 2018 from two major supermarket chains belonged to critically endangered species of European eels listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ("CITES"), and the food labels affixed were probably incorrect. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the quantity of eels of critically endangered and endangered species imported to Hong Kong which were seized by the authorities in each of the past 10 years, with a breakdown by (i) scientific name for the species to which the eels belonged and (ii) country of origin of the eels (set out in a table);
- (2) of the quantity of eels of critically endangered and endangered species to be exported/re-exported from Hong Kong which were seized by the authorities in each of the past 10 years, with a breakdown by (i) scientific name for the species to which the eels belonged and (ii) export/re-export destination country of the eels (set out in a table); and
- (3) in order to combat the trafficking of regulated eels and prevent people from inadvertently buying endangered eel products, whether the Government will amend the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) to require that the food labels of prepackaged eel products must provide information on (i) the scientific name for the species to which the eels concerned belonged and (ii) their production method (i.e. wild-caught or farmed); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

(Translation)

**Valedictory Motion
to be moved by Hon Starry LEE**

Wording of the Motion

That this Council concludes its work and wishes for the smooth formation of the Seventh Legislative Council to continue to serve the people of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.