

# Legislative Council

## Agenda

Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 11:00 am

### **I. Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council**

5 items of subsidiary legislation and 11 other papers to be laid on the Table of the Council set out in **Appendix 1**

### **II. Written Questions**

Members to ask 22 questions for written replies

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

### **III. Government Bill**

**Second Reading (debate to resume)** (Members speak)

Appropriation Bill 2021

: Financial Secretary

Other attending public officers

: Secretary for the Environment

Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Secretary for Security

Secretary for Transport and  
Housing

Secretary for Food and Health

Secretary for Commerce and  
Economic Development

Secretary for Development

Secretary for Education

Secretary for the Civil Service

Other attending public officers (Cont'd)

: Secretary for Innovation and  
Technology

Secretary for Constitutional and  
Mainland Affairs

Secretary for Home Affairs

Secretary for Financial Services  
and the Treasury

Under Secretary for Security

Clerk to the Legislative Council

## Council meeting of 21 April 2021

## Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

<b>Subsidiary legislation</b>	<b>Legal Notice No.</b>
1. <u>Arbitration (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (Commencement) Notice</u>	46 of 2021
2. <u>Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2021</u>	48 of 2021
3. <u>Tax Reserve Certificates (Rate of Interest) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Notice 2021</u>	49 of 2021
4. <u>Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles (Amendment) Regulation 2021</u>	50 of 2021
5. <u>Allowances to Jurors (Amendment) Order 2021</u>	51 of 2021
 <b>Other papers</b>	
6. <u>Employees' Compensation Insurance Levies Management Board Annual Report 2019/2020 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)	
7. <u>Employees Compensation Assistance Fund Board Annual Report 2019-2020 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)	
8. <u>Occupational Deafness Compensation Board Annual Report 2019/2020 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)	
9. <u>Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board Annual Report 2019 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)	

10. Pneumoconiosis Ex Gratia Fund  
Annual Report for the Year from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 (including Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit)  
(to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)
11. Insurance Authority  
Estimates of Income and Expenditure for 2021-22  
(to be presented by Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury)
12. Qualifications Framework Fund  
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (including Report of the Director of Audit)  
(to be presented by Secretary for Education)
13. Quality Education Fund  
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (including Report of the Director of Audit)  
(to be presented by Secretary for Education)
14. Education Development Fund  
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 (including Report of the Director of Audit)  
(to be presented by Secretary for Education)
15. AIDS Trust Fund  
Annual Report 2019-20, Financial Statements and Report of the Director of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2020  
(to be presented by Secretary for Food and Health)
16. Report No. 15/20-21 of the House Committee on Consideration of Subsidiary Legislation and Other Instruments  
(to be presented by Hon Starry LEE, Chairman of the House Committee)

## 22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 21 April 2021

Questions for written replies		Subject matters	Public officers to reply
1	Hon Christopher CHEUNG	<u>Impacts of investment losses incurred by investment funds</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
2	Hon LAU Kwok-fan	<u>Strengthening the regulation of the capital markets</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
3	Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan	<u>Self-regulation of the legal profession</u>	Secretary for Justice
4	Hon Abraham SHEK	<u>Planning and development of New Development Areas</u>	Secretary for Development
5	Hon MA Fung-kwok	<u>Cross-boundary cultural exchange activities</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
6	Hon Tommy CHEUNG	<u>Non-locally trained medical graduates and medical practitioners</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
7	Hon Kenneth LAU	<u>Small House Policy</u>	Secretary for Development
8	Hon Mrs Regina IP	<u>Development of an Islamic financial market</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
9	Hon WONG Kwok-kin	<u>The Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare
10	Hon Jimmy NG	<u>Pilot scheme for fixed-rate mortgages</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
11	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan	<u>Services of the accident and emergency departments of public hospitals</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
12	Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan	<u>Projects receiving the funding support of the Innovation and Technology Fund</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
13	Hon Wilson OR	<u>Proper carriage of loads on vehicles</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
14	Hon Frankie YICK	<u>Development of data centres</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
15	Hon LEUNG Che-cheung	<u>Installation of village lights in the rural areas</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
16	Dr Hon Pierre CHAN	<u>Vaccination for children</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
17	Hon Holden CHOW	<u>COVID-19 Vaccination Programme</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
18	Hon LUK Chung-hung	<u>MTR Kwun Tong Line and Tseung Kwan O Line</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
19	Hon CHAN Chun-ying	<u>Alternative payment mechanism for property transactions</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
20	Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG	<u>Influenza vaccination services</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
21	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	<u>Housing supply</u>	Secretary for Development
22	Hon Alice MAK	<u>Developing public housing on brownfield sites</u>	Secretary for Development

Question 1  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Impacts of investment losses incurred by investment funds

Hon Christopher CHEUNG to ask:

It has been reported that Archegos Capital Management (“ACM”), a family office fund based in the United States, failed to meet the margin calls after plunges in the prices of a number of United States-listed stocks in which it had invested in a highly leveraged way. As a result, ACM was forced to close out the securities contracts (commonly known as “forced liquidation”) and dump the stocks concerned of value amounting to almost US\$30 billion. Besides, a number of international investment banks which provided brokerage services for ACM suffered significant losses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has assessed the impacts of ACM’s forced liquidation on the capital market of Hong Kong, and how the incident affects the development of family offices’ wealth management business in Hong Kong;
- (2) given that the incident has revealed the enormous risk involved in investment banks’ provision of highly leveraged loans for hedge funds, of the Government’s measures in place to prevent local investment banks from providing such funds with excessive amounts of loans;
- (3) of the mechanism in place to guard the financial system of Hong Kong against the impacts arising from the investment losses suffered by sizable international financial institutions; and
- (4) whether it will take measures to raise investors’ vigilance about the possible risk of failure of sizable funds in times of high market volatility; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Strengthening the regulation of the capital markets

Hon LAU Kwok-fan to ask:

In February this year, the Securities and Futures Commission (“SFC”) and the Financial Reporting Council (“FRC”) concluded a new Memorandum of Understanding (“MoU”) to promote the collaboration between the two parties, thereby strengthening the regulation of the capital markets. According to the MoU, both parties will enhance the areas of collaboration, including case referrals, joint investigations, mutual assistance and capacity building. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the circumstances under which FRC will, upon initiating a formal investigation into a listed company, refer the relevant case to SFC;
- (2) of the details of SFC’s procedure for handling cases referred to it and the law enforcement actions that it may commence;
- (3) of the scope of actions that SFC and FRC may commence, and whether it includes investigating the conduct of the boards of directors of listed companies and their members, and imposing punishments on those persons involved in non-compliance incidents; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (4) given that SFC and FRC have agreed to notify each other before preparing and issuing policies or guidelines which may bring a significant impact to the regulatory functions of the other party, of the specific examples of such policies or guidelines; and
- (5) whether, apart from concluding the MoU, SFC and FRC have other specific plans to enhance the quality of financial reporting by listed companies and the quality of audit work conducted by auditors of listed companies, and to regularly conduct performance reviews on the relevant work; if so, of the details?

Question 3  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Self-regulation of the legal profession

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan to ask:

At the end of last year, the Council of the Law Society of Hong Kong (“Law Society”) intervened in the operation of a law firm (“the firm”) pursuant to the relevant legislation. The firm’s practice forthwith ceased, and all the money of the firm has been held by the Law Society on trust. Given that the firm, prior to its cessation of practice, was one of the major law firms in Hong Kong engaging in cases of sale and purchase of second-hand property units, more than 150 clients of the firm were affected by the incident (“affected clients”), and at least \$375 million of clients’ money was frozen. Some affected clients have pointed out that they have suffered huge losses as the money they deposited in the firm has been frozen, and that the incident has also illustrated that the self-regulatory regime of the legal profession cannot adequately protect the interests of clients of law firms. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of law firms the operation of which was intervened by the Law Society in the past 10 years, and set out in a table for each case (i) the date of intervention, (ii) the name of the law firm, (iii) the number of clients affected, (iv) the total amount of clients’ money frozen, and (v) the duration of the intervention;
- (2) of the number of enquiries or requests for assistance, received by the Department of Justice (“DoJ”) in the past 10 years, from the clients of the law firms which had been intervened, and the follow-up actions taken by DoJ;
- (3) whether DoJ regularly reviewed in the past 10 years if the legislation relating to the self-regulation of the legal profession could dovetail with the current situation, thereby being able to effectively protect the interests of members of the public and clients of law firms; if DoJ did, of the dates and outcome of such reviews; if not, the reasons for that, and whether DoJ will conduct a review immediately; and
- (4) given that in a judgment handed down on 19 February this year on an application for leave to apply for judicial review in relation to the aforesaid incident, the Court of First Instance of the High Court pointed out that the parties concerned could consider and implement tailor-made, perhaps innovative, solutions seeking to alleviate the

harshness of the impact felt by clients of the firm (such as making an early and significant interim payout), and that the Court would remain ready to provide such assistance and directions as might be sought, whether DoJ will follow up on this advice, and discuss with the Law Society solutions for helping the large number of affected clients; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 4  
(For written reply)

Planning and development of New Development Areas

Hon Abraham SHEK to ask:

A planning study commissioned in the late 1990s identified Kwu Tung North (“KTN”) and Fanling North (“FLN”) as suitable New Development Areas (“NDAs”). In July 2013, the Government adopted an Enhanced Conventional New Town Approach for these two NDAs, under which private land owners may apply for lease modification (including in-situ land exchange) for private developments. Site formation and engineering infrastructure works for the First Phase development of the two NDAs did not commence until September 2019. As the first resident intake for the two NDAs will not take place until the 2025-2026 financial year, i.e. about three decades after the inception of the development intention, some members of the public have criticized the unduly long planning and development process of NDAs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the latest progress of the Remaining Phase of site formation and engineering infrastructure works at KTN and FLN NDAs;
- (2) of the respective numbers of applications for lease modification (including land exchange) in respect of private lots falling within the sites under the Remaining Phase of the two NDAs development (i) received by the Lands Department (“LandsD”), (ii) being processed by LandsD, and (iii) concluded with the applicant’s acceptance of a binding basic terms offer (including premium);
- (3) whether it will consider taking measures to shorten the whole planning and development process of an NDA, so as to expedite the increase in housing supply;
- (4) whether, in order to expedite implementation of residential developments in NDAs, the Government will consider, by way of lease modifications for private lots in NDAs, entrusting the developers of such lots to build and then hand over to the Government those infrastructure works (e.g. building linking roads) in areas adjacent to the lots; and
- (5) whether it will review and relax the General Criteria for Consideration of Lease Modification (including in-situ Land Exchange) Applications in the two NDAs, as set out in LandsD’s Practice Note Issue No. 1/2014, with a view to attracting more lease modification applications and shortening the processing time for such applications, thereby expediting the increase in housing supply?

Question 5  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Cross-boundary cultural exchange activities

Hon MA Fung-kwok to ask:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) has been provided with a funding of \$140 million in the five years starting from the 2018-2019 financial year to support local arts groups and artists to conduct cultural exchanges in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”). Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Office of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the State Council, together with the People’s Government of Guangdong Province, jointly published on 24 December 2020 the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, setting out guiding directions for the overall cultural and tourism development of the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the expenditure incurred by LCSD in the past three financial years for supporting local arts groups and artists for conducting cultural exchange activities in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as the current balance of the funding;
- (2) of the respective numbers of local arts groups and artists funded by public money in the past three financial years for conducting cultural exchange activities in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area; the details of such cultural exchange activities; whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the Government’s efforts in promoting such type of cultural exchange activities; if so, of the details;
- (3) whether it will discuss with the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (“HKADC”) the relaxation of the criteria for grants under HKADC’s Arts Development Fund (Cultural Exchange Project) (e.g. expanding the scope of the expenditure items which are eligible for grants, increasing the ratio of the amount of the grant to the budgeted total expenditure of an activity) to encourage local arts groups and artists to conduct outbound cultural exchange activities (particularly to the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (4) of the measures in place to tackle the impediments posed by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic so as to assist local arts groups and artists in promoting the fruits of their efforts in culture and arts in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area; the preparation made by the Government to facilitate a swift commencement of cultural exchange activities in the Greater Bay Area upon the resumption of normal traveller clearance between the Mainland and Hong Kong;
- (5) of the measures in place to complement the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, with a view to providing further support for local arts groups and artists to take part in the promotion of cultural development in the Greater Bay Area; and
- (6) whether the approach of setting up a Cultural Exchange Division in the Hong Kong Office in Beijing will be extended to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong, with a view to strengthening the liaison work between the SAR Government and the relevant departments and bodies in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, thereby facilitating cultural exchange activities; if so, of the details, if not, the reasons for that?

Question 6  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Non-locally trained medical graduates and medical practitioners

Hon Tommy CHEUNG to ask:

A non-locally trained medical practitioner is required to pass the Licensing Examination administered by the Medical Council of Hong Kong (“MCHK”) and work as an intern and undergo a period of assessment of normally 12 months in an approved hospital before he/she may apply to be a registered medical practitioner. The Licentiate Committee of MCHK is responsible for conducting the Licensing Examination, while the Internship Sub-committee under the Licentiate Committee makes internship arrangements in collaboration with the Central Internship Committee of the Hospital Authority (“HA”) as well as supervises and assesses the performance of interns. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that some Hong Kong people who studied medicine in overseas places and graduated with flying colours are not eligible for taking the Licensing Examination as they have not completed medical training in such places, whether the Government will amend the Medical Registration Ordinance (Cap. 161) to permit non-locally trained medical graduates who have not completed medical training to take the Licensing Examination; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as the Singapore authorities have stipulated that fresh graduates of overseas medical schools recognized by them may apply for provisional registration in Singapore after one year of internship in the public hospitals in Singapore, whether the Government will follow such practice and require that such graduates must serve in the public hospitals for a specified period of time, so as to increase the manpower of medical practitioners in the public hospitals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether the channels for locally trained and non-locally trained medical graduates to apply for internships are the same; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (4) of the terms of reference and membership list of HA’s Central Internship Committee;
- (5) of the mechanism and criteria for selecting medical graduates to work as interns, and whether locally and non-locally trained medical graduates are treated equally; if not, of the reasons for that;

- (6) of the respective numbers of internship places offered to locally and non-locally trained medical graduates by (i) HA, (ii) the Department of Health and (iii) the faculties of medicine of the two universities in each of the past five years; the criteria for setting the quotas of such places;
- (7) of the mechanism for assessing the performance of interns; and
- (8) of the medium and long term measures in place to further facilitate non-locally trained medical graduates and medical practitioners to come to Hong Kong to practise?

Question 7  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Small House Policy

Hon Kenneth LAU to ask:

According to the Small House Policy (“the Policy”), a New Territories male indigenous villager over 18 years old is entitled to one concessionary grant during his lifetime to build one small house. However, following a judgment handed down by the Court of First Instance of the High Court on 8 April 2019 on a judicial review case of the Policy, the Government suspended the receipt and processing of applications for building small houses on government land by way of Private Treaty Grant (“PTG”) and Land Exchange. In a judgment handed down on 13 January 2021 on the appeals against the ruling of the said case, the Court of Appeal ruled that the arrangements of Free Building Licence, PTG and Land Exchange under the Policy are lawful traditional rights and interests of the indigenous villagers of the New Territories within the meaning of Article 40 of the Basic Law, and are lawful and constitutional. The Government subsequently resumed on 22 February 2021 the receipt and processing of the aforesaid applications. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications for building small houses which were (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) rejected and (iv) being processed by the Government in each of the past 10 years, and set out in the table below a breakdown by the aforesaid three ways of small house grant;

Year	Free Building Licence				PTG				Land Exchange			
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)

- (2) of a breakdown of the number of rejected applications mentioned in (1) by reason; if such figures are unavailable, whether it will compile such statistics;
- (3) of the respective numbers of applications for building small houses awaiting to be processed which were submitted to the Government (i) within the period from 8 April 2019 to 21 February 2021 and (ii) on or after 22 February 2021, with a breakdown by the aforesaid three ways of small house grant; and
- (4) of the measures in place to expedite the vetting and approval of applications for building small houses?

Question 8  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Development of an Islamic financial market

Hon Mrs Regina IP to ask:

In 2007, the then Chief Executive mentioned for the first time in his Policy Address the introduction of Islamic finance and the development of an Islamic bond (“sukuk”) market in Hong Kong. To this end, the Government amended the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap 112) and Stamp Duty Ordinance (Cap 117) to provide, for the issuance of sukuks, a tax structure comparable to that for conventional bonds. Subsequently, the Government issued three tranches of USD-denominated sukuks in September 2014, June 2015 and February 2017 respectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the development of the Islamic financial market in Hong Kong since the issuance of the third tranche of USD-denominated sukuks; Hong Kong’s market share in global Islamic financial activities and the annual changes in such market share, in each of the past three years;
- (2) of the challenges, according to the Government’s latest evaluation, that it needs to face in developing an Islamic financial market in Hong Kong; Hong Kong’s competitive edges, as compared with the neighbouring regions (e.g. Singapore), in developing an Islamic financial market;
- (3) of the details of the Government’s latest plans to strengthen market infrastructure, nurture talents, encourage product development and foster cooperation with other Islamic financial markets, for the purpose of developing an Islamic financial market in Hong Kong; and
- (4) whether the Government has formulated quantitative performance indicators for the coming 5, 10 and 15 years with regard to its efforts to develop an Islamic financial market in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 9  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund

Hon WONG Kwok-kin to ask:

With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic having dealt a heavy blow to Hong Kong's economy, and the Government no longer providing employers with wage subsidies through the Employment Support Scheme since December last year, the unemployment rate has continued to rise in recent months. Some representatives of trade unions have anticipated that there will be a sharp increase in the number of applications for ex gratia payments made to the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund ("the Fund") by those employees who have been owed (i) wages, (ii) pay for untaken annual leave and statutory holidays, (iii) wages in lieu of notice and (iv) severance payments. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective monthly numbers of applications for ex gratia payments (i) received, (ii) being processed and (iii) approved, as well as the balance of the Fund at the end of each month, in the past three years;
- (2) of (i) the average and (ii) the longest durations between the time when employees submitted applications for ex gratia payments to the Labour Department ("LD") and the time when payments were disbursed to them, in each of the past three years; whether the special work arrangements implemented by the Government last year due to the epidemic lengthened the time needed for processing such applications;
- (3) in respect of the applications for each of the aforesaid four types of ex gratia payments, of the average amount of payment applied for in such applications, and the number of such applications in which the amount of payment applied for was the relevant ceiling, in each of the past three years;
- (4) whether it will consider publishing on LD's website, on a monthly or quarterly basis, the updated monthly information on the Fund (including the aforesaid statistics);
- (5) given that the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund Board is conducting a review on the scope of protection of the Fund, of the progress and outcome of the review; as the ceilings for the aforesaid four types of ex gratia payments have not been adjusted for years, whether the Government will propose to the Board that the ceilings

be raised, e.g. raising the ceiling for ex gratia payment for wages in arrears from the existing \$36,000 to \$76,000, which is equivalent to four months' wages for an employee with the median monthly employment earning (i.e. \$19,000) in the second quarter of last year; and

- (6) whether LD will adopt measures to expedite the processing of applications for ex gratia payments, or extend the time limit for making such applications?

Question 10  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Pilot scheme for fixed-rate mortgages

Hon Jimmy NG to ask:

In delivering the 2020-2021 Budget, the Financial Secretary announced that the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (“HKMC”) would launch a pilot scheme for fixed-rate mortgages (“pilot scheme”) to provide potential homebuyers with fixed-rate mortgage options for periods of 10, 15 and 20 years, with the loan amount being capped at \$10 million. At the end of last year, HKMC extended the application period of the pilot scheme to 30 October this year, and lowered the interest rates per annum for mortgages for the aforesaid loan periods to 1.99%, 2.09% and 2.19% respectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications received and approved by HKMC since the pilot scheme was launched, with a breakdown by loan period; the average loan amount of each approved application in respect of each loan period;
- (2) whether it will request HKMC to (i) offer fixed-rate mortgage schemes with loan periods of 25 and 30 years respectively, (ii) raise the ceiling of the loan amount, and (iii) lower the interest rates per annum further; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) as the website of HKMC shows that only nine banks are participating in the pilot scheme at present, whether the Government will persuade more banks to participate in the pilot scheme; if so, of the details;
- (4) as there are comments that the pilot scheme has only received a lukewarm response from homebuyers, of the Government’s measures to increase the attractiveness of the pilot scheme; and
- (5) whether it will request HKMC to further extend the application period of the pilot scheme or regularize the scheme; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 11  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Services of the accident and emergency departments of public hospitals

Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan to ask:

It has been reported that in October last year, a male patient who had been suffering from anti-phospholipid syndrome and taking anticoagulant Warfarin for a long period attended the accident and emergency (“A&E”) department of a public hospital for treatment and was triaged as a patient of the “semi-urgent” category. After waiting for about two and a half hours for diagnosis and treatment at the A&E department, he was found by his family members to have stopped breathing. He was immediately given emergency treatment by healthcare personnel, but he eventually died from severe intracranial haemorrhage. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council if it knows:

- (1) the overall average time for which patients waited for diagnoses and treatments at the A&E departments of public hospitals, and set out the relevant average waiting time by hospital and triage category, in each of the past two financial years;
- (2) whether the Hospital Authority (“HA”) will step up the training for those nurses responsible for triaging patients at A&E departments, so as to assist them in making triage decisions that are more accurate; if HA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether HA will stipulate specifically in the guidelines for the triage system those clinical presentations requiring attention when triaging patients who are taking Warfarin, so as to avoid underestimation of their conditions; if HA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether HA will, through (i) deploying nurses to conduct regular reviews and (ii) connecting patients to monitoring devices, monitor if the conditions of those “urgent” and “semi-urgent” patients waiting for diagnoses and treatments have worsened; if HA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) the current establishment of healthcare personnel at each A&E department of public hospitals; whether HA has assessed if such manpower is sufficient to ensure that all patients at A&E departments can receive timely diagnoses and treatments?

Question 12  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Projects receiving the funding support of  
the Innovation and Technology Fund

Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan to ask:

The Hong Kong Research Institute of Textile and Apparel announced in December last year that it had launched with a non-profit-making organization, H&M Foundation, a five-year collaboration plan, which involved a study on superabsorbent polymer, and the relevant testing would be conducted by a garment manufacturer in India. The collaboration plan has received the funding support of the Innovation and Technology Fund (“ITF”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the details of the aforesaid study, and the amount of public funding involved;
- (2) whether it has assessed the benefits of the study in terms of promoting the sustainable development of Hong Kong industries (especially the textile and fashion industries);
- (3) whether the Government, when vetting and approving the funding application concerned, required that the testing relating to the study be conducted by local enterprises or enterprises in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”), so as to promote re-industrialization in Hong Kong and seize the opportunities brought by the development of the Greater Bay Area; and
- (4) whether it will stipulate that all research and development work for projects receiving the funding support of ITF must be conducted locally or in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area?

Question 13  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Proper carriage of loads on vehicles

Hon Wilson OR to ask:

Under regulation 57 of the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations (Cap. 374G), the driver of a motor vehicle on a road shall ensure that any load is properly secured to and contained on or inside the vehicle. However, it has been reported that from time to time, there have been instances in which loose loads (e.g. sand, ballast and miscellaneous objects) not properly covered with a cover fell from dump trucks and grab-mounted trucks onto roads, thus endangering the safety of other road users. In addition, some persons-in-charge of works, in order to save cost, have used dump trucks instead of tanker trucks of an enclosed design for carrying mud, resulting in mud spilling onto roads. There are also instances of foul water seeping from refuse collection vehicles while travelling, causing pollution to the environment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of complaints or reports about the presence of miscellaneous objects on roads received by the Government in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by District Council district;
- (2) of the Government's current procedure for clearing miscellaneous objects on roads, and the average expense of each operation;
- (3) of the number of prosecutions instituted by the Government in each of the past three years against drivers by invoking the aforesaid provision;
- (4) of the publicity efforts made by the Government in the past three years on promoting the practice of proper carriage of loads to members of the transport sector and other stakeholders, so as to reduce instances of miscellaneous objects and contaminants falling from vehicles onto roads; and
- (5) whether it will step up law enforcement actions against the aforesaid unlawful acts and raise the relevant penalties, so as to enhance road safety?

Question 14  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Development of data centres

Hon Frankie YICK to ask:

In 2012, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (“the Corporation”), which is wholly owned by the Government, introduced concessionary measures to facilitate the development of data centres. Such measures include the granting of dedicated sites in the Industrial Estates (“IEs”) under the Corporation at premiums below the market value for setting up data centres. Some members of the industry have pointed out that as the development of data centre services has become increasingly matured in recent years, this concessionary measure should be cancelled. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of data centres in Hong Kong and the annual growth rate of such number, in each of the past five years; of (i) the number of sites granted by the Lands Department (“LandsD”) for constructing data centres and the average land premiums per square foot, as well as (ii) the number of temporary waivers granted by LandsD for converting industrial buildings into data centres and the total amount of waiver fees exempted, in the past five years;
- (2) whether it has assessed if the concessionary measure of granting dedicated sites in IEs has resulted in an unfair competition in the data centre industry; if it has assessed, of the details and whether it can provide this Council with the assessment report; how the Government ensures the healthy and sustainable development of the industry;
- (3) of the considerations and criteria based on which the Corporation vets and approves applications for dedicated sites for data centres, and whether details of each approved application will be made public in order to enhance transparency; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) as the current IE policy has stipulated that most enterprises set up in IEs are only allowed to lease the specialized multi-storey industrial buildings built by the Corporation and only under exceptional circumstances will sites be granted to single users to build their own factories, what the relevant “exceptional circumstances” are;

- (5) as it has been reported that some grantees, instead of using the dedicated sites for operating their own data centres, have leased the premises concerned to various data centre operators to earn rents at the market value, whether the Corporation has devised new measures to eradicate such an act of profiteering by misusing public resources; and
- (6) given that early last year, the Government commenced a review on data centre development in Hong Kong and the relevant concessionary measures, of the progress and preliminary conclusion of the review; when the review outcome will be published?

Question 15  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Installation of village lights in the rural areas

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

Some residents in the rural areas of Yuen Long have relayed that a road section near their residences, which is about 1 kilometre long and used by both pedestrians and vehicles, was opened five years ago, but has not yet been installed with village lights so far. As the road section is extremely dark at night, accidents of vehicles bumping into objects on the roadsides have occurred from time to time, the rescue work of ambulances has been affected, and residents walking on the road section have their hearts in their mouths as they are worried about stepping on snakes. They have applied for the installation of village lights, but the District Office in the district has advised that their application needs to wait for at least six years before it will be processed. Regarding the installation of village lights, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (i) the number of applications for the installation of village lights received, (ii) the number of applications in respect of which the installation works of village lights had yet to be completed, (iii) the quota on village lights to be installed, and (iv) the number of village lights installed and the number of applications involved, in each of the past four years, with a breakdown by District Council district;
- (2) of the total number of unlit road sections of 500 metres or above in length which were involved in the applications for the installation of village lights currently on the waiting list;
- (3) whether it will, when planning new rural roads, ensure that the installation of village lights will be completed in tandem with the construction of roads; if not, of the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will expedite the installation of village lights, so as to clear the backlog of applications expeditiously; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 16  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Vaccination for children

Dr Hon Pierre CHAN to ask:

Under the Hong Kong Childhood Immunization Programme (“HKCIP”), children receive various vaccines in the following three stages: (i) newly born (administered by hospitals), (ii) one to 18 months from birth (administered by the Maternal and Child Health Centres (“MCHCs”) under the Department of Health (“DH”)), and (iii) Primary One to Primary Six (administered by the School Immunization Teams under the Centre for Health Protection of DH). Moreover, children aged between six months and below 12 years are eligible for free and subsidized seasonal influenza vaccination (“SIV”) under the Government Vaccination Programme (“GVP”) and Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (“VSS”) respectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following details of HKCIP last year: the respective numbers of doses of vaccines administered to (i) newborn babies by public/private hospitals, (ii) pre-school children by MCHCs, and (iii) primary school students by DH’s School Immunization Teams at schools, with a tabulated breakdown by the infectious disease involved; how such figures compare with the relevant figures of the preceding two years;
- (2) of the respective vaccination coverage rates among (i) pre-school children and (ii) primary school students last year; how such figures compare with the relevant figures of the preceding two years;
- (3) of the numbers of doses of vaccines (i) procured for HKCIP, (ii) discarded due to expiry or damage, and (iii) kept in stock, last year by DH and the Hospital Authority respectively; how such figures compare with the relevant figures of the preceding two years;
- (4) of the amount of expenditure incurred by the Government for procuring vaccines under HKCIP in each of the past three years;
- (5) of the respective numbers of primary schools and primary school students participating in the outreach SIV activities at schools in each of the past two years; how such figures compare with the relevant figures of the preceding year; the respective numbers of children for whom free SIV was administered under GVP, VSS and the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme in each of the past three years; and

- (6) whether it knows the up-to-date number of children who have not turned up for their scheduled appointments to receive various vaccines since the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Hong Kong early last year; whether DH has taken follow-up actions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 17  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Hon Holden CHOW to ask:

There have been, from time to time, serious adverse events in which members of the public felt unwell or even died after receiving the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) vaccines since the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme commenced on 26 February this year. There are views that although the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation has, after making assessment, considered that there was no causal relationship between such events and the administration of the vaccines, such events have undoubtedly discouraged some members of the public from getting vaccinated. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the up-to-date number of reports on serious adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination received and, among such reports, the respective numbers on (i) deaths and (ii) other cases; whether it knows the causes for the illness or deaths of the persons concerned; if it knows, set out such information in a table;
- (2) of the measures put in place to boost public confidence in the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines; whether such measures include disseminating information on the safety of the vaccines through the private doctors and clinics participating in the vaccination programme, so as to allay public concerns; and
- (3) whether it has discussed with the Mainland authorities allowing Hong Kong residents who hold COVID-19 electronic vaccination records downloaded via the “iAM Smart” mobile application to enter the Mainland without being subject to quarantine; if so, of the progress of such discussion; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

MTR Kwun Tong Line and Tseung Kwan O Line

Hon LUK Chung-hung to ask:

Some members of the public have relayed that the loadings of MTR Kwun Tong Line (“KTL”) and Tseung Kwan O Line (“TKOL”) during morning and evening peak hours have reached saturation. Also, with a number of developments along KTL being completed one after another, the train compartments of KTL as well as the station concourse and train platforms of Kwun Tong (“KT”) Station during peak hours are increasingly crowded. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows, in respect of the critical links of (a) KTL and (b) TKOL, the average hourly carrying capacities and actual patronages, as well as the loadings calculated respectively on the bases of six persons and four persons (standing) per square metre, during morning and evening peak hours (i) in each of the past four years and (ii) from January to March this year;
- (2) whether it knows the respective hourly passenger flows during morning and evening peak hours at the (a) entrances/exits and (b) train platforms of KT Station (i) in each of the past four years and (ii) from January to March this year;
- (3) whether it has assessed if, in the coming five years, the carrying capacity of KTL can cope with the transport needs arising from the increased population along the railway line; if it has, of the assessment outcome; if not, whether it will conduct such an assessment immediately and publish the relevant data;
- (4) given that the Government has proposed to construct an elevated landscaped deck of about 120 metres in length to link up KT Station with adjacent new developments, of the projected (i) increase in passenger flows that the station concourse and train platforms of KT Station can accommodate as compared with the current levels, and (ii) extent to which the crowdedness of the train platforms of the Station will be alleviated as compared with the current situation, upon the completion and commissioning of the deck; whether the Government will consider extending the existing train platform of KT Station; and

- (5) whether it knows the anticipated increase in the train frequencies and carrying capacities of KTL and TKOL upon the service commencement of the new signalling systems of the two railway lines in 2026-2027; the measures put in place by the MTR Corporation Limited to increase the carrying capacity of KTL before the service commencement of the new signalling system?

Question 19  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Alternative payment mechanism for property transactions

Hon CHAN Chun-ying to ask:

At the end of last year, the Council of the Law Society of Hong Kong (“Law Society”) suspected after investigation that a former employee of a law firm (“the firm”), which took up a significant number of property sale and purchase cases, had dishonestly misappropriated the money of the clients of the firm, and the Law Society intervened in the operation of the firm pursuant to the relevant legislation. The firm’s practice forthwith ceased, and all the money of the firm has been held by the Law Society on trust. It has been reported that the firm’s clients suffered huge losses because huge sums of money they deposited with the firm for property transactions (including deposit money and mortgage money from banks) were frozen. In order to prevent the occurrence of similar incidents, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (“HKMA”), in collaboration with the banking industry, is exploring a payment mechanism for property transactions that does not involve law firms (“alternative payment mechanism”), with an option under consideration being that the purchaser’s bank transfers the major sums of payments involved in a property transaction directly into the vendor’s bank account. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) if it knows the total amount of money frozen in the past 10 years due to the Law Society’s intervention which had been deposited with law firms by their clients for property transactions, as well as the amount and percentage of such money which has now been unfrozen and returned to the clients concerned;
- (2) whether HKMA has explored ways to enable the alternative payment mechanism to better ensure, as compared with the existing mechanism, the security of property transactions (e.g. ensuring that the purchaser’s solicitor has verified the title prior to the transfer of money by banks); and
- (3) whether HKMA has commenced a consultation exercise with the stakeholders on the alternative payment mechanism; if so, the initial views received; if not, when the consultation exercise will commence?

Question 20  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Influenza vaccination services

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

Under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) (“the free scheme”), a Public-Private-Partnership (“PPP”) Outreach Team or an Outreach Team of the Department of Health (“DH”) will go to those primary schools, as well as kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and child care centres (collectively referred to as “KGs/CCCs”) participating in the scheme to administer influenza vaccines to schoolchildren free of charge. The participating primary schools are provided with the vaccines by DH, but the vaccines for the participating KGs/CCCs need to be arranged by the participating doctors themselves. Schools not participating in the free scheme may participate in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme School Outreach (Extra Charge Allowed) (“the charge-allowable scheme”) so as to arrange school outreach vaccination services for their students, and the Government will provide a subsidy of \$240 per dose of vaccine. On the other hand, the findings of a survey conducted at the end of last year have shown that 20% of the early childhood educators surveyed indicated that last year, the KGs/CCCs in which they taught had participated in the free scheme, but had been unable to arrange for their schoolchildren to receive influenza vaccination due to the doctors being unable to procure the vaccines or the impact of class suspension. Moreover, 85% of the respondents considered that the non-provision of vaccines by DH to KGs/CCCs had increased the workload of the teaching staff in those schools. Regarding influenza vaccination services, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following information in each of the past two school years:
  - (i) the number of schools participating in the free scheme,
  - (ii) the number of schools participating in the charge-allowable scheme,
  - (iii) among the schools mentioned in (i), the respective numbers of those that opted for the matching of Outreach Teams by DH, that were successfully matched with Outreach Teams by DH, and selected doctors themselves,
  - (iv) among the schools mentioned in (i) and (ii), the number of those that eventually did not arrange for their students to receive vaccination, and

(v) the number of schoolchildren who received influenza vaccination under the two schemes;

of a breakdown of such figures by school type (i.e. primary school and KG/CCC);

- (2) of the number of doses of influenza vaccines procured by the Government for the various vaccination programmes and the values of the relevant contracts in each of the past two school years; among such vaccines, the number of doses used in the free scheme;
- (3) as the Government indicated in October last year that it would additionally supply in phases 100 000 doses of influenza vaccines to PPP Outreach Teams and doctors participating in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme in need, of the number of doses of such vaccines supplied to those doctors providing outreach vaccination services to schoolchildren in KGs/CCCs, with a breakdown by vaccine type (i.e. inactivated vaccine and live attenuated nasal vaccine); and
- (4) as some principals of KGs/CCCs have relayed to me that since the Government does not provide influenza vaccines to KGs/CCCs participating in the free scheme, such schools need to shoulder a substantial amount of additional administrative work (e.g. assisting the doctors in ordering vaccines, and responding to parents' enquiries about the safety of the vaccines after the occurrence of cases in South Korea and Taiwan in which some residents died soon after receiving influenza vaccination), of the support provided in this respect to the KGs/CCCs by DH and the Education Bureau; whether the Government will consider afresh providing vaccines to those KGs/CCCs participating in the free scheme from the 2021-2022 school year onwards; if so, whether the Government intends to provide inactivated vaccines or live attenuated nasal vaccines; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 21  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Housing supply

Hon KWOK Wai-keung to ask:

Regarding housing supply, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of public rental housing (“PRH”) units completed in each of the past five years and, among them, the number of those which were subsequently converted into subsidized sale housing units, with a breakdown of the relevant numbers and percentages by the type of such units (i.e. Type A (about 14 square metres), Type B (about 21 square metres), Type C (about 31 square metres) and Type D (about 35 square metres));
- (2) of the respective numbers of housing units expected to be completed in the following sites in 2025-2026 financial year and each of the subsequent four years: (i) the sites provided under the Tung Chung New Town Extension, (ii) the agricultural land and brownfield sites in Kwu Tung North/Fanling North New Development Area, (iii) the agricultural land and brownfield sites in Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area, (iv) the relevant site of the Fanling Golf Course, (v) the sites of three urban squatter areas located at Cha Kwo Ling, Ngau Chi Wan and Chuk Yuen United Village respectively, (vi) the sites of three factory estates of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, and (vii) the eight brownfield clusters with housing development potential (set out in Table 1);

Table 1

Sites	Financial year				
	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
(i)					
...					
(vii)					

- (3) among the some 20 000 housing units that may be provided by the topside development of the MTR Siu Ho Wan Depot site, of the respective (i) numbers and (ii) percentages of those which will be (a) private housing units, (b) subsidized sale housing units (excluding those under the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (“GSH”)), (c) GSH units and (d) PRH units, with a breakdown by the anticipated year of completion (set out in Table 2); and

Table 2

Type of units	(i)	(ii)
(a)		
...		
(d)		

- (4) as the Government indicated last month that it was close to completing the work on reviewing those private lands which had been zoned for high-density housing development but without concrete development plans, when the review results are expected to be announced?

Question 22  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Developing public housing on brownfield sites

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

In its Study on Existing Profile and Operations of Brownfield Sites in the New Territories published in November 2019, the Planning Department (“PlanD”) indicated that 450 hectares of scattered brownfield sites might have relatively higher possible development potential in view of their proximity to existing new towns and major highways as well as their relatively large size. PlanD completed early last year the review of about 160 hectares of such brownfield sites which were closer to the existing infrastructure, and shortlisted eight brownfield clusters suitable for public housing development. Relevant engineering feasibility studies have commenced. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following details of the various brownfield clusters:
  - (i) the areas and distribution of the various sites, broken down by the uses thereof,
  - (ii) the number of lots occupied by existing operators, and their lot numbers and site areas, and
  - (iii) the current numbers of residential units and residents;
- (2) of the following details expected of the various brownfield clusters upon completion of public housing development:
  - (i) the areas and distribution of the various sites, broken down by the uses thereof (including housing, community facilities and roads),
  - (ii) the number of residential units and the plot ratios of the sites concerned, and
  - (iii) the carrying capacity of nearby transport systems, including the traffic capacities of trunk roads and public transport interchanges; and
- (3) whether it has drawn up a timetable for carrying out the following work for the various brownfield clusters:
  - (i) the various processes involved in turning “non-spade-ready” sites into “spade-ready” sites (including engineering feasibility studies, detailed design, rezoning, land resumption, clearance, land decontamination and site formation works, and handover of the sites to the Housing Department), and

- (ii) expounding the compensation and rehousing arrangements to the affected residents and operators?