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From : Clerk to the Legislative Council

To : All Members of the Legislative Council

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**Council meeting of 29 September 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.

## 22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 29 September 2021

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Question 1  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Flying the national flag in public places

Hon WONG Kwok-kin to ask:

It is learnt that two days before the National Day on 1 October last year and the anniversary of reunification of Hong Kong on 1 July this year, some members' offices set up in public housing estates flew the national flag outside their entrances to celebrate the occasions. However, the Housing Department ("HD"), on account of having received complaints, ordered such offices to remove the national flag. Regarding the issue of flying the national flag in public places, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the aforesaid members' offices originally planned to fly the national flag for two to three days only and that the national flag flown posed no safety issues, of the justifications for HD to disallow the flying of the national flag by such offices;
- (2) whether it will draw up guidelines to stipulate that members of the public may fly the national flag in designated public places within a short period of time before and after the days of national celebrations, so that they have rules to follow; and
- (3) whether it will implement measures to encourage members of the public to fly the national flag in public places on major festive days to express their support and respect for the country; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Pursuing the legal liabilities of the Civil Human Rights Front

Dr Hon Junius HO to ask:

During the riots in 2019, the Civil Human Rights Front (“CHRF”) initiated a number of assemblies and processions. It has been reported that despite CHRF’s repeated claims that it was organizing such activities under the principle that they should be “peaceful, rational and non-violent”, the protesters shouted slogans that advocated violent opposition from time to time during such activities, and there were often protesters committing acts of violent attacks after such activities had ended, leading quite a number of young people astray to break the law. Moreover, CHRF has been suspected of laundering money, colluding with foreign forces and violating the National Security Law for Hong Kong. Following CHRF’s announcement of its disbandment on the 15th of last month, the Police issued a statement indicating that they were following up CHRF’s suspected offences of violating the Societies Ordinance, and would continue to pursue whether any organization and person had violated the National Security Law for Hong Kong and other Hong Kong laws. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) regarding CHRF’s suspected illegal acts, how the law enforcement agencies will pursue the relevant legal liabilities of its former successive convenors and office-bearers as well as its member organizations;
- (2) whether the law enforcement agencies will step up efforts to pursue, in accordance with the law, the liabilities of the aforesaid organizations and persons that advocated violence; and
- (3) whether the law enforcement agencies will undertake to expedite the handling of those cases on the illegal acts relating to the activities organized by CHRF, lest the suspects concerned abscond overseas and escape justice?

Question 3  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Alienation of Home Ownership Scheme flats

Hon KWOK Wai-keung to ask:

Upon the expiry of the alienation restriction period of Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) flats, the owners concerned may sell their flats in the open market after paying a premium to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”), and they may also sell their flats in the HOS Secondary Market without paying a premium. On the other hand, the findings of a study released at the end of last year show that the transaction prices of second-hand HOS flats have risen by more than one-fold over the preceding seven years, representing a rate of increase higher than that in the private residential market during the same period. In addition, cases of record-breaking transaction prices in the HOS Secondary Market have frequently occurred in recent months. Regarding the alienation of HOS flats, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications received in each of the past five years by HA from HOS flat owners for selling their flats in the HOS Secondary market in the first two years and within the period from the third to the fifth year upon purchase;
- (2) whether HA will formulate measures to prevent HOS flats from becoming a property investment tool, such as extending the validity period of the requirement under which flat owners may only sell their flats in the HOS Secondary Market at a price not higher than the purchase price from two to five years; and
- (3) whether HA will require that those HOS flats HA offers for sale in future may not be sold in the open market, so as to clearly segregate the subsidized housing market from the private residential market, and to prevent HOS flats from becoming a property investment tool; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 4  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Resumption of normal traveller clearance  
between Hong Kong and the Mainland

Hon Michael TIEN to ask:

It is reported that there has been no local confirmed case of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) in Hong Kong with an unknown source of infection for more than a month since mid-August. In addition, in view of the stable epidemic situation on the Mainland, the Government currently allows Hong Kong and Mainland residents to come to Hong Kong from the Mainland under the Return2hk and the Come2hk Schemes respectively, and they are required to undergo multiple virus testing after arriving in Hong Kong. However, it is not known when normal traveller clearance between Hong Kong and the Mainland can be fully resumed. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as a government expert consultant has suggested that people coming to Hong Kong from the Mainland should be required to have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course before they come to Hong Kong, so as to further reduce the risk of importing the epidemic, whether the Government will consider the suggestion;
- (2) whether it has discussed with the authorities of the various Mainland provinces and cities (including the Guangdong Province, Shanghai and Beijing) the resumption of normal traveller clearance between the two places; if so, of the progress; and
- (3) why the “Hong Kong Health Code” system, the development of which was completed in August last year, has not yet been launched; whether it will discuss with the Guangdong Provincial authorities the implementation of the following measure: if a resident of either place meets four conditions (i.e. having completed a COVID-19 vaccination course, having obtained proof of a positive result of serology antibody test, having no outbound travel history in the past month, and having obtained proof of a negative result of polymerase chain reaction nucleic acid test), he or she may apply for a “Guangdong-Hong Kong health code” which is valid for two weeks, so that he or she will be exempted from entry quarantine when he or she travels between Hong Kong and the designated cities of the Guangdong Province?

Question 5  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Immigration quarantine for foreign domestic helpers

Hon YIU Si-wing to ask:

The Government has, since 30 August, allowed foreign domestic helpers (“FDHs”) from Indonesia or the Philippines to enter Hong Kong in an orderly manner. They are required to undergo quarantine at a designated quarantine hotel or the Penny’s Bay Quarantine Centre upon entry into Hong Kong. Calculating on the basis that each FDH is subject to quarantine for 21 days, the daily quota for quarantine is 70 on average. It has been reported that as there are currently about 6 000 to 7 000 FDHs waiting to come to Hong Kong, a majority of such FDHs will have to wait for several months before they can enter Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as quite a number of hotels have indicated that they are willing to be designated as quarantine hotels for FDHs, whether the Government will increase the number of quarantine hotels and the quarantine quota for FDHs in the near future, so as to alleviate the shortage of FDHs as soon as possible; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as quite a number of families (especially those with young children, the elderly and the sick) urgently need to hire FDHs, whether the Government will take measures to alleviate the pressure on such families’ living before their FDHs assume duty, or accord priority to the FDHs hired by such families in being allocated the quarantine quota; and
- (3) whether it knows, in the event that FDHs are unable to come to Hong Kong as scheduled due to the Government’s invocation of the place-specific flight suspension mechanism, who will bear the expenses in relation to the rooms booked for quarantine of FDHs, and whether any mechanism is currently in place to reduce that party’s loss?

Question 6  
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Regulation of employment agencies  
for placement of foreign domestic helpers

Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask:

I have received quite a number of complaints from employers and prospective employers of foreign domestic helpers (“FDHs”), alleging that some employment agencies for placement of FDHs (“EAs”) have engaged in malpractices such as overcharging commissions, charging fees under all sorts of pretexts, failing to provide services in accordance with written service agreements, and abetting FDHs to “job-hop” to take advantage of the recent shortage of FDHs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that the persons-in-charge of some EAs have, upon the EAs concerned being convicted and fined for unlawful acts, set up new EAs and continued to make huge profits by the same unlawful means, of the Government’s follow-up actions to eradicate such situation;
- (2) given that quite a number of complaints were about EAs charging FDH employers a great variety of hidden fees, resulting in such employers ultimately having to pay fees that were much higher than those set out in the service agreements, whether the Government will specify the types and maximum amounts of fees chargeable to FDH employers by EAs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as some FDH employers have relayed that the situation of EAs engaging in malpractices has become increasingly serious, whether the Government will review if the existing regulatory regime is outdated or pierced with loopholes and introduce corresponding amendments and increase the penalties; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?



Question 7  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Purchase of petrol by practitioners of  
the agricultural and fisheries industry

Hon Steven HO to ask:

Some practitioners of the agricultural and fisheries industry have relayed to me that as some oil companies no longer sell petrol in bulk after the disturbances arising from the opposition to the proposed legislative amendments erupted in 2019, it is difficult for them to use agricultural and fisheries machinery powered by petrol (e.g. plowing machines, and petrol outboard engines used in fishing vessels) and they need to switch to other modes of operation, resulting in an increase in costs and a significant impact on their livelihood. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the existing legislation regulating oil companies' sale of petrol in bulk, and the measures in place to prevent lawbreakers from purchasing petrol in bulk for criminal purposes;
- (2) whether it knows (a) which oil companies currently sell petrol in bulk to practitioners of the agricultural and fisheries industry and the related arrangements (including (i) whether documentary proof is required to be produced when purchasing petrol, and (ii) whether a restriction has been imposed on the purchase quantity), and (b) if the locations of the petrol filling stations concerned are convenient for practitioners of the agricultural and fisheries industry;
- (3) whether it will assist practitioners of the agricultural and fisheries industry in purchasing petrol more conveniently, such as issuing them with relevant documentary proof, and discussing with oil companies the streamlining of the relevant arrangements; and
- (4) whether it has assessed if the eight "Designated Bunkering Areas" ("DBAs") currently set up in Hong Kong waters can facilitate the operation of practitioners of the fisheries industry, and whether it will consider afresh setting up more DBAs?

Question 8  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Improving the law and order in rural areas

Hon Kenneth LAU to ask:

It is learnt that as rural areas are extensive in area and sparsely populated, burglaries occur there from time to time. There were 28 more burglary cases involving village houses in the first half of this year as compared with the same period last year, giving rise to worries that the law and order in rural areas shows a deteriorating trend. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of burglary cases which occurred in rural areas received by the various police districts as well as their detection rates, in each of the past three years;
- (2) of the new measures put in place by the Police to combat burglary crime committed in rural areas;
- (3) of the measures put in place by the Police to enhance communication and cooperation with the residents in rural areas, so as to detect and prevent burglary crime; and
- (4) whether the Police will consider increasing the manpower of the Rural Patrol Team; if so, of the relevant target establishment and implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 9  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Strategies to cope with the epidemic

Hon SHIU Ka-fai to ask:

Many members of the public and practitioners of a number of trades have relayed to me that they are eagerly looking forward to an expeditious resumption of normal traveller clearance between Hong Kong and the Mainland, so that residents of the two places will be able to fully engage in activities such as visiting relatives, travelling and doing business which have been restricted for a long time. On the other hand, the Chief Executive (“CE”) indicated early this month that Hong Kong could not and should not adopt a strategy of “co-existing with the virus” for coping with the epidemic, otherwise the hope of resuming normal traveller clearance with the Mainland will be even more remote. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has studied how countries and places which have adopted the strategy of “co-existing with the virus” for coping with the epidemic compare with (i) their own situations prior to their adoption of this strategy and (ii) those countries and places which have adopted the strategy of “zero-infection” case for coping with the epidemic in terms of infection rate, the incidence of cases with severe symptoms and the death toll; if so, of the details;
- (2) given that the epidemic in various places across the globe is still fluctuating, whether the Government has assessed the impacts of Hong Kong’s long-term adoption of the strategy of “zero-infection” case on local economic activities such as tourism as well as convention and exhibition, and whether it has formulated corresponding plans; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as CE indicated in the middle of this month that the Government was discussing with the Mainland authorities the circumstances and conditions under which normal traveller clearance could be resumed in a progressive and an orderly manner, and that the Central Authorities were very supportive of the experts from Hong Kong and the Mainland to establish a dialogue in this respect, of the progress of the relevant work, including whether the relevant conditions and timetables have been worked out?

Question 10  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Support for individuals and families with financial difficulties

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung to ask:

The Government has relaxed the eligibility criteria for the Working Family Allowance (“WFA”) Scheme and the Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects starting from June this year for a period of one year, with a view to strengthening the support for individuals and families with financial difficulties. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications received under the aforesaid initiatives in each month since March this year;
- (2) of the respective projected expenditures of the aforesaid initiatives for the period from June this year to May next year; and
- (3) whether it will consider reviewing and improving the WFA Scheme in the near future (e.g. by increasing the amounts of allowances and introducing an additional “under-employment allowance”)?

Question 11  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Public facilities on Po Toi Island

Hon Mrs Regina IP to ask:

Po Toi Island is a popular tourist spot but it lacks public facilities, causing great inconvenience to the residents on the island and tourists. The only public toilet on the island is far away from the pier, is overloaded during peak tourist seasons, and gives off stench as it is an aqua privy; residents on the island do not have tap water supply and can only use rainwater collected by water storage tanks, nor do they have electricity supply and can only rely on power generators for provision of night-time lighting. In addition, as the only existing trail connecting Tai Wan and the pier is rugged with many steps, the residents of the island have, over the years, strived for the construction by the Government of a barrier-free access connecting the two places as a replacement, but to no avail. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will provide modernized public toilets near the pier and at other places with high visitor flows on Po Toi Island, and decommission that aqua privy; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as it has been reported that a power company has completed a preliminary design study on the construction of a solar power generation system on Po Toi Island, whether the Government knows the project's details (including the generating capacity and the construction timetable) and progress;
- (3) as it has been reported that the Water Supplies Department commissioned early last year a consultant to conduct investigation work on underground water resources on Po Toi Island, of the progress of the relevant work; and
- (4) whether it will study afresh the construction of the aforesaid barrier-free access; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and what other measures are in place to facilitate tourists as well as aged and mobility-impaired residents on the island to commute between Tai Wan and the pier?

Question 12  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Provision of infrastructure

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

The current-term Government advocates the adoption of the “infrastructure-led” and “capacity creating” approaches in planning for new development areas, so as to create more development opportunities for these areas and make the use of lands in their vicinity more efficient. Regarding the provision of infrastructure, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as the Government indicated in the 2018 Policy Address that it must proactively create capacity through a “transport-first” strategy, of the respective numbers of transport infrastructure projects (i) proposed, (ii) in respect of which funding have been approved and (iii) commenced, since 2018, and set out by project name how the relevant projects create capacity and make the use of lands in their vicinity more efficient;
- (2) of the various indicators adopted for reflecting the economic return of transport infrastructure projects (and whether these indicators include new economic activities and the increase in land value) and their respective weightings;
- (3) of the details of the improvement works for the New Territories sewerage systems completed in the past five years, including the project names, the lots involved, as well as the commencement and completion dates of such works;
- (4) of the current number of villages in the New Territories the sewerage systems of which have yet to connect to public sewers; the respective numbers of villages for whose sewerage systems the Government (i) has and (ii) has not yet carried out improvement works, together with the details of the former and the reasons for the latter; and
- (5) whether, in the light of a number of large-scale development projects being carried out in the New Territories, it has plans to enhance the infrastructure in respect of electricity supply, fresh water supply, drainage and sewerage, etc., in the New Territories in the coming five years; if so, of the details and timetables of the various works projects?

Question 13  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The Hong Kong Club

Hon Paul TSE to ask:

It has been reported that the Hong Kong Club (“HKC”) was established in 1846, shortly after Hong Kong had become a British colony. In 1895, the British Hong Kong Government granted HKC a piece of land on Jackson Road adjacent to Statue Square in Central at a rent of \$324 per annum for a term of 999 years (i.e. until 2894) for the construction of a club building for British officials and business tycoons’ gathering and socialization. In the early 1980s, HKC reached an agreement with a private developer, under which the latter funded the redevelopment of the original club building into a new 21-storey building in exchange for the rental income generated by letting out most of the storeys until 2009. There are views that HKC has occupied a site in the heart of Central for over a century but all along it has only around 1 500 members, and as Hong Kong reunified with the Motherland in 1997, the function of that building as a place for British officials and business tycoons’ gathering and socialization during the colonial period no longer exists. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the details of the land lease of the HKC building, and whether it contains any terms concerning restrictions on development and subletting as well as the social responsibilities to be fulfilled; the existing channel(s) through which members of the public may inspect the lease;
- (2) whether any land premium was paid to the Government when the HKC building was redeveloped in the early 1980s, and whether HKC is currently required to pay tax for the rental income from its club building;
- (3) given that the HKC building occupies a site in the heart of Central at a low government rent, and that its members are the rich or noble with the general public not being able to enjoy its facilities, whether the Government has assessed if such a situation is outdated and not in the public interest;
- (4) whether it will consider the suggestion made by the former Governor Sir Cecil Clementi in the early 19th century: replacing HKC with a club whose membership is to be open to people of all races and social strata; and

- (5) whether it has assessed the current market price of the site of the HKC building; whether it will consider putting forth a land exchange proposal to HKC with a view to vacating the precious site occupied by its club building for redevelopment, so that the proceeds so derived can be used to alleviate the record-breaking fiscal deficit of the Government?



Question 14  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Statistics on private development projects

Hon Wilson OR to ask:

Regarding the statistics on private development projects, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications for (a) in-situ land exchange, (b) non-in-situ land exchange and (c) lease modification for private residential development projects (i) received and (ii) processed by the Lands Department (“LandsD”) in each year from 2015 to 2020, as well as (iii) the estimated total number of units to be provided by the projects involved in the processed cases (set out in Table 1);

Table 1

Year	Type of applications	(i) Number of applications received	(ii) Number of applications processed	(iii) Estimated total number of units to be provided by the projects involved in the processed cases
2015	(a) In-situ land exchange			
	(b) Non-in-situ land exchange			
	(c) Lease modification			
	Total:			
...				
2020				

- (2) of the respective numbers of applications for (a) in-situ land exchange, (b) non-in-situ land exchange and (c) lease modification for private non-residential development projects (i) received and (ii) processed by LandsD in each year from 2015 to 2020, as well as (iii) the estimated total number of units to be provided by the projects involved in the processed cases (set out in a table of the same format as Table 1); and
- (3) of the number of premium assessment cases for private residential development projects completed by LandsD in each of the past five financial years, and set out in Table 2 the details of each project?

Table 2

Project	Execution date of land document [Type of transaction]	Location [Lot number]	Original use	Site area (hectares)	Date of valid application for land exchange/ lease modification	Estimated number of units

Question 15  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Common Spatial Data Infrastructure

Hon CHAN Chun-ying to ask:

To facilitate the development of Hong Kong into a smart city, the Government is developing a Common Spatial Data Infrastructure (“CSDI”) portal, with a view to enhancing the use, management, discovery and sharing of spatial data. CSDI will be ready for full operation next year. On the other hand, it is learnt that the Singapore Government has developed CSDI for more than 10 years, and the key measures introduced in this respect include setting specific performance pledges for all government agencies (e.g. data fusion for cross-agency projects to be completed within seven working days), and actively encouraging the private sector to provide and use spatial data. The geospatial industry in Singapore is developing vibrantly, with its scale nearly tripling to an amount equivalent to HK\$2.8 billion between 2009 and 2020. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has set specific targets for the provision of spatial data by policy bureaux/government departments; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether specific measures are in place to encourage public and private organizations to actively provide CSDI with the geospatial data in their possession; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it has assessed how the private sector’s participation in CSDI can facilitate the development of the local geospatial industry; if so, of the details (including the scale expected to be achieved), and whether a development roadmap will be drawn up for such industry; if it has not assessed, the reasons for that?

Question 16  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Flooding problem in the New Territories North

Hon Holden CHOW to ask:

It has been reported that in the early hours on 6 August this year when a Red Rainstorm Warning Signal and a Special Announcement on Flooding in the Northern New Territories were in force, serious flooding occurred on Lin Ma Hang Road near the roundabout of Heung Yuen Wai Highway in the New Territories North (“NTN”). As a result, two motor vehicles broke down and, among them, a seven-seater vehicle was almost submerged. Some residents in the New Territories have pointed out that serious flooding often occurs in NTN (particularly in rural areas) during periods of heavy rain, threatening the safety of the residents’ properties and lives. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has plans to conduct a comprehensive review on the planning of the stormwater drainage facilities in NTN; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (2) of the number and other details of flood barriers installed by the Drainage Services Department (“DSD”) in the past five years for the residential areas in flood-prone districts;
- (3) of the quantity of sandbags currently kept in stock by DSD for residents and shop operators in need to borrow before the onset of flooding, and how DSD ensures the timely delivery of sandbags to them; and
- (4) given that flooding occurred on the major roads (including Man Kam To Road and the aforesaid roundabout) in NTN during the heavy rainstorms in early August this year, and caused serious traffic congestion, of the Government’s plans to improve the stormwater drainage facilities of such roads so as to prevent the recurrence of traffic congestion caused by flooding?

Question 17  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Statistics on social incidents

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

Regarding the relevant statistics on the three series of social incidents, namely the Occupy Central movement in 2014, the Mong Kok disturbance on the night of the Lunar New Year's Day in 2016 and the disturbances arising from the opposition to the proposed legislative amendments in 2019, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) among the persons arrested in each series of social incidents, of the respective up-to-date numbers of those who:
  - (i) were released under the Police Superintendent's Discretion Scheme;
  - (ii) had to bear legal consequences (i.e. convicted, bound over, and placed under a Care or Protection Order), with a breakdown by consequence;
  - (iii) had the charges against them withdrawn;
  - (iv) were acquitted after trial; and
  - (v) are awaiting trial;
- (2) of a breakdown of the numbers of persons mentioned in (1) by (i) the age group to which they belonged, and (ii) capacity (i.e. primary student, secondary student, tertiary student, and others), at the time of arrest (set out in a table);
- (3) whether it knows, in respect of the cases relating to each series of social incidents, the respective numbers of cases which have been or will be heard by the courts, with a tabulated breakdown by (i) court level and (ii) case type (i.e. criminal or civil);
- (4) in respect of the criminal cases relating to each series of social incidents, of the respective up-to-date numbers of legal aid applications (i) received and (ii) approved by the Legal Aid Department ("LAD"), as well as LAD's total expenditure on legal costs incurred for such cases so far; and
- (5) in respect of the criminal cases relating to each series of social incidents, of the up-to-date number of the persons involved who have jumped bail, and the measures taken by the Government to pursue and arrest them?

Question 18  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Problem of water dripping from air-conditioners

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

Regarding the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following figures on the complaints about water dripping from air conditioners received, and the law enforcement actions taken on the matter, in each of the past three years and since January this year by the 19 district environmental hygiene offices (“DEHO”) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”) respectively:
  - (i) the number of complaints received,
  - (ii) the number of cases identified through proactive inspections,
  - (iii) the number of nuisance notices issued,
  - (iv) the number of applications for nuisance orders made to the court, and
  - (v) the number of prosecutions instituted as well as the average amount of fine imposed on the convicted persons;
- (2) of a breakdown of the figures mentioned in (1) by type of housing (namely public rental housing, subsidized sale housing and private housing);
- (3) of the following information relating to the handling of the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners by FEHD in each of the past three years and since January this year (set out by DEHO):
  - (i) the staffing establishment for handling water dripping from air-conditioners;
  - (ii) in respect of the completed cases, the average, longest and shortest time taken to (a) investigate and (b) reply to complainants; and
  - (iii) the average number of days between inspections conducted for the same street or same building;
- (4) of the following information relating to the “Scheme of Participation by Property Management Agents in Tackling Dripping Air-conditioners” in each of the past three years and since January this year:

- (i) the number and percentage of property management agents participating in the Scheme;
  - (ii) the number and percentage of estates participating in the Scheme;
  - (iii) whether it knows, among the relevant complaints for the participating estates, the respective percentages of those cases in which the water dripping problem was (a) resolved and (b) referred to FEHD for follow-up actions; and
  - (iv) whether it has evaluated the effectiveness of the Scheme in helping to resolve the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners in the estates concerned; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (5) as the Government has advised that there are difficulties inherent in handling complaints about water dripping from air-conditioners (e.g. (i) difficulties in ascertaining the source of water dripping in dim light environment, and (ii) there may be multiple sources of water dripping because air-conditioners are installed vertically at the same location on each floor of high-rise multi-storey buildings), whether the Government will apply advanced technologies for resolving those difficulties; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (6) as the Government indicated in 2015 that it would review the practice of recruiting extra contract staff in summer to support frontline staff in handling the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners, and that it would, subject to the availability of resources, consider setting up dedicated teams to focus mainly on handling more complicated complaints in various districts, of (i) the review outcome and (ii) the number of dedicated teams and staffing establishment in each of the past three years and since January this year?

Question 19  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Development and manufacture of medicines  
by local biotechnology industry

Hon Elizabeth QUAT to ask:

The University of Hong Kong (“HKU”) is currently researching and developing the world’s first nasal vaccine against the Coronavirus Disease 2019 with fewer side effects, and has completed phase one clinical trial of the vaccine. It has been reported that the industrialization of the vaccine is faced with those problems that local biotechnology research and development (“R&D”) personnel commonly encounter. The Research Report on Hong Kong-Shenzhen Biotechnology Collaboration (“the Report”) recently released by Our Hong Kong Foundation has pointed out that the problems concerned are largely related to the clinical trials and manufacture of medicines. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as some members of the biotechnology industry have pointed out that although Hong Kong has a worldwide reputation for its strengths in the clinical trials and research of medicines, and the data obtained from relevant clinical trials have been recognized by quite a number of major drug regulatory authorities (including those on the Mainland and in the United States and Europe), its clinical trial industry lacks support from the Government, of the Government’s measures to support local hospitals and medical schools in conducting the clinical trials of medicines, and whether it has assessed the effectiveness of such measures; if such measures are not in place, of the reasons for that;
- (2) as the Report has pointed out that the time currently taken for vetting and approval of an application for conducting clinical trials of medicines in Hong Kong (particularly phase one clinical trial) is longer than that on the Mainland and in other places, whether the Government will explore shortening the time taken for vetting and approval of such applications, so as to attract medical and pharmaceutical enterprises to conduct clinical trials in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (3) as HKU's R&D team has indicated that the clinical trials concerned cannot commence as early as possible because there is not any vaccine manufacturing plant in Hong Kong, and the vaccine doses to be used in the clinical trials have to be produced by a pharmaceutical company on the Mainland, whether the re-industrialization initiatives implemented by the Government include those measures to facilitate biotechnology enterprises to set up high-end pharmaceutical manufacturing plants in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) of the measures in place to make use of the Lok Ma Chau Loop to promote the scaled development of the biotechnology industry in Hong Kong, and whether such measures include providing subsidies to the relevant organizations to facilitate the establishment in the Loop of a base for coordinating Mainland/Hong Kong multi-centre late-stage clinical trials or high-end pharmaceutical production lines?



Question 20  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Assisting young people in taking up employment

Hon LUK Chung-hung to ask:

In the past three years, the unemployment rates of persons belonging to the two age groups of 15 to 19 and 20 to 29 were both higher than those of persons from other age groups. Although the unemployment rates of persons from the two age groups dropped from their peaks in July to September last year (i.e. 25.2% and 12%) to 18.5% and 8.6% in May to July this year respectively, such rates were still much higher than those of persons from other age groups. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it conducted in the past three years studies and surveys on matters such as the causes of unemployment among young people, their intention to receive training, career aspirations and terms of employment; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will regularly conduct thematic studies and surveys with young people and employers as targets;
- (2) whether it evaluated in the past three years the effectiveness of those measures which had been introduced to assist persons from the aforesaid two age groups in taking up employment; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will conduct such an evaluation and improve the relevant measures based on the evaluation results; and
- (3) given that in the light of the epidemic, the Government has launched the “Job Creation Scheme” and introduced measures under the Scheme to assist young people in taking up employment, of the progress and effectiveness of the various measures?

Question 21  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Problems faced by the taxi trade

Hon Frankie YICK to ask:

The findings of a research have pointed out that the taxi trade has been facing in recent years a number of structural problems, including low and rigid taxi fares, drivers earning an income lower than the average level of the overall transport sector, as well as ageing and shortage of drivers. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that it has been an established practice for the Government, when setting the fare levels of taxis, to maintain sufficient differentials between taxi fares and those of other public transport modes (the differentials being five to seven times and three to four times for urban taxis and New Territories taxis respectively) in order to minimize the competition between the former and the latter, how such differentials are determined and computed; of the current actual differentials between taxi fares and those of the various public transport modes; if such differentials are lower than the target levels, whether the Government has plans to increase the differentials so as to bring them back to the target levels, with a view to improving drivers' income;
- (2) of the number of holders of a valid full driving licence for taxis and, among them, the number of those who were active taxi drivers, in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by the age group to which they belonged (i.e. aged 29 or below, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79, and 80 or above); apart from shortening, from three years to one year, the period for which an applicant for a driving licence for commercial vehicles (including taxis) must have held a private car/light goods vehicle valid full driving licence, the new measures in place to address the problems of ageing and shortage of taxi drivers; and
- (3) whether the Government will, by drawing reference from the relevant measures of New South Wales of Australia, introduce the following measures to enhance the competitiveness of the taxi trade: (i) implementing flexible fare arrangements (e.g. fares for peak and late night hours being higher than those for other hours), (ii) providing subsidies to drivers for carriage of wheelchair-bound passengers on a per trip basis, and (iii) providing interest-free loans to assist the taxi trade in expediting the replacement of existing taxis by new models that can accommodate wheelchair-bound passengers;

if so, of the details; if not, what alternative measures that the Government has in place?

Question 22  
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The Modular Integrated Construction method

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok to ask:

Compared with traditional construction methods, the Modular Integrated Construction method (“MiC”) can substantially reduce construction time, uplift on-site productivity and save costs. In 2018, the Government allocated \$1 billion for setting up a Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (“the Fund”) to subsidize the adoption of innovative technologies (including MiC) by the construction industry in Hong Kong for enhancing construction efficiency. Moreover, to encourage broader adoption of MiC by developers, the Buildings Department (“BD”) announced a concessionary measure in May 2019: 6% of the floor area of a development constructed by MiC may be disregarded from the calculation of the gross floor area (“GFA”) of that development and will not be subject to the current 10% cap on GFA concessions. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that as at the end of May this year, among the 101 applications for subsidies relating to MiC received under the Fund, only 37 of them were approved (i.e. a success rate of less than 40%), whether the Government has analysed the causes for the low success rate of applications and made improvement; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will consider raising the amount of non-recurrent commitment of the Fund and at the same time relaxing the eligibility criteria and streamlining the vetting and approval procedure, so as to further promote the adoption of innovative construction technologies such as MiC in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the respective numbers of applications related to the aforesaid concessionary measure received, approved and rejected by BD since June 2019; and
- (4) whether it will consider providing more concessions or other incentives in the light of market situations to encourage greater adoption of MiC by developers; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?