

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting
of 14 June 2019**

**Questions scheduled for the
Legislative Council meeting of 19 June 2019**

Questions by:

- | | | |
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| (1) | Hon LEUNG Che-cheung | (Oral reply) |
| (2) | Hon YIU Si-wing | (Oral reply) |
| (3) | Hon Andrew WAN | (Oral reply) |
| (4) | Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai | (Oral reply) |
| (5) | Hon Charles Peter MOK | (Oral reply) |
| (6) | Hon Kenneth LEUNG | (Oral reply) |
| (7) | Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-ki | (Written reply) |
| (8) | Hon LAU Kwok-fan | (Written reply) |
| (9) | Hon CHAN Kin-por | (Written reply) |
| (10) | Hon Alice MAK | (Written reply) |
| (11) | Hon SHIU Ka-fai | (Written reply) |
| (12) | Hon Frankie YICK | (Written reply) |
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| (16) | Hon WU Chi-wai | (Written reply) |
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| (18) | Hon Paul TSE | (Written reply) |
| (19) | Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT | (Written reply) |
| (20) | Hon LEUNG Che-cheung | (Written reply) |
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| (22) | Hon James TO | (Written reply) |

Question 1
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Tuen Mun South Extension

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

The Railway Development Strategy 2014 recommends the taking forward of seven new railway projects, including the Tuen Mun South Extension. The MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) submitted a proposal on the Tuen Mun South Extension to the Government in as early as December 2016, but the Government has yet to complete its review of the proposal. On the other hand, it was reported last month that the Government was considering an idea of constructing an additional railway station near Tuen Mun Swimming Pool along the Tuen Mun South Extension, so that MTRCL could finance the railway construction costs through the revenues from the topside developments at that station. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that it has been two and a half years since the Government received the Tuen Mun South Extension proposal, when the Government will respectively announce the alignment of the railway and seek funding approval from this Council, if necessary;
- (2) of the details of the idea of constructing a new railway station near the Tuen Mun Swimming Pool; the details of the topside developments or the changes to be made to the community facilities involved; when it will consult the Tuen Mun District Council and this Council on that idea; and
- (3) given that in order to take forward the “Lantau Tomorrow Vision”, the Government will conduct an area-wide transport study and an engineering feasibility study on the road and rail links connecting the Hong Kong Island, the artificial islands in the Central Waters, Lantau Island and the coastal areas of Tuen Mun, and such studies will not be completed until 2023, whether the implementation timetable of the Tuen Mun South Extension will be affected as a result; if so, of the details?

Question 2
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Vacancy information of public car parking spaces

Hon YIU Si-wing to ask:

As at the end of February this year, there were a total of 276 government and commercial public car parks disseminating vacancy information of their car parking spaces to the public through “HKeMobility”, a mobile application of the Transport Department. However, the vacancy information of car parking spaces of government car parks disseminated through the application is not real-time, and the application does not cover all commercial public car parks. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective current numbers of government and commercial public car parks disseminating vacancy information of their car parking spaces through the application; the respective numbers of car parking spaces of these two types of car parks and their percentages in the relevant totals;
- (2) of the reasons why the application cannot cover all public car parks in Hong Kong; and
- (3) whether it will make improvements, first by disseminating real-time vacancy information of car parking spaces of government car parks through the application, and then by introducing measures to encourage operators of commercial public car parks to disseminate such information; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 3
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Applications for naturalization as a Chinese national

Hon Andrew WAN to ask:

Quite a number of members of the ethnic minorities (“EM”) wish to apply for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Passport to facilitate their travelling and studying abroad. As only Chinese citizens may apply for the passport, they have to apply for naturalization as a Chinese national. Despite having resided in Hong Kong for years (quite a number of them and their older generations were born and raised in Hong Kong), they have encountered quite a number of difficulties when applying for naturalization, including that they need to wait for a long time and pay high fees, as well as that they are not informed of the reasons when their applications are rejected and no appeal channel is available. As a result, such EM members, who regard Hong Kong as their home, have lost their sense of belonging to Hong Kong, and some of them even chose to emigrate to other countries. Regarding the applications for naturalization by EM members, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of naturalization applications received, approved and rejected by the Immigration Department (“ImmD”), as well as the number of applications withdrawn, in each of the past 10 years, together with a tabulated breakdown by ethnicity;
- (2) given that ImmD will, in processing naturalization applications, consider 10 factors such as whether the applicant has the right of abode in Hong Kong and whether the applicant has sufficient knowledge of the Chinese language, of the minimum number of such factors for which applicants attained positive scores in order for their applications to be considered; whether it will regard the applicant’s duration of residence in Hong Kong as one of the factors; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that under the existing legislation, ImmD is not required to assign any reason for its decisions to reject naturalization applications, and applicants may not lodge any appeal against such decisions, whether the Government will amend the relevant provisions so as to avoid EM members whose naturalization applications have been rejected feeling confused and being discriminated against; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 4
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

International image and business environment of Hong Kong

Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai to ask:

Recently, the legislative amendments concerning the surrender of fugitive offenders proposed by the Government have aroused concerns of the international community. The United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission of the United States (“US”), the European Union (“EU”) Office to Hong Kong and Macao and the diplomatic representatives of EU member states, as well as the International Chamber of Commerce-Hong Kong have raised objections one after another. They are worried about the safety of businessmen, journalists, rights and interests advocates and political activists in Hong Kong in the wake of the passage of the legislative amendments, and a deterioration of Hong Kong’s freedom, level of the rule of law and the business environment. In addition, the US Government warned the Hong Kong Government last month not to allow an Iranian oil tanker to berth at Hong Kong or provide replenishment to that oil tanker. Also, quite a number of businessmen are worried about the international status of Hong Kong being shaken as a result of Hong Kong being caught in the crossfire of the trade war between China and the US. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has assessed the impact of the aforesaid incidents on Hong Kong’s international image, and of the counter measures to be adopted by the Government; and
- (2) whether it has assessed if there will be an exodus of overseas enterprises and professionals from Hong Kong for worries of deterioration of the human rights situation and the business environment in Hong Kong; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the counter measures; if the outcome is in the negative, the reasons for that?

Question 5
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

A fair trial and human rights protection for
Hong Kong people surrendered

Hon Charles Peter MOK to ask:

It is stipulated in Article 10 of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights that everyone shall have the right to a fair and public trial. According to Article 3(f) of the United Nations Model Treaty on Extradition, extradition shall not be granted if the person whose extradition is requested has not received or would not receive, in the requesting State, the minimum guarantees in criminal proceedings as contained in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (“the Covenant”). All the surrender of fugitive offenders agreements (“SFO agreements”) signed between Hong Kong and 20 jurisdictions were implemented after going through this Council’s legislative procedure for subsidiary legislation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows, among the jurisdictions which have signed SFO agreements with Hong Kong, the respective jurisdictions that have and have not implemented the Covenant as well as the respective numbers of them; how the Government, at an institutional level, ensures the provision of a fair trial and human rights protection for Hong Kong people subsequent to their being surrendered; whether it will add the relevant protection provisions to the legislation; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it has assessed if a situation will emerge in which a fair trial and human rights protection for Hong Kong people is undermined as a result of their being surrendered; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether such a situation will affect the commercial, trade and other relationships between Hong Kong and foreign countries; and
- (3) whether the Government assessed, before and after signing an SFO agreement with a certain jurisdiction, if there were serious discrepancies between the legal provisions and the actual enforcement of such provisions in that jurisdiction; if it made such an assessment and found the existence of such a situation, how the Government handled the relevant SFO agreements so as to ensure the provision of a fair trial and human rights protection for those Hong Kong people who had been surrendered?

Question 6
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Future fuel mix for electricity generation

Hon Kenneth LEUNG to ask:

In 2014, the Government conducted a public consultation on the future fuel mix for electricity generation and put forward two options, namely: “grid purchase” under which electricity would be purchased from the China Southern Power Grid (“CSG”), and “local generation” under which more natural gas would be used for local electricity generation. A majority of the respondents supported the local generation option. On the other hand, it has been reported that the Government will soon consult the public on the long-term decarbonization strategy, proposing, among others, that 80% of the energy supply to Hong Kong should have zero carbon emissions by 2050, and zero-carbon electricity be bought from CSG. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the quantity of electricity currently imported from CSG and its percentage in the overall power supply to Hong Kong, the fuel mix adopted for electricity production, and the supply reliability;
- (2) as the Government indicated in July last year that the CLP Power Hong Kong Limited would enhance the clean energy transmission system with CSG, whether the Government knows the details, including the quantity of electricity import, the fuel mix adopted for electricity production, the production cost, and the progress of the relevant work; and
- (3) as the outcome of the aforesaid public consultation showed that a majority of the respondents supported the local generation option, why the Government still heads towards the direction of grid purchase; whether it will first focus on promoting the local development of renewable energy or other clean energy to maintain Hong Kong’s power autonomy; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Road safety involving crane lorries

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok to ask:

It has been reported that on the 16th of last month, the crane of a crane lorry running on the road in the Western District hooked and damaged an overhead cable of the tramway system, allegedly because the crane had not been folded properly. As a result, the tram service at the road section concerned was suspended for works personnel to repair the cable. Regarding road safety involving crane lorries, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of traffic accidents caused by cranes of crane lorries not folded properly and the resultant casualties, in each of the past five years;
- (2) whether it reviewed and improved, in the past three years, the measures regulating the operation of crane lorries, such as raising the penalties for contravening the work safety requirements; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it will discuss with members of the relevant trades ways to improve the design of crane lorries and the operational guidelines as well as enhance the training for the operators in relation to safe work practices, so as to avoid the occurrence of similar kind of accidents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Supply of water to Hong Kong

Hon LAU Kwok-fan to ask:

The new agreement on the supply of Dongjiang (“DJ”) water to Hong Kong from 2018 to 2020, signed by the Government and the Guangdong provincial authorities in December 2017, continues to adopt the “package deal lump sum” approach in calculating water prices. However, both parties have agreed to conduct a review of the future payment approach for water supply. In addition, it has been reported that the Pearl River Delta Water Resources Allocation Project (commonly known as the “West to East Water Diversion Project”) commenced last month and is expected to be completed in 2024. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has started discussing with the Mainland authorities the arrangements for making Xijiang water a backup supply for Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given that the quality standard of DJ water supplied to Hong Kong is in compliance with Type II waters in the Environmental Quality Standards for Surface Water (GB3838-2002), which is the highest national standard for surface water quality applicable for the abstraction for human consumption, and the quality standard of Xijiang water supplied to Macao from 2014 to 2016 was in compliance with the national standard at a grade lower (i.e. Type III waters), whether the Government has conducted studies and made preparation in this regard to ensure that the quality of Xijiang water to be supplied to Hong Kong meets the highest standard; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) of the details, specific timetable and progress in respect of the review of the payment approach for DJ water; as the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong has suggested switching to the adoption of a combined payment approach for the purpose of securing stable water supply and reasonable charges, whether the Government has assessed if Xijiang water as a backup supply may provide a better assurance for water supply, so that the feasibility of adopting a combined payment approach is enhanced; if it has conducted such an assessment and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether the Government will discuss with the Guangdong provincial authorities the adoption of a combined payment approach?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Air quality in train compartments and railway stations

Hon CHAN Kin-por to ask:

Railway is a major mode of public transport used by members of the public on a long-term basis. The findings of a research conducted by a university, which were published last year, showed that (i) when train doors opened, the concentrations of fine suspended particulates at the door-side surged, and (ii) those particulates contained metals which, after being breathed into the lungs, might cause respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and even lung cancer. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the timetable for and other details of the regular tests currently carried out by the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) on the air quality of train compartments and railway stations, and the latest concentration levels of air pollutants obtained from such tests;
- (2) whether it knows if MTRCL conducted any study in the past three years on ways to reduce the concentration levels of air pollutants in train compartments and railway stations; if MTRCL did, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that MTRCL currently monitors the air quality in railway facilities according to the Practice Note for Managing Air Quality in Air-conditioned Public Transport Facilities: Railways published in 2003 by the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”), whether EPD has updated the Practice Note since 2003; if not, when EPD will update the Practice Note?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Minimum income requirement for applicants of
subsidized sale housing

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

The subsidized sale flats (“SSFs”) put up for sale in recent years have met with overwhelming responses, with oversubscriptions easily reaching dozens of times. As no minimum income requirement has been set in the relevant eligibility criteria, some members of the public have applied for purchasing SSFs in the names of their family members who have no income (e.g. children who have just reached the age of 18 and are students) in order to increase their chances of success in the ballots. However, such “buyers” simply are unable to make the down payments nor repay the mortgage loans by themselves. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the median monthly household income of the applicants in each sale exercise for the Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) flats in the past three years;
- (2) of the number of HOS flats sold in each of the past three years, and set out (i) a breakdown by the group to which the monthly household income of the buyers belonged (as set out in the table below) and (ii) the corresponding percentages;

Monthly household income (\$)	2016		2017		2018	
	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)	(i)	(ii)
5,000 or below						
5,001 to 10,000						
10,001 to 20,000						
20,001 to 30,000						
30,001 to 40,000						
40,001 to 50,000						
50,001 or above						
Total:		100%		100%		100%

- (3) whether it knows, among the buyers in each sale exercise since 2014 for flats under HOS, the Green Form Subsidized Home Ownership Scheme and the White Form Secondary Market Scheme, the respective numbers of those whose mortgage loan agreements contained mortgage guarantors;
- (4) as the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”) provides mortgage default guarantee to financial institutions with whom HA has entered into a Deed of Guarantee so that they can offer more favourable mortgage terms to SSF buyers (e.g. a mortgage loan-to-value ratio of 90% or above), whether the Government has assessed

the financial risks posed to HA by the situation that some buyers are unable to repay mortgage loans by themselves; if so, of the outcome; if not, whether it will conduct such an assessment; and

- (5) whether it will tighten the eligibility criteria for SSFs by setting a minimum income requirement, so as to ensure that the buyers are able to repay mortgage loans by themselves?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Regulation of person-to-person telemarketing calls

Hon SHIU Ka-fai to ask:

The Unsolicited Electronic Messages Ordinance (Cap. 593) implemented since December 2007 regulates the sending of commercial electronic messages, but it is not applicable to person-to-person (“P2P”) telemarketing calls. Last year, the Government proposed to bring such calls within the ambit of the Ordinance and establish a do-not-call register (“the Register”) for such calls. Under the proposed regulatory arrangement, no person shall make telemarketing calls to those telephone numbers on the Register, unless the caller has obtained prior consent from the recipient. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that during the time when the relevant bill was scrutinized by this Council in 2007, Hon WONG Ting-kwong had proposed Committee Stage amendments (“CSAs”) to bring P2P telemarketing calls under regulation, with an exemption for those telemarketing calls to persons made pursuant to a previous or current business or client relationship (but the CSAs concerned were not incorporated into Cap. 593), and recently the Government has indicated, in reply to my enquiries, that the proposed regulatory arrangement will be similar to the concept of the CSAs proposed by that Member back then, whether the Government can confirm if the proposed regulatory arrangement will include this exemption;
- (2) as Cap. 593 provides that “consent” means (a) express consent or (b) consent that can reasonably be inferred from the conduct of the individual or organization concerned, and the Government has indicated that it will, by making reference to such meaning, define the “consent” under the proposed regulatory arrangement, whether the Government has studied if it can be inferred from a person’s conduct of giving out business cards on social occasions that the person has given consent to the recipients of the business cards to make telephone calls to that person in future to introduce products or services;
- (3) given that the listing of telephone numbers on the Register will take effect 10 working days after registration, and that companies will have to arrange manpower to check regularly (say, weekly) the telephone numbers of existing and potential clients against those in the Register, so as to avoid breaching the law by mistakenly calling

a telephone number on the Register, whether the Government has assessed: (i) the obstacles to economic activities that will be caused by such checking work, and (ii) the manpower and time to be spent on performing such work weekly by companies which have hundreds or thousands of telephone numbers of existing and potential clients; if it has assessed, of the outcome; if not, whether it will conduct such an assessment expeditiously;

- (4) of the measures to be put in place for alleviating the compliance costs for micro, small and medium enterprises to be brought about by the implementation of the proposed regulatory arrangement; and
- (5) as there are views that the proposed regulatory arrangement cannot eradicate telemarketing calls from overseas and those pretended to have come from legitimate financial institutions, whether the Government has assessed if adopting non-legislative approaches, such as promoting the use of call-filtering applications and educating the public on how to handle telemarketing calls, will be more effective than enacting legislation; if it has not assessed, of the reasons for that?

Question 12
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Traffic control at a certain road junction

Hon Frankie YICK to ask:

The southern end of the two-way Beacon Hill Road (“the minor road”) in Kowloon Tong is connected to the Cornwall Street (“the major road”). Although the latter is a two-way east-west road with heavy traffic and vehicles travel on it at a rather high speed, no traffic light has been installed at that road junction. Some members of the public have relayed that due to the sharp bend at the entrance/exit of the minor road and drivers’ views being blocked by a building or mound on the roadsides, there is a certain degree of danger for eastbound vehicles on the major road to make a left turn into the minor road and vehicles on the minor road to make a left turn into the major road. In addition, westbound vehicles on the major road intending to make a right turn into the minor road, as well as vehicles intending to make a right turn into the major road (westbound) after leaving the minor road, have to cut across several lanes on the major road, which frequently causes dangerous situations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of traffic accidents which occurred at the aforesaid road junction in each of the past five years, and the details of each accident (including the causes of the accident, classes of vehicles involved and the resultant casualties); and
- (2) whether it will install traffic lights at the road junction to control traffic; if so, of the details; if not, the measures to be put in place by the Government to enhance the road safety there?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

New measure to support students with special educational needs

Hon IP Kin-yuen to ask:

Starting from the next school year, the Education Bureau (“EDB”) will implement a new enhancement measure for the Learning Support Grant (“LSG”) (“the new measure”) in public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools to support students with various types of special educational needs (“SEN”) and academic low achievers. The new measure will replace the Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme (“IRTP”) and Integrated Education (“IE”) Programme, which have been implemented for many years. Some members of the education sector have relayed that as all classes and regular teaching posts under IRTP will be cancelled in September this year, quite a number of schools need to reduce their staffing establishment and, as a result, the contracts of some existing contract teachers may not be renewed, dealing a severe blow to the morale and stability of the teaching force and running counter to the Government’s undertaking made in the 2018 Policy Address that “[u]nder the enhanced measure, schools will have a more stable teaching force and additional resources for flexible deployment”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (i) the number of classes, (ii) the rate of the class grant, (iii) the number of additional regular teaching posts and (iv) the total recurrent expenditure, under IRTP for the current school year;
- (2) of the number of schools in which the number of approved classes will be reduced due to the cancellation of IRTP and/or a decline in the intake of Primary One students, with a breakdown by reason for reduction in classes and by number of classes in schools, i.e.:
 - (i) those in which the number of classes will drop from 24 or more to 23 or less, and
 - (ii) those in which the number of classes will drop from 12 or more to 11 or less;
- (3) among the schools mentioned in (2), of the respective numbers of schools in which the following personnel arrangements will have to be made in the next school year:
 - (i) lowering the rank of the principal; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post,

- (ii) reducing the number of vice principals; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post,
 - (iii) reducing the number of senior teachers; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post,
 - (iv) reducing the number of assistant clerical officers; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post,
 - (v) reducing the number of clerical assistants; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post, and
 - (vi) reducing the number of Workmen II; the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved in the arrangement, calculated on the basis of the median salary of the post;
- (4) given that grant thresholds of \$600,000, \$1.6 million and \$2.2 million have been prescribed for the new LSG, of the criteria based on which EDB set such thresholds;
 - (5) of the number of schools in which the number of teaching posts converted/provided under the new measure will not be able to absorb all redundant/surplus teachers arising from the cancellation of IRTP and/or the IE Programme, with a breakdown by number of redundant/surplus teachers (i.e., one such teacher, two and three such teachers);
 - (6) as the Government has indicated that all IRTP teachers can be retained in the staffing establishment of schools and there will be no redundant teachers, of the methods by which schools can retain IRTP teachers, and set out by method the number and names of the schools involved, the number of teaching posts retained, and the total expenditure on the remuneration and benefits involved, calculated on the basis of the median salaries of the posts concerned;
 - (7) whether it has assessed if the new measure will result in the contracts of the existing contract teaching staff not being renewed; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the number of the schools and the number of the contract teaching staff involved, and the measures in place to assist them; if the assessment outcome is in the negative, the reasons for that;

- (8) given that a school may contravene the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 487) if it caps the number of students with SEN to be admitted, of EDB's justifications for capping LSG under the new measure; the criteria based on which EDB set the calculation ceiling and cash grant ceiling at the levels of \$2.2 million and \$1.24 million;
- (9) whether it has estimated the number of schools for which the grant calculated under the new measure exceeds the ceiling of \$2.2 million; if so, of the details, and the measures in place to assist those schools not provided with the amount of grant exceeding the said ceiling in catering for the learner diversity among students;
- (10) of the to-date number of complaints or requests for assistance received by EDB from schools about the impact of the new measure on them and the contents of such complaints or requests, as well as the assistance offered by EDB to those schools; and
- (11) whether it will implement transitional arrangements for enabling a "soft landing" of the new measure, and ensure that the current staffing establishment and the rank of the principals of the schools concerned will not be affected by the new measure; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Former Tsuen King Circuit Market

Hon Michael TIEN to ask:

The Government closed down the under-utilized Tsuen King Circuit Market in early 2018, but so far it has not given an account of the way forward for that building and the site concerned. In March this year, I called on the Government to expeditiously give an account of the matter and suggested implementing a revitalization scheme for the building, including (i) providing a kindergarten on the ground floor and giving move-in priority to a neighbouring kindergarten currently saddled with a heavy rent burden, (ii) providing a day care centre for the elderly on the ground floor, and (iii) providing a youth centre and a study room on the first floor. The Government indicated in reply that it either had the intention to do so or was examining the feasibility of the suggestions. On the other hand, I have recently learnt that the Government is considering demolishing the building to make way for planning and developing afresh the site concerned. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it has made a decision on the way forward for the building; if so and the decision is to demolish the building, of the details; if the decision is to retain and revitalize the building, the progress of the relevant studies and the implementation timetable, as well as the measures to expedite its work in this regard?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Evening secondary courses

Hon HO Kai-ming to ask:

The Government currently provides, through the Financial Assistance Scheme for Designated Evening Adult Education Courses (“FAEAEC”), financial assistance for adult students taking evening secondary courses offered by approved course providers. Eligible students may receive 30%, 50% or 100% reimbursement of the tuition fees paid. Students who are unable to pay tuition fees in advance due to financial difficulties may apply for loans under the Extended Non-means-tested Loan Scheme (“ENLS”) to settle tuition fees. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of students at various grades taking evening secondary courses under FAEAEC, in each of the past five years;
- (2) of the number of evening secondary students taking the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination and, among them, the number of those whose examination results met the general entrance requirements for subsidized undergraduate programmes, in each of the past five years;
- (3) of the respective numbers of students whose applications made under FAEAEC were received and approved in each of the past five years; in respect of the number of students whose applications were approved, (i) a breakdown by the percentage of tuition fees reimbursed and (ii) its percentage in the total number of evening secondary students;
- (4) of the number of eligible students applying for loans under ENLS, in each of the past five years;
- (5) of the current average annual tuition fee of the evening secondary courses offered under FAEAEC; as the Government has implemented for years free day secondary education, whether the Government will implement free evening secondary education;
- (6) given that evening secondary students have to compete with day secondary students for admission to subsidized undergraduate programmes, but support in the areas of finance and learning, etc. provided by the Government for the former is less than that for the latter, whether the Government will relax the eligibility criteria of the various subsidy schemes set up for the latter so as to cover the

former, and launch scholarship and bursary schemes for the former to encourage them to study; and

- (7) whether it will comprehensively review and strengthen the support provided for evening secondary students, with a view to encouraging people with low educational attainment to complete secondary education programme while working at the same time?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Workmanship of subsidized housing units

Hon WU Chi-wai to ask:

It has been reported that in recent years, quite a number of members of the public have, after moving into newly completed units of public rental housing, and those under the Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) and Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (“GSH”), found that both the materials and the workmanship of the in-flat installations are of poor quality. Some members of the construction industry have pointed out that the causes for such a situation include a shortage of experienced construction workers in recent years, and an increased use of precast concrete components (“PCCs”) in the construction of these subsidized housing. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) in respect of the three aforesaid types of subsidized housing projects completed within the past five years, of the respective numbers of complaints/reports received by the Housing Department (“HD”) from residents about quality problems of the materials and workmanship of the in-flat installations, and among such complaints/reports, the respective numbers of those which were (i) made via the Defects Report Forms and (ii) made after the expiry of the warranty periods of their HOS and GSH units;
- (2) in respect of the complaints/reports mentioned in (1)(i) and (ii) respectively, of the following information on each problem in the past five years relating to the quality of materials and workmanship: (i) the number of cases handled, (ii) the average time taken for the repair works, (iii) the longest time taken for the repair works, and (iv) the number of cases not handled, and set out the information by the name of each subsidized housing project and in tables of the same format as the table below;

Name of subsidized housing project: _____

Problem	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Water seepage on the wall				
Water seepage on the ceiling				
Window problems				
...				
Other problems				
Total:		Not applicable	Not applicable	

- (3) of the most common in-flat problems involving substandard workmanship and installations (e.g. kitchen doors not meeting the

fire resistance standard) that were identified by HD in the past five years in the course of hand-over inspections of the three aforesaid types of subsidized housing units;

- (4) regarding the construction works in the past five years for the three types of subsidized housing projects respectively, of the (i) percentage of PCCs used on average, (ii) the number of days taken for the construction of a typical floor on average, and (iii) the number of man-days taken for the construction of a unit on average, for each of the projects; whether HD assessed, in the course of the hand-over inspections of such units, the impacts of such factors on the workmanship; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (5) whether HD issued in the past five years advices or warnings to or imposed penalties on the contractors of subsidized housing projects due to quality problems of materials and workmanship; if so, of the details;
- (6) of the measures put in place to enhance the supervision of the workmanship of subsidized housing projects (e.g. increasing the number of inspection items and the frequency of random inspections during the construction stage, as well as reviewing the construction methods and the procedure and criteria for hand-over inspections); and
- (7) whether it will consider extending the warranty period for subsidized sale units and taking other measures to better protect the rights and interests of owners who have purchased such units?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Welfare of animals

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

Regarding the welfare of animals, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that a government official said at a Panel meeting of this Council held last month that the Government was heading towards the goal of “zero euthanasia of animals”, of the Government’s specific measures to achieve that goal; whether it has set interim goals and the relevant dates for achieving the goals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (“AFCD”) invited in November last year suggestions from animal welfare organizations (“AWOs”) on places that might be suitable for conducting the Trap-Neuter-Return trial programme for stray dogs (“the trial programme”), of the number and details of the suggestions received by AFCD to date; the resources needed for implementing the programme as estimated by the Government;
- (3) as AFCD has indicated that the trial programme conducted in the past three years did not achieve the predetermined performance targets, whether the Government will take the initiative to explore suitable places for AFCD to implement a new round of the trial programme; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (4) as the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421) provides that a keeper of animals who, without reasonable excuse, abandons his mammal (except a human being) commits an offence, of the conviction rates of the relevant prosecutions in the past five years; whether the Government will step up law enforcement efforts, and of the law enforcement manpower in each of the coming three years;
- (5) of the current procedure to be followed by animal owners for surrendering to the Animal Management Centres (“AMCs”) under AFCD the animals that they no longer keep; given that the Government has recently proposed to amend the legislation to introduce the concept of “duty of care” to animals on the part of the persons responsible for the animals, and proposed that the abandonment of an animal should be regarded as a contravention of the duty of care and an offence, whether the Government anticipates that the number of animals to be received by AMCs will increase

after the implementation of the relevant legislative amendments; if so, of AFCD's counter measures;

- (6) whether it will consider, by drawing reference from the practices in other places, collecting fees from persons abandoning animals, so as to subsidize the relevant expenses of AWOs;
- (7) given that the governments of places such as Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States have established online platforms for animal owners to register animals and report on loss of animals, whether the Government will develop a similar online platform; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (8) given that the number of animals re-homed dropped from 966 in 2014 to 753 in 2018, of the Government's measures to encourage members of the public to adopt animals, e.g. whether it will (i) establish an online platform, (ii) establish a dedicated animal adoption fund, and (iii) provide incentives (e.g. healthcare vouchers for pets, and waivers of fees for dog licences); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (9) given that the main problems currently faced by AWOs are difficulties in finding suitable venues and paying high rents for venues, whether the Government will offer assistance in this regard, including extending the use of the subventions provided for such organizations to include payment of rents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Management of streets

Hon Paul TSE to ask:

In early years, the Government signed, with the owners of the land adjoining a number of streets in Causeway Bay such as Great George Street, Paterson Street, East Point Road, Kingston Street and Cleveland Street, agreements under which the land owners would replace the facilities on the streets concerned at their own cost and be responsible for the future repair and maintenance of such facilities (but excluding street management). At present, some of such streets are full-time or part-time pedestrian streets. Some members of the public have complained that there are often busking and commercial promotion stalls on those streets, and that some groups occupy the road space for holding activities, which have caused serious nuisance to the residents in the vicinity and pedestrians. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the total number of complaints received by the various government departments in the past three years about the noise nuisance, road obstruction, environmental hygiene problems, etc. which were caused by hawking, busking and other activities on the aforesaid streets, and the follow-up actions taken;
- (2) if it has gained an understanding about whether the aforesaid land owners have made profits from the commercial activities conducted on the pedestrian streets; if it has, of the details;
- (3) whether, apart from the aforesaid streets in Causeway Bay, the Government signed in the past three years/will sign in the coming three years similar agreements with other land owners and, thereafter, designated/designate the streets concerned as pedestrian streets; if so, of the details; and
- (4) of the existing channels and procedure through which individuals and groups who intend to organize commercial, political or performing activities on pedestrian streets may make applications for such activities?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Public dental services

Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

There are views that as the population of Hong Kong is ageing, dental services are facing great challenges. There were nearly 310 000 poor elderly persons in 2015, representing a poverty rate of 30%. Quite a number of elderly persons are suffering from various dental problems and rely on public dental services heavily. However, such services are grossly inadequate, rendering elderly persons with financial difficulties unable to receive diagnoses and treatments. Regarding public dental services, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of dentists who obtained practising qualifications in each of the past five years;
- (2) whether it knows the current number of registered dentists in Hong Kong and, among them, the respective numbers of dentists practising in public organizations and private dental clinics/organizations;
- (3) of the specific measures in place to increase dentist manpower;
- (4) of the specific measures in place to encourage non-locally trained dentists and graduates in dentistry to come to Hong Kong and practise in public organizations;
- (5) whether it has projected the manpower demand and supply situation of dentists in each of the coming 10 years; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (6) whether it has plans to increase the number of dental clinics under the Department of Health, so as to expand the free emergency dental treatment (commonly known as “general public dental sessions” (“GP dental sessions”)) provided for the public; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (7) whether it will consider increasing the consultation quota of GP dental sessions through means such as allocating resources and streamlining procedure; and
- (8) whether it will introduce a population-wide dental care scheme; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Default on maintenance payments

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

The Social Welfare Department (“SWD”), in calculating the amounts of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (“CSSA”) payments payable to CSSA recipients who are concurrently receiving maintenance payments, makes a deduction of the maintenance payments they may receive. If the CSSA recipients can prove to SWD that they have commenced legal proceedings to recover the arrears of maintenance payments, the deduction of their CSSA payments may be suspended. Some social welfare organizations have pointed out that it is very time-consuming to provide such a proof, and such recipients, who are mainly single parents, will immediately fall into financial difficulties once they are owed their maintenance payments. Besides, the work on implementing the maintenance order system falls within the remit of the Home Affairs Bureau and yet SWD, which provides support to single parents, is under the Labour and Welfare Bureau, resulting in a lack of coordination for and effectiveness of the relevant work. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of maintenance orders granted by the court in the past five years, with a tabulated breakdown by the group to which the amount of monthly maintenance payments belonged (i.e. below \$2,000, \$2,000 to \$3,999, \$4,000 to \$5,999, and \$6,000 or more);
- (2) of the respective numbers of requests for assistance (i) received and (ii) handled by SWD and non-governmental organizations in the past three years concerning default on maintenance payments;
- (3) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of cases in the past three years in which legal proceedings were commenced to recover arrears of maintenance payments;
- (4) whether it will dispense with the requirement for CSSA recipients to submit proof of having commenced legal proceedings, and stipulate that as long as they make a statutory declaration stating that they are owed their maintenance payments, the deduction of their CSSA payments will be suspended;
- (5) whether it will put the work on implementing the maintenance order system under the purview of the Labour and Welfare Bureau so as to enhance the coordination for the work relating to default on

maintenance payments and the support for the single parents concerned; and

- (6) whether it will consider setting up a dedicated department to strengthen the support for single parents who are owed their maintenance payments?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Provision and management of public markets

Hon Andrew WAN to ask:

Some members of the public have pointed out that the government's efforts in providing and managing public markets have been ineffective. For instances, patronage of North Kwai Chung Market has remained low due to the prolonged delay in retrofitting air conditioning system, Tsuen King Circuit Market was closed as a result of mismanagement, and there has been a shortage of public market in new towns such as Tung Chung and Tin Shui Wai. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has formulated plans to redevelop the public markets in New Territories West; if so, of the details (including the name of the public markets involved and the timetable for redevelopment);
- (2) whether it has formulated plans to renovate the public markets in New Territories West; if so, of the details (including the name of the public markets involved and the timetable for renovation);
- (3) whether it will pursue the "single site, multiple use" model in multi-storey developments in redeveloping public markets, and build municipal complexes to provide the various types of public facilities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) as the Chief Executive indicated in last year's Policy Address that the Government would build a public market in Tung Chung and Tin Shui Wai respectively, whether the Government will provide more public markets in phases having regard to the current and anticipated future population of the two districts; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) as the Financial Secretary announced in his 2018-2019 Budget Speech that the Government would earmark \$2 billion for implementing a Market Modernisation Programme over the next 10 years, whether it has assessed the number of public markets that can benefit from the funding; whether it will provide additional funding in a timely manner in order that the relevant works can be carried out in more public markets; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 22
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Early withdrawal of Mandatory Provident Fund accrued benefits

Hon James TO to ask:

Under the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance (Cap. 485), Mandatory Provident Fund (“MPF”) scheme members may withdraw their accrued benefits early under specified circumstances (such as early retirement, permanent departure from Hong Kong and terminal illness). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following figures on early withdrawal of MPF accrued benefits under each specified circumstance in each year between 2015 and 2018:
 - (i) the respective numbers of applications received, approved and rejected by the trustees,
 - (ii) the average age of the applicants,
 - (iii) the total amount of accrued benefits in the approved cases, and
 - (iv) the highest, lowest and average amounts of accrued benefits in the approved cases; and
- (2) as the aforesaid ordinance stipulates that a member with a “terminal illness” means the member “has an illness that is likely to reduce the life expectancy of the member to 12 months or less”, but that definition depends on the subjective estimations by individual doctors on the life expectancy of their patients, whether the Government will formulate a more objective and less stringent definition for “terminal illness”, such as setting out, in the form of a table in respect of the various death-causing illnesses, the specific stage(s) for each illness to be regarded as terminal illness?