

Panel on Home Affairs

**Government's Response to Issues Raised by Members
at the Meeting on 12 October 2017**

Issue	Government's Response
1. Mid-term review of the Five-year Strategic Plan (2015-2020) for the development of football	The mid-term review is underway. The Government expects to brief the Panel on Home Affairs (the Panel) on the findings of the mid-term review in the second quarter of 2018.
2. Strategies to promote sports participation by people with disabilities	The Government will report to the Panel in the first quarter of 2018 on the progress of various measures implemented, including the pilot scheme to provide full-time training to athletes with disabilities and the funding support to the elite sports for the disabled.
3. Promotion of the sport of balance bike riding	Regarding Government's arrangements for the use of venues by balance bikes, please refer to the reply (Annex) from the Secretary for Home Affairs on 13 December to the written question raised by the Honourable LEUNG Che-cheung of the Legislative Council (LegCo).
4. Safety of organising high-risk sports events	The Government has provided the Panel with a written reply to the issue in March 2017.
5. Support measures for the development of non-elite sports	The Government will provide the Panel with a written reply to the issue.

Issue	Government's Response
6. Venue booking policies of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department	In April 2017, the Government has reported to the Panel on its plan to develop a brand-new intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system. The system will facilitate a more efficient and fairer allocation of valuable venue resources, a curb on touting activities and the prevention of the abuse of facilities. The Government will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the LegCo in early 2018.
7. Latest progress on the review of the Places of Public Entertainment Ordinance	The Government is conducting a review on the Ordinance. Owing to the wide scope of the review and the number of industries involved, the relevant work cannot be completed within the current legislative session. Upon completion of the review, we will report to the Panel and consult the industries concerned.
8. New measures announced to encourage the participation by young people in policy discussions and in politics 9. Various youth exchange and internship programmes conducted in the Mainland and overseas	The Government will report to the Panel on various youth development initiatives in the second quarter of 2018.

Issue	Government's Response
10. Review of the policy on Private Recreational Leases	Given that the review involves the work of various bureaux and departments and that the issues in question are complex, we need to study them in detail so as to work out a reasonable and practicable policy recommendation package. We hope that we can report the findings of the review to the Panel of the LegCo as soon as possible before conducting a public and stakeholder consultation.
11. Outcome of the public consultation on the proposed amendments to the Chinese Temples Ordinance	The outcome of the public consultation showed that the community has not reached a clear consensus on the major amendments proposed by the Government. Subsequently, the Chinese Temple Committee formed a sub-committee in August 2016 to specifically examine further the direction of legislative amendments. We estimate that the work cannot be completed within the current legislative session. We will report to the Panel upon completion of the review.
12. Elections for Rural Representatives and Chairmen of Rural Committees	The electoral system concerned has been running effectively. At present, the Government has no plan to conduct a review.
13. Procedures to designate "fung shui grounds" in the New Territories	Procedures involving land fall under the policy purview of the Development Bureau.

Issue	Government's Response
14. Latest progress on the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349)	In July 2017, the Government has reported to the Panel on the progress of amendments to the Ordinance and the implementation of administrative enhancement measures; and consulted Members on Government's further legislative proposals. We will introduce the Amendment Bill into LegCo upon completion of the drafting work.
15. Memorial day for the Nanjing Massacre	Since 2014, the Government has been holding an official ceremony on 13 December every year to commemorate the event.

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 11
(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon LEUNG Che-cheung Date of meeting : 13 December 2017

Replied by : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question

It has been reported that push bikes (also known as "balance bikes"), a kind of pedal-less and brake-less bicycle for small children which are quite popular in Europe and America, have been introduced into Hong Kong in recent years. Quite a number of parents consider it safer to ride balance bikes than ordinary bicycles due to their slower travelling speeds and are therefore happy to accompany their children in riding balance bikes. However, a number of residents have recently relayed to me that small children riding balance bikes in recreation and sports venues where cycling is allowed, which are under the management of government departments such as the Home Affairs Department, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Housing Department, are often stopped by venue attendants, but after intervention by District Council members, such activity is allowed in some of the venues. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the rules or guidelines made by the authorities on riding balance bikes and using other wheeled sports equipment in various public recreation and sports venues; if riding balance bikes is forbidden in such venues, of the reasons for that;
- (2) whether the authorities will study the provision of dedicated venues for balance bike riding; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (3) as some members of the public have relayed that the utilization rates of the existing public roller skating rinks are low because roller skating is no longer popular, whether the authorities regularly reviewed in the past three years the utilization of the various public recreation and sports venues and the rules on their use, and provide

suitable recreation and sports venues in tandem with the rise and decline of various types of sports;

- (4) as some members of the public have relayed that since balance bike riding is a new sport, they can hardly take out third party risks insurance as required by the terms and conditions of hire of public recreation and sports venues, whether the authorities will provide assistance in this respect to encourage the development of balance bike riding and other new sports; if so, of the details; and
- (5) whether the authorities will consider launching a trial/pilot scheme to open up the recreation and sports venues of public schools outside school hours for public use so as to help solve the problem of insufficient recreation and sports venues in local districts, thereby promoting the development of new sports?

Reply

President,

My reply to the five parts of the question is as follows:

- (1)&(2) Most of the venues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) can be used for various purposes to accommodate different sports and activities. Currently, different types of cycling facilities are provided for various cycling activities in 24 leisure venues of LCSD. Among the venues, 16 are available for balance bike riding. As the remaining 8 cycling facilities require users to possess a certain level of skills, they are not suitable for balance bike riding.

At present, LCSD has not established rules or guidelines specially for riding balance bikes, nor has any plan to provide dedicated venues for balance bike riding.

- (3) To dovetail with sports development and meet the needs of the public, LCSD reviews from time to time the usage and the relevant conditions for use of its facilities and closely monitors the needs of the public. The roller skating rinks of LCSD are

non-fee-charging leisure venues used by the public for roller skating from time to time. LCSD will, taking into account the actual situation, consider making individual venues with lower utilisation available for booking by the public for other activities or altering the use of facilities for other sports and recreational purposes as and when required.

- (4) Members of the public who ride balance bikes in venues available for balance bike riding under the management of LCSD are not required to take out third party liability insurance. Organisations which book other leisure venues of LCSD for balance bike riding are required to take out third party liability insurance in accordance with the LCSD's requirements for application for non-designated use of leisure venues so as to offer basic protection to the organisers.
- (5) It has been the Government's policy to encourage schools to open up their school facilities and hire out their school premises to social organisations as a means to foster collaboration between schools and the community.

Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) jointly launched the Opening up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme (the Scheme), to further encourage public sector schools to open up their school facilities during leisure time to sports associations for organising sports activities, with a view to promoting a sporting culture in schools, encouraging students to develop a healthy sporting habit, and helping promote sports development. These sports activities are generally open for members of the public.

Since the implementation of the Scheme in the 2017/18 school year, about 30 squad training programmes, young athletes training programmes and district sports activities have been conducted in 11 schools. EDB is currently inviting schools to submit the second round applications for this school year to encourage more schools to participate in the Scheme. Besides, EDB and HAB will collect views from participating schools and sports associations to further enhance the Scheme.