

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

**(issued by email only)**  
LC Paper No. CB(3) 277/20-21

Ref : CB(3)/P/5

Tel : 3919 3304

Date : 7 January 2021

From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

---

**Council meeting of 13 January 2021**

**Questions approved by the President**

I attach for Members' information the questions approved by the President to be asked at the above meeting.

(Lolita SHEK)  
for Clerk to the Legislative Council

Encl.

## 19 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 13 January 2021

### Subject matters

#### Questions for oral replies

- |   |                       |   |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| 1 | Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan | <u>Procurement of drugs and high-value medical supplies</u>       |
| 2 | Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok | <u>Measures to cope with the epidemic</u>                         |
| 3 | Hon Alice MAK         | <u>Community-wide efforts to fight the epidemic</u>               |
| 4 | Hon Wilson OR         | <u>Targeted anti-epidemic measures</u>                            |
| 5 | Hon Elizabeth QUAT    | <u>Anti-epidemic efforts targeted at foreign domestic helpers</u> |
| 6 | Hon CHAN Han-pan      | <u>Traffic and transport studies</u>                              |

#### Questions for written replies

- |    |                        |  |
|----|------------------------|--|
| 7  | Hon WONG Ting-kwong    | <u>Banners displayed by members of District Councils</u>                                 |
| 8  | Hon LEUNG Che-cheung   | <u>Comprehensive Social Security Assistance</u>  |
| 9  | Hon KWOK Wai-keung     | <u>Statistics on employees' salaries</u>   |
| 10 | Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG | <u>The Government's anti-epidemic efforts</u>  |
| 11 | Hon Tony TSE           | <u>Impacts of the Government's special work arrangement on the construction industry</u> |
| 12 | Hon Paul TSE           | <u>Legal aid services</u>  |
| 13 | Hon CHAN Chun-ying     | <u>Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement</u>                             |
| 14 | Hon Vincent CHENG      | <u>Telephone deception cases</u>   |
| 15 | Hon Holden CHOW        | <u>Transport infrastructure involving the Tuen Mun District</u>                          |
| 16 | Hon CHAN Hak-kan       | <u>District Cooling Systems</u>  |
| 17 | Hon Elizabeth QUAT     | <u>Cancer treatment</u>  |
| 18 | Hon LEUNG Che-cheung   | <u>Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme</u>  |
| 19 | Hon CHAN Hak-kan       | <u>Face masks produced with government subsidies</u>                                     |

Notes: Six oral questions and 13 (instead of 16) written questions are scheduled for this meeting as:

- two written question slots were not taken up by Members by the deadline for giving notice of question; and
- a Member has withdrawn his written question after the deadline for giving notice of question.

Question 1  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Procurement of drugs and high-value medical supplies

Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan to ask:

It is learnt that the Mainland authorities have implemented, since 2019, the Pilot Program of the Centralized Procurement and Use of Drugs Organized by the State as well as the Reform Plan for the Control of High-value Medical Supplies, with a view to lowering the unit prices of drugs and high-value medical supplies through bulk procurement, thereby alleviating the burden on patients. For instance, the National Healthcare Security Administration has recently made a bulk procurement of over one million vascular stents for use in percutaneous coronary intervention (“PCI”) operations at a purchase price of around Renminbi (“RMB”) 700 only for each stent which had a marked price of RMB13,000. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council if it knows:

- (1) the respective unit prices of expensive drugs for treating cancers such as Cetuximab, Nilotinib and Osimertinib procured last year by the Hospital Authority (“HA”), and how such prices compare to the prices of the relevant drugs the bulk procurement of which was made by the Mainland authorities in the same period;
- (2) the number, place(s) of origin and unit price(s) of the vascular stents procured in each of the past three years by HA for use in PCI operations; and
- (3) whether HA has discussed with the Central Authorities or the relevant authorities of the Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area the prospect for HA to participate in the mechanism of the Mainland for the bulk procurement of drugs and high-value medical supplies; if HA has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Measures to cope with the epidemic

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok to ask:

As the epidemic has raged on in Hong Kong for nearly one year but has not yet been brought under control, various industries have been hard hit, with the unemployment rate soaring. Quite a number of members of the public have pointed out that such a situation stems from the Government's perfunctory anti-epidemic efforts which are inept and piecemeal, and merely deal with problems on an ad hoc basis. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will, by making reference to the successful anti-epidemic experience on the Mainland, carry out anti-epidemic work under a state-of-war mentality, mobilizing and steering the efforts of the whole society towards fighting the epidemic, in order to strive for "zero" infection case as soon as possible; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether the Government will, for the sake of cutting the virus transmission chain as early as possible, consider afresh the implementation of universal compulsory testing and, when necessary, once again request the Central Authorities to send a test support team to Hong Kong to provide assistance; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that the universal vaccination programme is massive in scale, involving work in various aspects such as transporting and storing vaccines, setting up vaccination centres, conducting publicity, rebutting rumours, providing vaccination appointment service, keeping vaccination records and handling post-vaccination adverse reactions, of the progress of preparing and the specific work arrangements for the vaccination programme?

Question 3  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Community-wide efforts to fight the epidemic

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

As the epidemic has persisted for months in Hong Kong and has not yet been brought under control, quite a number of members of the public have indicated that they would rather put up with the temporary inconvenience that may be caused to them by a “lockdown” and population-wide compulsory testing, in return for achieving “zero” infection case as early as possible. Regarding the concerted efforts across the community to fight the epidemic, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has worked out a roadmap for achieving zero infection case and drawn up a specific timetable for the anti-epidemic work at various stages, so that all parties concerned can complement each other’s efforts; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as the Government has indicated that the implementation of population-wide compulsory testing must be complemented with a comprehensive lockdown which will, however, cause disruptions to the normal operation of Hong Kong and the living of members of the public, whether the Government has studied ways to keep such disruptions to the minimum (such as drawing up a clear timetable and giving members of the public time for preparation); if so, of the study outcome; if not, whether it will conduct such a study immediately; and
- (3) whether it will enhance the arrangements for members of the public to record their whereabouts by themselves, including adding a positioning function to the “LeaveHomeSafe” mobile application and setting up a system for recording whereabouts by using Octopus cards, so as to provide convenience to those people who do not use smartphones (such as the elderly and the grassroots)?

Question 4  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Targeted anti-epidemic measures

Hon Wilson OR to ask:

During the outbreak of the third and fourth waves of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, more confirmed cases were recorded in Kowloon East as compared with other districts. Moreover, the authorities issued last month notices requiring persons who had been present in specified buildings during the specified periods to undergo testing by a certain deadline, and around half of the 40-odd buildings involved are public housing blocks located in Kowloon East. Some members of the public consider that to be successful in fighting against the epidemic, anti-epidemic measures should be targeted, including strengthening the anti-epidemic efforts in Kowloon East where the epidemic situation is more serious. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will make it compulsory for persons who reside or work in Kowloon East to undergo testing, with a view to identifying asymptomatic infected persons as far as possible;
- (2) as an expert on epidemiology and a surveyor have pointed out that the public housing blocks in Kowloon East are relatively old and their sewers may leak due to disrepair and, as a result, once a resident has been infected, his or her faeces may cause the residents of the same block to get infected, whether the authorities will, in the short term, finish inspecting and repairing the sewerage systems of the various public housing blocks in the district; and
- (3) whether it will, targeting at the inadequacies of the current anti-epidemic efforts, make improvements, including shortening the waiting time for persons who were the close contacts of persons confirmed to have contracted the disease to be transferred to the quarantine centres, and sending personnel to carry out disinfection work for all of the private premises where persons confirmed to have contracted the disease were present?

Question 5  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Anti-epidemic efforts targeted at foreign domestic helpers

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

It has been reported that so far, a number of foreign domestic helpers (“FDHs”) have been infected with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”). Among such FDHs, some were suspected of having transmitted the disease to their employers after getting infected in FDH dormitories. Moreover, during holidays, a large number of FDHs gather and share meals in public places such as parks, allegedly violating the stipulations which prohibit group gatherings and require the wearing of a mask in public places, but very few FDHs have been prosecuted as a result. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the current number of FDH dormitories and the number of boarding places therein; whether it will enact legislation to regulate the sanitary conditions of FDH dormitories; if so, of the details and the implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that, and what measures are in place to prevent such dormitories from becoming venues for spreading the epidemic;
- (2) of the up-to-date number of FDHs who were confirmed to have contracted COVID-19; what measures are in place to step up law enforcement efforts against violation of anti-epidemic stipulations by FDHs; and
- (3) given that quite a number of FDHs have disregarded the appeal for refraining from gathering on holidays, whether the Government will examine prohibiting FDHs from gathering in public places; if so, of the details and the implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that, and the alternative solutions?

Question 6  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Traffic and transport studies

Hon CHAN Han-pan to ask:

The Government conducted three comprehensive transport studies in 1976, 1989 and 1997 respectively. Some members of the public have pointed out that it has been over 20 years since the last study was completed in 1999, and during this period Hong Kong has seen substantial changes in its population, the development of various districts, and transport-related situations such as the number of vehicles and cross-boundary transport. Moreover, problems such as inadequate public transport services and road congestion have also become increasingly serious in some districts (New Territories West in particular). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the past three comprehensive transport studies were conducted at irregular intervals, of the criteria adopted by the authorities for determining the timing for conducting such kind of studies;
- (2) whether it will launch the fourth comprehensive transport study in the near future; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, what mechanism is in place to ensure that the public transport services and transport infrastructure in New Territories West can cater for the development of the district; and
- (3) as the Chief Executive mentioned in the 2020 Policy Address that the Government would carry out a comprehensive traffic and transport strategy study, of the aspects covered by the study and the implementation timetable?



Question 7  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Banners displayed by members of District Councils

Hon WONG Ting-kwong to ask:

The findings of a survey, conducted by an organization in November last year on the contents of the banners displayed by members of District Councils (“DC members”) on roadsides and in other public places, reveal that as many as 84 banners contained inappropriate contents such as those discrediting the Government or the Central Authorities, or spreading false statements and hate speeches. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it removed, in the past three years, any banners displayed by DC members in public places on the grounds that such banners contained inappropriate contents; if so, of the number of those banners removed and their contents; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) of the government departments which are currently responsible for vetting and approving the applications from DC members for displaying banners in public places, and the respective vetting and approval criteria adopted by them; if such criteria are not consistent, whether they will standardize such criteria, and incorporate the following criterion currently adopted by the Housing Department: the contents of the banners should not carry any messages that are unlawful, obscene, defamatory, insinuating, criticizing or denouncing individual persons/parties; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the measures in place to prevent DC members from displaying banners containing inappropriate contents in public places; whether it will consider rejecting those claims submitted by them for reimbursement of the expenses concerned; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will provide incentives to encourage members of the public to report those banners displayed in public places which contain inappropriate contents, so as to enhance the effectiveness of the regulatory efforts; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 8  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Comprehensive Social Security Assistance

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

In vetting and approving applications for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (“CSSA”) at present, the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) considers in aggregate the income and assets of the applicants and their family members. If those elderly people who live with family members wish to apply for CSSA on their own, their family members are required to make a declaration that they do not provide any financial support to the applicants. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) among the applications from elderly people applying for CSSA on their own in each of the past four years (set out in a table), of (i) the number of them approved after the applicants provided the aforesaid declaration, and (ii) the respective numbers of them (a) approved and (b) rejected under the situation that the applicants were unable to provide the aforesaid declaration;
- (2) of the justifications based on which SWD approved the applications mentioned in (1)(ii)(a), and the average time taken to complete the vetting and approval of such applications;
- (3) as some applicants have indicated that they did not receive any reply from SWD about the application results until the fifth month after they had submitted their applications, whether SWD will make a performance pledge in respect of the time taken for vetting and approval of CSSA applications;
- (4) given that in order to cope with the epidemic, the Government made arrangements on several occasions last year for government personnel not providing emergency and essential public services to work from home, whether the time taken for vetting and approval of CSSA applications has been affected; if so, of the details; and
- (5) given that starting from February 2017, when elderly people who do not live with family members apply for CSSA on their own, their family members are no longer required to make the aforesaid declaration, whether the Government will consider extending this arrangement to those elderly people who live with family members applying for CSSA on their own; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 9  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Statistics on employees' salaries

Hon KWOK Wai-keung to ask:

Will the Government inform this Council of the following statistics in 2019 regarding the middle-level managerial and professional employees of the selected industry sections listed in the table below (using the first quarter of 2004 as the base period): (i) the Nominal Salary Index (A), (ii) the Real Salary Index (A), (iii) the Nominal Salary Index (B), (iv) the Real Salary Index (B), and (v) the number of employed persons?

Selected industry section	2019	
Manufacturing, electricity and gas supply	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	
Building, construction and related trades	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	
Transportation, storage, communications and travel agencies	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	
Financing and insurance	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	
All of the above items	(i)	
	(ii)	
	(iii)	
	(iv)	
	(v)	

Question 10  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The Government's anti-epidemic efforts

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

In January last year, the Government established a Steering Committee cum Command Centre on anti-epidemic efforts led by the Chief Executive, and set up under it an expert advisory group and four workgroups. Furthermore, the Centre for Health Protection ("CHP") of the Department of Health ("DH") held an epidemic briefing almost every day for the past year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of meetings held last year by two of the aforesaid workgroups, namely (i) the Workgroup on Public Participation, which was led by the Secretary for Home Affairs, and (ii) the Workgroup on Communications, which was led by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs; among such meetings, the respective numbers of those chaired by the Secretaries themselves; the respective tasks carried out so far by the two Workgroups;
- (2) given that the epidemic has been brought under control on the Mainland, whether the Government will invite experts on public health and epidemiology (e.g. Professor ZHONG Nanshan) from the Mainland to join the expert advisory group to draw on collective wisdom; if so, of the candidates; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the respective numbers of occasions last year on which (i) the Director of Health, as well as (ii) the Controller, (iii) the Head of Communicable Disease Branch and (iv) other personnel of CHP attended the epidemic briefings and other press conferences; and
- (4) as it has been reported that the Head of Communicable Disease Branch has been attending the epidemic briefings almost every day for over 11 consecutive months, while the Controller of CHP took leave for more than one month within the period, whether DH has reviewed if the division of labour among its personnel is appropriate; if DH has, of the outcome; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 11  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Impacts of the Government's special work arrangement  
on the construction industry

Hon Tony TSE to ask:

To cope with the epidemic, the Government has implemented, for several occasions since early last year, a special work arrangement under which all government employees, save for those involved in the provision of emergency and essential public services, worked from home. Some members of the construction industry have relayed that such an arrangement has led to delays in the vetting and approval of a large number of works projects relating to land and housing developments. Consequently, the income and cash flow of contractors have been affected due to their failure to complete works projects by the contractual deadlines. The livelihood of their employees has also been affected by the suspension of works. On the other hand, some government employees have relayed that as they lack relevant information technology ("IT") equipment at home and have not been issued with relevant procedural guidelines, it is difficult for them to handle the vetting and approval work at home. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the criteria to be met by public services in order for them to be regarded as emergency or essential services; whether such criteria include: suspension of such services will (i) adversely affect the land and housing supply, (ii) seriously affect the operation of relevant industries, and (iii) deal a severe blow to the livelihood of the practitioners concerned;
- (2) whether it will, in the light of the aforesaid situation, improve the special work arrangement, so as to avoid delays in or suspension of the relevant vetting and approval work;
- (3) whether it has provided government employees who need to handle vetting and approval work at home with computers for processing documents and architectural/engineering drawings, as well as IT software and hardware for holding video conferences, etc.;
- (4) whether it has formulated vetting and approval procedure and guidelines which are applicable to the special work arrangement, including (i) allowing applicants to make electronic submission of documents and architectural/engineering drawings for various kinds of applications, (ii) allowing the use of recorded footage or real-time images in place of onsite inspections, and (iii) adjusting the

counting methods for relevant statutory deadlines and performance pledges; and

- (5) whether it has consulted members of the construction industry on the vetting and approval procedure under the special work arrangement, in order to make appropriate arrangements and reduce the relevant impacts?

Question 12  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Legal aid services

Hon Paul TSE to ask:

Under the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91), a person granted legal aid by the Director of Legal Aid (“aided person”) may nominate a solicitor/counsel of his/her own choice to act on his/her behalf. As the Legal Aid Department (“LAD”) acts in accordance with the principle that an aided person’s interest is of paramount importance, it fully respects and will not reject any nomination unless there are compelling reasons to do so. In addition, even if a nominee does not meet the requirements concerning year of service and case-handling experience in respect of the relevant type of cases as set out in the Manual for Legal Aid Practitioners, LAD will still make the assignment according to the will of the aided person. There have been comments that such a practice is unfair to other solicitors/counsels with considerable experience, and fuels the formation of specific economic circles in the legal profession. On the other hand, there have all along been comments from the community querying the excessively lenient criteria adopted by LAD for vetting and approving legal aid applications, and the excessively high average legal aid expenses of each case. Some members of the public are of the view that the authorities should take measures to improve the legal aid system, with a view to allocating legal aid services that are funded by public money to the needy in a fairer manner. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether LAD has stipulated a cap on the legal aid expenses for each case; if so, of the relevant policies and criteria adopted, as well as how such policies and criteria compare with those adopted by other common-law jurisdictions (e.g. the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and Singapore); if not, whether LAD will, by drawing reference from the practices of such jurisdictions, stipulate the relevant cap;
- (2) how the policies under which an aided person (including aided persons of torture claims and judicial review cases) is entitled to nominate a solicitor/counsel of his/her own choice to act on his/her behalf compare with the relevant policies of the aforesaid jurisdictions; whether it has assessed if Hong Kong’s relevant policies are overly lenient;

- (3) whether there was a phenomenon in the past three years in which legal aid cases of a particular type (e.g. torture claims and judicial review cases) were assigned to several certain solicitors/counselors in an unduly concentrated manner; if so, whether it can set out, by name of such solicitors/counselors, the number of legal aid cases they handled and the total amount of legal fees charged;
- (4) among the cases for which legal aid was granted by LAD in each of the past three years, of the number and percentage of those in which the solicitors/counselors assigned did not meet the aforesaid requirements concerning year of service and case-handling experience; how such figures compare with those of the aforesaid jurisdictions; and
- (5) given that currently LAD will, in vetting and approving legal aid applications, entrust the solicitors/counselors assigned to make an assessment on whether the cases or defences concerned meet the requirement of having a reasonable chance of success, whether the Government has assessed if such a practice constitutes potential conflict of interests; if it has assessed, of the outcome; if not, whether it will conduct an assessment expeditiously?



Question 13  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

Hon CHAN Chun-ying to ask:

A total of 15 countries such as China and the 10 ASEAN states signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (“RCEP”) in November last year, with an aim to promote regional economic integration and progressively attain an overall tariff abolition rate of 91%. The Financial Secretary has stated that the Government will strive to make Hong Kong one of the first batch of economies joining RCEP after it takes effect. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the concrete plan and timetable for spurring Hong Kong’s joining RCEP;
- (2) whether it has assessed the opportunities and challenges that joining RCEP may bring to Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) given that the RCEP signatories, for the sake of complying with the rule of “direct consignment” so as to enjoy tariff reduction, may avoid transshipment of goods through a third place that is not a RCEP signatory, whether the Government has assessed the impact of such situation on Hong Kong’s re-export trade; if so, of the assessment outcome; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) given that Hong Kong is the world’s largest offshore Renminbi (“RMB”) business hub, whether the Government has plans to promote the use of RMB for trade settlements in Hong Kong among the importers and exporters of the RCEP signatories; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 14  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Telephone deception cases

Hon Vincent CHENG to ask:

It has been reported that the Police recorded 895 telephone deception cases in the first three quarters of last year, representing a 1.3-fold increase when compared with the number of cases in the same period of the preceding year, with the amount of money involved increasing nearly fourfold to \$402 million. Quite a number of the fraudulent calls came from outside Hong Kong, and the fraudsters mostly impersonated government officials, bank staff and staff of financial intermediaries or courier companies. My office has also received recently a number of requests for assistance involving telephone deception. In one of the cases, a fraudster called the victim impersonating bank staff and obtained by deception the victim's personal information, with which the fraudster then applied for a loan of \$100,000 from a bank. The fraudster afterwards withdrew the money. It was only when the bank demanded repayment of the loan that the victim realized that this had been a scam. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of telephone deception cases recorded by the Police last year, with a breakdown by (i) the District Council ("DC") district in which the victims resided, (ii) whether the victims suffered a pecuniary loss, and (iii) the identity impersonated by the fraudsters; among such cases, of the number of those in which the telephone calls concerned came from outside Hong Kong;
- (2) of the respective numbers of persons arrested and convicted last year for being involved in telephone deception-related offences; the penalties imposed on the convicted persons; the number of cases in which the Police successfully intercepted the lost money and the amount involved;
- (3) whether the Police have recently found fraudsters using new tactics to deceive others; if so, of the details; and
- (4) given that the Police established the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre in July 2017 to improve intelligence gathering, enhance efforts in publicity and education, as well as strengthen cross-boundary collaboration, whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the work of the Centre; if so, of the assessment outcome, and the results achieved by the Centre in detecting and investigating fraudulent calls coming from outside Hong Kong?

Question 15  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Transport infrastructure involving the Tuen Mun District

Hon Holden CHOW to ask:

The Government has planned to implement several public housing development projects in Area 54 of Tuen Mun to accommodate a population of about 50 000. However, some residents are worried that the transport infrastructure within the Tuen Mun District and that linking the District with urban areas can hardly meet the transport needs arising from the increased population. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective (i) peak hour vehicular flows and (ii) traffic capacities of the two new local distributor roads (i.e. L54A and L54D) in Area 54, which were commissioned in November last year; whether it has plans to build new roads in the Area; if so, of the details;
- (2) given that the current Kowloon-bound road of the Lam Tei Interchange, which is adjacent to Area 54, accommodates single lane traffic only, and traffic congestion occurs every day during the morning peak hours, of the details and progress of the road improvement works to be carried out thereat by the Government;
- (3) as it has been reported that the Government has recently decided to revise the alignment of the Tuen Mun Western Bypass which has been under planning for years but is still at the investigation stage, of the details of the latest alignment and the reasons for making that decision; and
- (4) of the new transport infrastructure plans to cater for the population growth in Area 54 and to improve the traffic within the Tuen Mun District and that between the District and the urban areas?

Question 16  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

District Cooling Systems

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

Hong Kong's first district cooling system ("DCS") is located in Kai Tak ("KTDCS"), which has been put into operation since 2013, providing services to the public and private non-domestic developments in the Kai Tak Development Area. Given that there was an overrun in the cost of the construction works of KTDCS by two times (increasing substantially from \$1.67 billion to \$4.95 billion) and it takes decades to recover the cost, some members of the public have questioned the cost effectiveness of adopting such systems locally. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the maintenance and other operating expenses of KTDCS in the last financial year;
- (2) of the energy efficiency of KTDCS at present; the reduction in carbon emissions and the savings in electricity cost due to the adoption of the system since its commissioning;
- (3) how the (i) capital and (ii) recurrent expenditures per megawatt of the cooling capacity of KTDCS compares with those of the individual water-cooled air-conditioning systems using cooling towers;
- (4) given that some members of the public have criticized DCSs for their high construction costs, long cost recovery periods and high maintenance costs, whether the Government has reviewed the cost effectiveness of KTDCS; if so, of the details;
- (5) of the estimated expenditures and cost recovery periods of those DCSs which the Government intends to build in new development areas (such as the Lok Ma Chau Loop) (set out such information by district); whether it will take enhancement measures for the new DCSs; if so, of the details; and
- (6) given that a water main in a chiller plant room of KTDCS burst in July 2018, causing flooding in the room, of the number of similar incidents that have occurred since the commissioning of the system; the measures in place to prevent the occurrence of similar incidents?

Question 17  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Cancer treatment

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

Some patient groups have relayed that it may take as long as five years for a new drug to go through the process from submission of an application for its registration in Hong Kong to the Pharmacy and Poisons Board (“the Board”), approval given for its registration, its being listed by the Hospital Authority (“HA”) on HA’s Drug Formulary (“HADF”) as a Self-financed Item (“SFI”) with safety net coverage, to its being reclassified as a General Drug or a Special Drug on HADF. As a result, quite a number of patients with cancers are unable to receive in time treatments which make use of new drugs. Regarding cancer treatment, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective dates on which the various SFIs and Special Drugs under the category of “Malignant Disease and Immunosuppression” in HADF were (i) given approval for registration by the Board, (ii) listed as SFI, and (iii) reclassified as a Special Drug (if applicable);
- (2) whether it has reviewed if the time taken for a new drug to go through the process from approval for its registration being given by the Board to its being listed as a Special Drug is reasonable and meets the public expectation; if it has reviewed and the outcome is in the negative, whether it will make improvements;
- (3) since some patients with cancers have relayed that they cannot afford the expensive drugs used for cancer therapies, such as chemotherapy, targeted therapy, hormonal therapy and immunotherapy, whether the Government will consider further relaxing the threshold for applying for the Samaritan Fund and Community Care Fund Medical Assistance Programmes; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) as some patient groups have indicated that tumour treating fields therapy and cell therapy are not covered by the Medical Assistance Programmes of the two aforesaid funds, of the Government’s measures to assist patients receiving these two therapies in obtaining the support needed; whether it will expand the clinical application of these two therapies in public hospitals; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that; and

- (5) given that Hong Kong currently adopts a “secondary review” approach in vetting and approving applications for registration of pharmaceutical products containing new chemicals or biological entities, under which applicants are required to submit to the Board documentary proof of registration and certificates of free sale issued by the drug regulatory authorities of two or above of the recognized countries, whether the Government will study the relaxation of the relevant registration requirements by allowing applicants to submit the relevant documents issued by the drug regulatory authority of only one of the advanced countries, with a view to expediting the registration process; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

Under the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme, the Government provides health care vouchers (“HCVs”) of a total value of \$2,000 on 1 January each year to eligible elderly people aged 65 or above to subsidize them in using the private primary healthcare services provided by healthcare professionals. The unused HCVs each year may be retained for use in future, but the excess above the limit of accumulated value (which has been increased from \$4,000 in 2014 to \$5,000 and \$8,000 in 2018 and 2019 respectively) will be forfeited. Some elderly people have relayed recently that they used healthcare services less last year due to the rampant epidemic, which resulted in some of their HCVs being forfeited. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) among the eligible elderly people, of the number and percentage of them who used HCVs, in each of the past three years;
- (2) of the number of elderly people who had HCVs under their names forfeited in each of the past three years because the accumulated value of their HCVs had exceeded the limit, as well as the total value of HCVs involved; and
- (3) whether it will consider raising the limit of accumulated value of HCVs to \$10,000, so that the elderly people may use HCVs to obtain more healthcare services when the epidemic is over; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 19  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Face masks produced with government subsidies

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

In March last year, the Government launched the Local Mask Production Subsidy Scheme (“the Scheme”) to provide subsidies to manufacturers for producing face masks locally in order to meet the needs of the Government and society. The first two million face masks produced each month by each subsidized face mask production line (with 20 lines in total) must be sold to the Government for a period of one year, while the manufacturers concerned may sell the remaining face masks in the local market. The Hong Kong Productivity Council (“HKPC”) was engaged to administer the Scheme and serve as the Secretariat. Besides, the Innovation and Technology Bureau was provided with funding for the research and development (“R&D”) as well as the production of the reusable CuMask+™ (“CuMask”) for distribution to all members of the public in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) (i) in respect of the face masks procured by the Government under the Scheme, of (a) the quantity, (b) the average unit price and (c) the total expenditure involved, as well as (ii) the number of such face masks distributed to various government departments, in each month since the Scheme was launched;
- (2) whether it knows the total quantity of face masks currently made available to the market by the subsidized production lines each month, and the average unit cost of such face masks;
- (3) of the respective amounts of subsidies disbursed to the various production lines so far;
- (4) of the amount of fees payable to HKPC by the Government under the Scheme and its percentage in the estimated expenditure of the Scheme;
- (5) of the current stock of face masks kept by the Government, and how it will deal with the surplus face masks; and
- (6) of the respective quantities of CuMask distributed to members of the public in the first and second rounds of distribution; the current stock of CuMask, and how the Government will deal with the stock?