

Legislative Council

Agenda

Wednesday 15 September 2021 at 11:00 am

I. Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

5 items of subsidiary legislation and 3 other papers to be laid on the Table of the Council set out in Appendix 1

II. Questions

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

Questions for oral replies to be asked by

1. Hon Starry LEE
(Ensuring fair and smooth conduct of the Legislative Council General Election)
2. Hon CHAN Hak-kan
(Electronic consumption vouchers)
3. Hon Mrs Regina IP
(Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask on her behalf)
(Burden on public finance)
4. Hon Wilson OR
(Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs site)
5. Hon Paul TSE
(Online acts of inciting and calling on attacks of commercial organizations)
6. Hon Elizabeth QUAT
(Prevention of school and cyber bullying)

Public officers to reply

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Under Secretary for Development

Secretary for Development
Under Secretary for Food and Health

Secretary for Security
Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Secretary for Education
Secretary for Security

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

III. Government Bills

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

1. Legislative Council (Disciplinary Sanctions and Remote Sitting) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2021 : Chief Secretary for Administration
2. Supplementary Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill : Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
3. Dangerous Goods (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2021 : Secretary for Security

IV. Members' Motions

1. Motion on “Further enhancing Hong Kong’s status as an offshore Renminbi centre”

Mover : Hon Christopher CHEUNG

Wording of the motion : **Appendix 3**

Amendment mover : Hon CHAN Chun-ying
(Amendment set out in LC Paper No. CB(3) 964/20-21 issued on 9 September 2021)

Public officers to attend : Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

2. Motion on “Promoting education on the history of War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression”

Mover : Hon Kenneth LAU

Wording of the motion : **Appendix 4**

2 amendment movers : Hon LUK Chung-hung and Hon POON Siu-ping
(Amendments set out in LC Paper No. CB(3) 967/20-21 issued on 10 September 2021)

Public officers to attend : Secretary for Home Affairs
Under Secretary for Education
Under Secretary for Home Affairs

Clerk to the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 15 September 2021

Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

Subsidiary legislation	Legal Notice No.
1. <u>Building (Administration) (Amendment) Regulation 2021</u>	222 of 2021
2. <u>Building (Minor Works) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2021</u>	223 of 2021
3. <u>Building (Inspection and Repair) (Amendment) Regulation 2021</u>	224 of 2021
4. <u>Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 3) (No. 2) Order 2021</u>	225 of 2021
5. <u>Electronic Transactions (Exclusion) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2021</u>	226 of 2021
 Other papers	
6. <u>Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the year ended 31 March 2021</u> (to be presented by President of the Legislative Council)	
7. <u>Accounts of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the year ended 31 March 2021</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury)	
8. <u>Report No. 28/20-21 of the House Committee on Consideration of Subsidiary Legislation and Other Instruments</u> (to be presented by Hon Starry LEE, Chairman of the House Committee)	

22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 15 September 2021

	Subject matters	Public officers to reply
Questions for oral replies		
1	Hon Starry LEE <u>Ensuring fair and smooth conduct of the Legislative Council General Election</u>	Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
2	Hon CHAN Hak-kan <u>Electronic consumption vouchers</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
3	Hon Mrs Regina IP (Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask on her behalf) <u>Burden on public finance</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury Under Secretary for Development
4	Hon Wilson OR <u>Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs site</u>	Secretary for Development Under Secretary for Food and Health
5	Hon Paul TSE <u>Online acts of inciting and calling on attacks of commercial organizations</u>	Secretary for Security Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
6	Hon Elizabeth QUAT <u>Prevention of school and cyber bullying</u>	Secretary for Education Secretary for Security
Questions for written replies		
7	Hon LEUNG Che-cheung <u>Nationality information of shareholders and directors of companies</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
8	Hon Jimmy NG <u>Promoting sports development</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
9	Hon YIU Si-wing <u>Reverse Vending Machine Pilot Scheme</u>	Secretary for the Environment
10	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan <u>Using Hong Kong drugs and medical devices in the Greater Bay Area</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
11	Hon Holden CHOW <u>Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
12	Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG <u>Vaccination against Coronavirus Disease 2019</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
13	Hon CHAN Han-pan <u>Supporting the public light bus trade</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
14	Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok <u>Vaccine-related issues</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
15	Hon Tony TSE <u>Handling civil servants with persistent sub-standard performance</u>	Secretary for the Civil Service
16	Hon CHAN Hak-kan <u>Payment of transport fares by scanning QR codes</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
17	Hon Starry LEE <u>Public transport services in Kowloon City district</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
18	Hon Elizabeth QUAT <u>Treating patients suffering from depression</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
19	Hon Mrs Regina IP <u>Non-emergency ambulance transfer service</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
20	Hon Wilson OR <u>Public light bus services</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
21	Hon Frankie YICK <u>Policy on public light buses</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
22	Hon CHAN Chun-ying <u>Deposit Protection Scheme</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question 1
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Ensuring fair and smooth conduct of
the Legislative Council General Election

Hon Starry LEE to ask:

The 2021 Legislative Council (“LegCo”) General Election will be held on 19 December this year. Some members of the public have pointed out that this Election has a significant meaning in that it is the first LegCo election to be held after the electoral system has been improved to implement the most fundamental principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. However, during the canvassing period for candidates and even on the polling day of the 2019 District Council (“DC”) Election, there were numerous illegal acts in society which involved the use of violence to obstruct individual candidates and their teams from conducting electioneering activities. In addition, a large quantity of extreme and misrepresented propaganda appeared on the Internet in an attempt to discredit individual candidates and the entire polling arrangement, advocate electors to take actions to obstruct other electors from voting as well as boycott that Election. In order to ensure the fair and smooth conduct of the LegCo General Election, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has any targeted plan to enable members of the public to correctly understand the most fundamental principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong” under the new electoral system; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) of the strategies and measures it has put in place to guard against the recurrence in this Election of illegal acts similar to those which occurred in the 2019 DC Election; the Government’s deployment for the election day to ensure that candidates can conduct electioneering activities safely and electors can go to the polling stations to cast their votes free from threat, so as to enable this Election to be conducted fairly and smoothly; and
- (3) given that the Government will introduce for the first time in the LegCo General Election measures to provide special queuing arrangement for voters in need and use the Electronic Poll Register system to assist in the issuance of ballot papers, of the Government’s plan to strengthen the training for polling staff, and whether measures are in place to prevent the Election from being affected by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, so as to ensure the smooth conduct of this election?

Question 2
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Electronic consumption vouchers

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

Quite a number of members of the public were not disbursed, as scheduled, the first batch of electronic consumption vouchers on the 1st of this month because of erroneous or missing information on the paper registration forms completed and submitted by them. For several consecutive days in early this month, a large number of such persons (many of whom were elderly people) flocked to the Consumption Voucher Scheme Secretariat to make enquiries or resubmit registrations, resulting in long queues. The Secretariat subsequently extended the deadline of the special arrangement for resubmission of registrations to the 15th of this month. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective up-to-date numbers of resubmitted registrations the processing of which has been completed and is underway;
- (2) whether, before the 1st of this month, the Government had become aware of the large number of paper registration forms with erroneous or missing information; if so, why the Government had not made good preparation for the follow-up work, including setting up offices at the government venues in various districts to divert visitor flows; and
- (3) whether it will comprehensively review the arrangements of the Scheme to avoid the recurrence of similar incidents?

Question 3
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Burden on public finance

Hon Mrs Regina IP to ask (Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask on her behalf):

In the coming decade, a number of major infrastructure projects will be implemented in Hong Kong. Among such projects, the “Lantau Tomorrow Vision” is the largest in scale, involving reclamation in the waters near Kau Yi Chau and Hei Ling Chau to the east of Lantau for the construction of artificial islands with a total area of up to 1 700 hectares at an estimated construction cost of \$624 billion. On the other hand, the Financial Secretary indicated earlier that the Government’s fiscal deficits for the last and the current financial years were projected to be \$257.6 billion and \$101.6 billion respectively, and fiscal deficits are also expected to be recorded in the coming four financial years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will consider setting up a special purpose vehicle by adopting a public-private partnership approach, so as to facilitate the raising of funds from the capital market and society for taking forward the various infrastructure projects, thereby alleviating the burden on public finance; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 4
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs site

Hon Wilson OR to ask:

The Government is currently implementing a plan of relocating Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to caverns, and has commenced a feasibility study on the future uses of the four-hectare site to be vacated. The Government indicated in 2018 that the site concerned was preliminarily planned to be used for housing and community facilities purposes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the timetable for and progress of the aforesaid feasibility study;
- (2) whether, according to the latest outcome of the feasibility study, it is feasible to provide housing on the site to be vacated; if so, of the details, including the number of public housing units that can be provided; and
- (3) as the Government indicated in 2019 that it had planned to reserve a certain area of land in the aforesaid site for redeveloping and expanding the Wong Tai Sin Hospital, of the area of land it currently plans to reserve, and whether the Hospital will, upon redevelopment and expansion, be provided with an accident and emergency (“A&E”) department, so as to resolve the problem of A&E patients of the Wong Tai Sin district having to seek medical consultation in other districts?

Question 5
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Online acts of inciting and calling on
attacks of commercial organizations

Hon Paul TSE to ask:

After the riots in 2019, the political opinions of those members of the public who are commonly known as “blue ribboners” and “yellow ribboners” have been sharply divided. From time to time, some netizens have, through online platforms, called on people to collectively vilify, slander, uglify and boycott those commercial organizations belonging to the rival camp (which include: the largest local mainstream television broadcaster, major fast food chains, retail outlets, China-capital private enterprises, state-owned enterprises and banks), thereby tarnishing their business reputation. The advertisers and artistes of the television broadcaster concerned have been doxxed, boycotted, bullied and even harassed. There have also been online remarks instigating depositors of China-capital banks to withdraw their deposits and place them in overseas banks, so as to impair the performance of the former. Some members of the public are concerned that the aforesaid phenomenon has seriously impeded the fair competition and normal operation of commercial organizations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the legislation targeting the following online acts: wilfully vilifying, slandering, uglifying and calling for group boycotts against commercial organizations in an attempt to affect the fair competition and normal operation of commercial organizations; which government departments are responsible for enforcing the relevant legislation; whether there has been any relevant conviction since 2019;
- (2) of the government departments to which commercial organizations that have been subjected to such acts may make complaints and seek assistance; how the Government will deal with such complaints and requests for assistance upon receipt of them; and
- (3) whether it has studied the negative impacts, since the eruption of the riots in 2019, of the aforesaid acts on commercial organizations (especially listed companies), market competition and the operation of the stock market, and if such acts have de facto helped fuel the development of a “yellow economic circle”, deepened animosity among members of the community, intensified Mainland-Hong Kong conflicts, as well as endangered national security; if so, of the

details; if not, whether it can immediately conduct such a study and formulate counter-measures?

Question 6
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Prevention of school and cyber bullying

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

The findings of a survey show that school bullying is a serious problem in Hong Kong. Nearly 30% of the responding students indicated that they had been bullied, and such a percentage was higher than the relevant percentages on the Mainland and in the Taiwan region. It has been reported that during the riots in 2019, with politics infiltrating schools, various kinds of bullying problems were even more severe. Moreover, during the epidemic, incidents of cyber bullying have increased concomitantly with the rising number of young people playing online games. On prevention of school and cyber bullying, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of requests for assistance, complaints and reports about school bullying received by the authorities since January 2019; whether they have studied the underlying causes for the occurrence of such cases and formulated corresponding plans;
- (2) as there are views that the “zero tolerance” policy adopted by the Education Bureau (“EDB”) in respect of school bullying is empty talk because EDB has not mandated schools to report bullying cases, conducted preventive inspections or drawn up clear penalty provisions, whether EDB will, by drawing reference from the practices on the Mainland and in the Taiwan region, strengthen the investigation, punishment and reporting mechanisms, as well as step up efforts in holding teachers and school authorities accountable; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that some overseas jurisdictions have made cyber bullying a criminal offence, whether the Government will enact the relevant legislation; if so, of the details; if not, what new measures are in place to address cyber bullying and prevent young people from becoming the victims of such cyber bullying which does not constitute a criminal offence?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Nationality information of shareholders and directors of companies

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

As the item of nationality is not included in the details of shareholders and directors of a company limited by shares currently required to be provided on the Incorporation Forms (Company Limited by Shares) and the Annual Returns completed and returned to the Companies Registry under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622), members of the public cannot get to know such information of a particular company when they inspect the Companies Register. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will amend Cap. 622 to include the nationalities of shareholders and directors in the details to be provided, as well as to allow public inspection of this item of information, so as to facilitate members of the public to understand more of the background and sources of funds of the company concerned; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Promoting sports development

Hon Jimmy NG to ask:

Hong Kong's athletes achieved brilliant results in the Tokyo Summer Olympic Games ("TOG") that concluded recently. In addition, the Government's acquisition of the Hong Kong broadcasting rights for TOG enabled all members of the public in Hong Kong to watch the relevant events free of charge, thereby rousing a craze for TOG and sports throughout the city. On the other hand, the Government announced last month measures to further promote sports development, which include expediting the implementation of the project for construction of a new building for the Hong Kong Sports Institute ("HKSI"). On promoting sports development, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the measures to be put in place in the coming three years to encourage the business sector to put in more resources to assist in promoting sports development in Hong Kong, and whether such measures will include the provision of relevant tax concessions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will undertake to acquire the broadcasting rights for those major sports events to be held in the coming three years in which athletes representing Hong Kong will take part, so as to sustain the craze for sports in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the major sports events to be held in Hong Kong in the coming year; the measures to be put in place in the coming three years to step up support for local sports organizations to bid for the hosting of more major international sports events in Hong Kong;
- (4) as it has been reported that the current number of accommodation places provided by HKSI for athletes is insufficient, and the living environment in such accommodation is crowded (e.g. two to three athletes sharing a room), of the measures put in place by the Government to alleviate such problems of insufficient accommodation places and crowded environment therein before the completion of the new building for HKSI;

- (5) whether, in the coming year, it will review the remuneration mechanism for full-time athletes, so as to ensure that those athletes whose performances have fallen short of the requirements for specified reasons such as injuries and illnesses may still receive their original remuneration for a longer period of time afterwards; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (6) as it has been reported that there are currently not enough physiotherapists and masseurs to support athletes in HKSI, of the measures put in place by the Government to increase support for athletes in this regard?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Reverse Vending Machine Pilot Scheme

Hon YIU Si-wing to ask:

The Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) rolled out a one-year Reverse Vending Machine Pilot Scheme (“the Pilot Scheme”) in the first quarter of this year to install 60 reverse vending machines (“RVMs”) at public places or government facilities and encourage, through the provision of an instant rebate, the public to return used plastic beverage containers (“PBCs”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether EPD has set targets on the quantities of PBCs to be recovered under the Pilot Scheme; if not, of the reasons for that; if so, the details, and whether the quantity of PBCs recovered so far has met the interim targets set originally;
- (2) whether EPD has laid down requirements on (i) the contractor’s delivery of those PBCs recovered by RVMs to recyclers, and (ii) the recycling arrangements for such PBCs, as well as monitored the entire process, so as to ensure that all PBCs recovered have actually been recycled; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether the Government will, based on the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme at this stage, expand the items to be recovered under the Scheme to include other recyclable containers such as aluminium cans and beverage cartons; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Using Hong Kong drugs and medical devices
in the Greater Bay Area

Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan to ask:

In November last year, the Central Government announced a measure of allowing designated Hong Kong-owned healthcare institutions in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) to use, subject to approval, (i) Hong Kong-registered drugs and (ii) medical devices procured and used by Hong Kong public hospitals, with urgent need clinically (“the Measure”). The Measure was first implemented at the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital (“HKU-SZH”) on a trial basis and the trial period ended on 31 July this year. After the trial work has achieved phased progress, the Mainland authorities will extend the relevant arrangement gradually to cover healthcare institutions in other cities of GBA that meet the requirements. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the effectiveness of the Measure implemented in the trial period;
- (2) whether it knows the timetable for the Mainland authorities to extend the relevant arrangement to cover healthcare institutions in other cities of GBA that meet the requirements, and whether they have plans to extend the Measure to cover (i) the first Hong Kong-owned private general hospital in Shenzhen (i.e. “Shenzhen New Frontier United Family Hospital”) soon to be commissioned, and (ii) the hospital which is being set up by The Chinese University of Hong Kong in Shenzhen and expected to be commissioned in 2026; if they do, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) given that under the existing arrangement, patients may make a request for a copy of their medical records in the Electronic Health Record Sharing System and give authorization for the records to be passed to HKU-SZH for medical consultation purposes (“medical record sharing arrangement”), but it has been reported that such medical records cover only part of the information on medical history, whether the authorities will relax the restrictions on the request for and use of such medical records (e.g. extending the coverage to include patients’ detailed surgical reports and images derived from radiological examinations such as nuclear magnetic resonance examinations), and extend the medical record sharing

arrangement to cover other high-quality Mainland hospitals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (4) as it has been reported that the Measure currently focuses on western medicines, whether the authorities will extend the relevant arrangement to cover proprietary Chinese medicines, with a view to promoting the development of Chinese medicine in GBA; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) whether it will consider allowing the Hospital Authority to use, subject to approval, (i) Mainland-registered drugs and (ii) medical devices procured and used by designated healthcare institutions in GBA, with urgent need clinically; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone

Hon Holden CHOW to ask:

At present, the Hong Kong Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government are jointly developing the “Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone” (“the Co-operation Zone”), which comprises the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (“HSITP”) and the Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Zone (“SZ I&T Zone”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the Shenzhen Municipal Government released two policy documents on the Co-operation Zone in August last year, setting out the development direction of SZ I&T Zone and the support measures to facilitate entrepreneurship provided therein, when the Government will release the relevant policy documents on the Co-operation Zone;
- (2) whether it will consider a recommendation put forward by a think tank of implementing in HSITP a tax rebate policy for research and development expenditures of enterprises;
- (3) whether it has projected if the rent levels of HSITP will be higher than those of SZ I&T Zone; if it has projected and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the measures in place to enhance the competitiveness of the rental rates of HSITP; and
- (4) of the number of meetings held so far by the Joint Task Force on the Development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop, and whether both parties of Hong Kong and Shenzhen have explored the strategies for promoting business in and attracting investments to HSITP; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 12
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Vaccination against Coronavirus Disease 2019

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

It is learnt that in recent months, the patients in a number of imported cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) had completed a COVID-19 vaccination course (“vaccination”) prior to their being confirmed of infection. As a result, quite a number of members of the public are unwilling to receive vaccination as they are doubtful about the efficacy of the vaccines. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of a breakdown of the number of persons confirmed to have been infected with the disease in each of the past three months by
 - (a) the vaccination status (i.e. (i) not vaccinated, (ii) having received the first dose of vaccine (in respect of vaccines which need two doses for completion of vaccination) and (iii) having completed a vaccination course) of the infected persons prior to being confirmed of infection,
 - (b) whether the confirmed cases were local or imported, and
 - (c) the infected persons’ clinical presentations (i.e. asymptomatic, mild disease, severe disease and death);
- (2) of (i) the number of arrivals, and (ii) the percentage of arrivals who were confirmed after entry to have been infected, in the past three months; a breakdown of (i) by vaccination status prior to their entering Hong Kong; and
- (3) as a number of experts on epidemiology have pointed out that the vision of building an immunity barrier through vaccination has been dashed due to the lower efficacy of the various vaccines against highly transmissible COVID-19 variants, how the Government will adjust its publicity strategies to incentivize members of the public to get vaccinated?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Supporting the public light bus trade

Hon CHAN Han-pan to ask:

Some operators of public light buses (“PLBs”) have relayed that under the Government’s transport policy of designating railway as the backbone of Hong Kong’s public transport system, the areas covered by railway services have been expanding continuously while the business opportunities of PLBs have been shrinking continuously. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will consider allowing PLBs whose services have been suspended due to rationalization of service routes to be put to other uses (including rehabilitation minibuses, luxury minibuses or provision of minibus rental services for government departments); if so, of the details and timetable; if not, whether measures are in place to help practitioners of the PLB trade whose livelihood has been affected by the rationalization of service routes;
- (2) whether the Transport Department will (i) establish, by making reference to the functions of its Bus Development Division, a Public Light Bus Development Division responsible for coordinating the planning and open bidding of existing and new PLB service routes, and (ii) conduct planning for a balanced development of various types of public transport services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) as some PLB operators have relayed that they have experienced business difficulties due to a decrease in PLB patronage in recent years, whether the Government will consider relaxing the restrictions on advertisements on the bodies of PLBs (e.g. allowing display of advertisements on the tops of PLBs) so that the operators concerned can have more income; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will consider providing loan guarantees for PLB operators to assist them in their financing for purchasing new vehicles or upgrading the facilities of their PLBs to improve service quality, thereby attracting more members of the public to choose to commute by PLBs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Vaccine-related issues

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok to ask:

As at the sixth of this month, the number of people in Hong Kong who had received at least one dose of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) vaccines (“the vaccines”) accounted for around 63% of the eligible population, and such a percentage was some distance away from the interim goal set by the Government (i.e. a vaccination rate reaching 70% by the end of this month). Moreover, it has been reported that the governments of the United States and some European countries have mandated specified personnel to receive vaccination, and quite a number of multinational enterprises have required their employees to get vaccinated before they may return to their positions. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has updated the target vaccination rate according to the global trend of the epidemic, and studied the implementation of further measures to encourage and facilitate members of the public to receive vaccination; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will consider offering free COVID-19 antibody tests to members of the public who have completed a vaccination course, so as to bolster their confidence in the efficacy of the vaccines; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) when the two scientific committees under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will make a decision on whether members of the public who have completed a vaccination course need to receive a third dose of the vaccines, and (if the decision is that there is such a need) whether they will announce the relevant details as soon as possible after the decision is made, including the commencement date of vaccination and whether the third dose of the vaccines may be of a different type from that of the previous two doses; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will step up publicity work relating to vaccination and organize teams of experts to explain doubts and dispel suspicions about vaccination, with a view to building a consensus among the various sectors of society on mandatory vaccination, thereby speeding up the pace of universal vaccination; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Handling civil servants with persistent sub-standard performance

Hon Tony TSE to ask:

The Government may, on grounds of public interest, require a civil servant with persistent sub-standard performance to retire from the service under section 12 of the Public Service (Administration) Order. The relevant procedure comprises the following three phases: (1) the management to advise and counsel the officer in question; (2) the management to call for special appraisal report(s) on that officer and issue him/her a forewarning (i.e. if his/her work performance remains at a sub-standard level during an observation period, the management may apply section 12 action on him/her); and (3) the Civil Service Bureau (“CSB”) to consider whether there is adequate evidence to apply section 12 action on that officer and, if so, CSB to issue a letter of intent of requiring retirement to that officer and invite him/her to submit representations before a decision is made on the case. The Chief Executive may, upon considering the relevant circumstances, require that officer to retire from the service. There are views that such a procedure is complicated and lengthy, which has deterred management staff members from taking such course of action, and caused them only “turning a blind eye” to those civil servants with sub-standard performance, thereby affecting the overall performance of civil servants. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of civil servants who underwent the aforesaid three phases, and the number of those civil servants who were required to retire from the service under the aforesaid procedure, in the past five years;
- (2) of the respective shortest, longest and average time taken for each phase in the past five years;
- (3) whether it will review the aforesaid procedure, consolidate the various steps involved and shorten the time needed for the various steps, so as to expedite the handling of civil servants with persistent sub-standard performance and at the same time reduce the manpower and financial resources spent on such procedure;

- (4) apart from the aforesaid procedure, what other measures are currently in place for handling civil servants with persistent sub-standard performance by the Government, and whether it has evaluated the effectiveness of such measures; and
- (5) whether it will explore the introduction of more efficient human resource management measures, so as to expedite the handling of civil servants with persistent sub-standard performance?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Payment of transport fares by scanning QR codes

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

Several franchised bus operators have, one after another since last year, introduced electronic payment systems to their bus fleets to enable passengers to pay bus fares via e-payment platforms (“platforms”) by scanning QR codes (“code scanning”). In January this year, payment of fares by code scanning was extended to heavy rail: passengers may pay MTR fares by scanning the “QR Code Ticket” in the MTR Mobile app or the “EasyGo” of the relevant platform. The MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) indicated at that time that more platforms would be introduced after 12 months. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows, among the passenger trips of public transport services since January this year, the (i) number and (ii) percentage of those the transport fares for which were paid by code scanning, and set out a breakdown of such number and the relevant percentages by type of transport services;
- (2) whether it knows MTRCL’s progress in introducing other platforms;
- (3) given that as members of the public who pay MTR fares by code scanning are not entitled to the fare concessions currently offered by MTRCL to students and persons with disabilities, such persons have been greatly discouraged from paying fares by code scanning, whether the Government will request MTRCL to make improvements; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) given that members of the public are currently required to use an Octopus card to pay transport fares in order to benefit from the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (commonly known as “the \$2 Scheme”) as well as the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, whether the Government will bring the transport fares paid by code scanning into the scopes of application of the two schemes, so as to encourage members of the public to pay transport fares by code scanning; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Public transport services in Kowloon City district

Hon Starry LEE to ask:

The MTR Tuen Ma Line (“TML”) was fully commissioned on 27 June this year. The Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong conducted from late July to late August a survey targeted mainly at people travelling to and from Kowloon City district for work and attending schools. The results showed that 63.6% of the respondents had used To Kwa Wan Station and Sung Wong Toi Station, whereas 36.4% of the respondents had never used the two railway stations, reflecting that almost 40% of the respondents still relied on other means of public transport for travelling since the commissioning of TML. The reasons cited by respondents for not taking TML included that: the stations are too far away from their homes, interchanging for trains of different lines is time-consuming, and MTR fares are relatively high. In addition, 31.6% of the respondents opined that traffic congestion in Kowloon City district had not been ameliorated since the commissioning of TML. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as the aforesaid survey has reflected that quite a number of members of the public still rely on buses and green minibuses (“GMBs”) for travelling, whether the Government will (i) undertake not to reduce at this stage the bus routes with catchment areas overlapping those of the railway stations concerned, and regularly monitor the patronage of such bus routes to assess the service demand, and (ii) introduce new GMB routes and enhance the existing GMB services in areas with service demand before deciding to reduce the GMB routes concerned in the future, so as to help the affected GMB operators to sustain their living; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will study the construction of additional pedestrian links connecting the entrances/exits of the aforesaid two railway stations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it will request the MTR Corporation Limited to expedite the resolution of the problem of “higher fares for shorter journeys” of TML, and formulate a relevant implementation timetable; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether it will consider installing “MTR Fare Savers” at easily accessible locations in Kowloon City district (such as Kowloon City

- Plaza, Kowloon City Market, To Kwa Wan Sports Centre and Jubilant Plaza); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) whether it will consider taking measures to facilitate the early commissioning of the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section of the Shatin to Central Link, with a view to easing the situation of congested traffic in Kowloon City district as soon as possible; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Treating patients suffering from depression

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

I have learnt that there are currently over 300 000 people in Hong Kong suffering from depression. Among them, those with mild symptoms suffer from impaired functioning in their daily lives and those with severe symptoms have obvious suicidal tendencies. However, if such patients receive appropriate treatment early, most of them can recover. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows, among the patients in Hong Kong suffering from depression, the current number and percentage of those suffering from treatment-resistant depression, and whether the Hospital Authority (“HA”) currently provides targeted diagnostic and treatment services for such patients;
- (2) as the statistics of The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong show that 1 019 persons in Hong Kong died of suicide in 2020, with the suicide rate hitting a five-year high of 13.61 (i.e. 13.61 persons died of suicide per 100 000 persons) and, among the deceased, 438 persons were 60 years old or above, accounting for 43% of the number of deaths (with the figure representing an increase of 4.8 percentage points as compared to 2019 and being the highest since records were first kept in 1973), whether the Government (i) knows, among the persons who committed suicide last year, the number of those suffering from depression before they died and whether they had received treatment, and (ii) has reviewed the adequacy of the support as well as diagnostic and treatment services provided to elderly persons suffering from depression;
- (3) as it has been reported that the existing medications and psychotherapy have insignificant effects on some patients suffering from depression, and more and more studies have confirmed that Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (“TMS”) therapy has a curative effect, coupled with the fact that approval has been given by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence in the United Kingdom and the Food and Drug Administration in the United States for the use of such therapy in treating depression, and the Australian Government has allocated an amount equivalent to approximately HK\$1.7 billion in this year’s budget for implementing TMS therapy, of the information on TMS therapy currently provided in the public hospitals in Hong Kong (including the name of hospitals, the year in

which such therapy became available, and the number of patients who have received treatment so far); whether the Government will request HA to fully introduce TMS therapy to provide patients suffering from depression with treatment carrying a better curative effect; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

- (4) of the reasons for not introducing TMS as a treatment approach on the various websites of the Government and HA concerning depression?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Non-emergency ambulance transfer service

Hon Mrs Regina IP to ask:

At present, non-emergency ambulance transfer service (“NEATS”) (including inter-hospital patient transfer) is provided by the Hong Kong Fire Services Department (“FSD”), the Hospital Authority (“HA”) and the Auxiliary Medical Service. Some members of the public have pointed out that as NEATS is provided solely by FSD after 12 o’clock on each night, the provision of emergency ambulance service by FSD during small hours may be affected, and the situations of ambulance depots with only a few ambulances stationed (e.g. Tung Chung Ambulance Depot with only three stationing ambulances at night) have particularly aroused concerns. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current number of ambulances stationing at each FSD ambulance depot and, among them, the number of those used for the provision of NEATS;
- (2) of the number of service calls attended by the ambulances stationing at each FSD ambulance depot and, among such calls, the number and percentage of those for the provision of NEATS, in each of the past three years; and
- (3) whether it will request HA to provide round-the-clock NEATS so that FSD’s resources for emergency ambulance service will not be thinned out; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Public light bus services

Hon Wilson OR to ask:

Public light bus (“PLB”) services, being a type of public transport services in Hong Kong, are subject to the regulation by the laws of Hong Kong and the Transport Department (“TD”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (i) the respective numbers of complaints about scheduled PLBs (“green minibuses”) and non-scheduled PLBs received by TD, and (ii) the respective numbers of such complaints which were found substantiated after investigation, together with a breakdown by PLB route and the subject matter of the complaints, in each of the past three years; if the relevant statistics are unavailable, of the reasons for that;
- (2) of the number of cases in each of the past three years in which the Commissioner for Transport ordered operators of green minibuses to make written representations on violation of conditions of their passenger service licences, together with a breakdown by the licence condition involved;
- (3) of the number of prosecutions instituted by invoking those legal provisions applicable exclusively to PLBs, as well as the relevant number of convicted cases, in each of the past three years, together with a breakdown by the provision involved; and
- (4) given that some members of the public have criticized some green minibuses for overcharging and operating with a high lost-trip rate, of the practicable regulatory measures that TD has put in place to ensure the provision of highly effective and quality PLB services by the relevant operators?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Policy on public light buses

Hon Frankie YICK to ask:

Since mid-1970s, the Government has prohibited red minibuses (“RMBs”) from providing service in newly developed areas with a comprehensive rail and bus network or on newly commissioned expressways. The aforesaid restrictions, coupled with the incessant expansion of the railway network in recent years, have resulted in the service areas of RMBs shrinking gradually and their patronage declining continuously. On the other hand, the Government introduced in 1972 green minibus (“GMBs”) scheduled services with fixed routes, schedules and fares, and has encouraged the conversion of RMBs into GMBs. However, some members of the public light bus (“PLBs”) trade have pointed out that there are currently 400 to 500 RMBs the operators of which have all along been intending to convert such RMBs into GMBs over the years, but they were unable to do so due to various reasons. Regarding the policy on PLBs, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the details of the new GMB routes that the Government plans to introduce in the coming three years, and the expected number of RMBs which can be converted into GMBs upon the introduction of such routes;
- (2) as some PLB operators have pointed out that some RMBs are currently operating in a mode consistent with that of GMBs, whether the Government will allow the relevant routes to change to GMB routes, so that the RMBs can be converted into GMBs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) as some PLB operators have pointed out that the room for business for RMBs has been shrinking continuously as a result of the aforesaid restrictions, of the Government’s new measures in place to increase the room for business for the trade;
- (4) given that the primary function of GMBs is to provide supplementary transport services in areas where the patronage does not justify franchised bus service or access by other modes of public transport is limited, but the Public Transport Strategy Study released by the Government in 2017 recommended the introduction of routes to be plied by mid-sized single-deck buses by franchised bus operators to those areas in the New Territories with relatively lower population density but with growth potential, whether the Government has assessed if such an arrangement will impede the

conversion of RMBs into GMBs; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and the measures in place to expedite the conversion of RMBs into GMBs; and

- (5) given that it has been more than two decades since the Transport Advisory Committee conducted the last PLB policy review in 1997, whether the Government will conduct in the near future a comprehensive review of the policy on PLBs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 22
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Deposit Protection Scheme

Hon CHAN Chun-ying to ask:

The Deposit Protection Scheme (“DPS”) is a statutory scheme for protecting bank depositors. All licensed banks, including virtual banks, are required, unless exempted by the Hong Kong Deposit Protection Board (“the Board”), to participate in DPS as a scheme member and make contributions to the Deposit Protection Scheme Fund (“DPS Fund”). In the event of a bank failure, the Board is required to pay compensation to depositors. Each depositor’s aggregate deposits in a scheme member are protected up to a limit of HK\$500,000 (“protection limit”), but certain types of deposits and those non-deposit banking products are not protected. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the aforesaid protection limit, which took effect in January 2011, was comparable to the then relevant protection limit in the United Kingdom (“UK”), but UK and the European Union have raised the relevant limits to the current levels of about HK\$910,000, whether the authorities have plans to raise the aforesaid limit so as to enhance depositors’ confidence in the banking system; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given that since DPS commenced operation in September 2006, Hong Kong’s banking system has remained sound and the DPS Fund has never been utilized, whether the authorities have plans to review the amounts of contributions payable by scheme members to the DPS Fund and the relevant mechanism; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether the authorities will consider reviewing the scope of protection of DPS with a view to including more types of deposits and banking products; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

(Translation)

**Hon Christopher CHEUNG's motion on
“Further enhancing Hong Kong's status as an offshore Renminbi centre”**

Wording of the Motion

That Hong Kong as an international financial centre and the world's largest offshore Renminbi ('RMB') business hub plays an important role in promoting RMB internationalization; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to seize the opportunities arising from the National 14th Five-Year Plan for Hong Kong's financial industry by formulating measures to actively motivate competitive Mainland enterprises to raise fund through launching RMB initial public offerings in Hong Kong and introducing diversified RMB investment products in Hong Kong's financial market to foster cross-boundary investment, with a view to substantially expanding Hong Kong's RMB liquidity pool and further enhancing Hong Kong's status as an offshore RMB centre.

(Translation)

**Hon Kenneth LAU's motion on
“Promoting education on the history of
War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression”**

Wording of the Motion

That the Communist Party of China was the mainstay of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression ('the War of Resistance'), and under its leadership, the Hong Kong Independent Battalion of the Dongjiang Column, an anti-Japanese aggression guerrilla force, fought against the Japanese army and rescued the Allied troops in various locations during the occupation of Hong Kong by the Japanese army, making significant contribution to the victory in the War of Resistance; to date, the war relics have scattered across various districts throughout the territory; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to actively promote education on the history of the War of Resistance and conserve the relevant relics in Hong Kong, so that Hong Kong people will have a better understanding of the history of the War of Resistance as well as the contribution and patriotism of the war martyrs, thereby enabling Hong Kong people to enhance their sense of national and ethnic identity and belonging, understand the importance of safeguarding national security, and treasure the prosperity and stability enjoyed by Hong Kong with the country's support; the relevant proposals include:

- (1) strengthening school education to facilitate students' correct understanding of the history of the War of Resistance through different channels such as curriculum design, topical studies, seminars and inter-school competitions; and
- (2) stepping up the promotion of the historical facts about anti-Japanese aggression to the community and heritage conservation, such as setting up a memorial hall and heritage trails of the War of Resistance, declaring sites marking the War of Resistance as statutory monuments, drawing up a list of sites of the war relics, erecting monuments for anti-Japanese aggression martyrs, and organizing thematic exhibitions and guided tours, so that the public can gain a deeper understanding of this episode in history.