

**For discussion on
11 October 2021**

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

**2021 Policy Address
Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau**

Introduction

The major policy responsibilities of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) include youth development, sport, culture and arts, and district administration. The 2021 Policy Address proposes a series of policy initiatives on these aspects. This paper presents our background, new initiatives and major ongoing initiatives.

Our Background

2. The current-term Government strives to do its best in youth development work. Through the platform of the Youth Development Commission (YDC), relevant policy bureaux and non-governmental organisations strive to jointly address young people's concerns about education, career pursuit and home ownership, and encourage their participation in politics as well as public policy discussion and debate. Looking ahead, we will continue to enrich communication channels to gauge the views of young people of different backgrounds in order to better meet their needs in areas such as education, career pursuits, housing, upward mobility and development of their potential, etc. as well as to facilitate them to grasp the various opportunities brought about by the Outline of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 (14th Five-Year Plan). and development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). At the same time, we need to put more emphasis on nurturing young people's positive thinking to help them develop positive values, and enable them to become a new generation with a sense of responsibility, and with an aspiration and willingness to strive for the future of our country and of Hong

Kong.

3. For sports development, we currently follow the Government's three policy objectives to promote sports for all, support elite sports and promote Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events, which includes promoting sports in the community and in schools, strengthening the support to athletes and attracting major international sports events to Hong Kong. Meanwhile, we endeavour to implement the Kai Tak Sports Park project and build more community sports facilities.

4. On culture and the arts, our vision is to promote Hong Kong as a vibrant international cultural metropolis and achieve the objective of developing the city into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange according to the 14th Five-Year Plan. We will also provide the public with opportunities for wide participation in culture and the arts while continuing our efforts to invest resources in nurturing talent, encourage innovation and support the preservation and promotion of our traditional cultures.

5. We will continue to work closely with different stakeholders in the community and practically take into account their opinions to alleviate district problems, and implement more effectively the District Minor Works Programme and various livelihood-related community activities.

New Initiatives

Youth Development

I. Promotion of Young People's Positive Thinking and Well-being

6. The Government is concerned about the physical and mental well-being of young people and puts emphasis on nurturing young people's positive thinking and positive values. We strive to establish effective channels to enable them to transform their aspirations and passion into a constructive force for community building. To this end, the Government will invite the YDC to explore ways to enrich its existing programmes and launch new funding initiatives to subsidise eligible NGOs to organise projects that are conducive to nurturing young people's positive thinking, particularly those projects which involve cross-sectoral efforts or are youth-led and could drive community building.

7. Besides, the YDC has rolled out a pilot scheme to promote youth outdoor adventure training activities in July this year. The pilot scheme has received positive responses so far and is expected to benefit about 2 600 young people. Subject to the outcome of the pilot scheme, we will roll out a brand-new thematic funding scheme on outdoor adventure training activities for more NGOs to provide systematic and quality outdoor adventure training activities for young people.

II. Youth Entrepreneurship

8. The Government has launched two funding schemes under the Youth Development Fund (YDF) to further support youth start-ups to start businesses in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the GBA, and provide them with entrepreneurial support and incubation services that befit their needs. The application results were announced in February this year. The Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area supports 16 NGOs to organise youth entrepreneurship projects in the GBA, providing capital subsidy to about 230 youth start-ups (involving more than 800 young people) and rendering entrepreneurial support and incubation services to more than 4 000 young people. Funded NGOs have started rolling out their youth entrepreneurial projects and received positive response. Some funded NGOs have also successfully recruited the first batch of youth start-up teams and will assist them in settling in GBA entrepreneurial bases subject to the development of the pandemic. Meanwhile, the Funding Scheme for Experiential Programmes at Innovation and Entrepreneurial Bases in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area supports 15 NGOs to organise short-term experiential projects at innovative and entrepreneurial bases in the GBA, benefiting about 700 young people.

9. Looking ahead, we will establish an Alliance of Hong Kong Youth Innovative and Entrepreneurial Bases in the Greater Bay Area. Organisations from Guangdong and Hong Kong with strength and proven track record, such as innovative and entrepreneurial bases, universities, NGOs, scientific research institutes, professional bodies, venture funds, etc. will be invited to join the alliance and jointly set up a one-stop information, publicity and exchange platform to support Hong Kong youth entrepreneurs in GBA.

10. HAB will also continue to implement initiatives related to young people's concerns about education, career pursuit and home ownership, and participation in politics as well as public policy discussion and debate. These initiatives include Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth,

youth entrepreneurship, youth internship and exchange, youth hostels, Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities and YDC Youth Ambassadors Programme, which are set out in paragraphs 1 to 6 in Annex.

Sports

I. Elite Sports

11. The Hong Kong, China Delegation performed brilliantly at the Tokyo Olympic Games (OG), achieving the best results of one gold, two silver and three bronze medals in Hong Kong history; attained remarkable and encouraging results of two silver and three bronze medals at the Tokyo Paralympic Games (PG); and captured two gold and five bronze medals at the 14th National Games. The entire community was proud of our athletes and was lifted by their excellent performance. The success of the Hong Kong athletes does not come about by chance. In addition to their own efforts and the support of different sectors, the Government's policy directives and continuous allocation of resources are also indispensable.

12. We will expedite the construction of the new facilities building of the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) and strive for completion in mid-2024. The new facilities building will have a net operating floor area of about 8 935 m². It will mainly provide two new training venues, and expand the strength and conditioning, sports science and sports medicine facilities. The approval by the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council on the funding application for the main works is being sought.

13. The Government and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust will finance jointly the setting up of a \$300 million Sports Science and Research Funding Scheme to, through research in sports science and sports medicine, enhance the competitiveness of athletes and their preparation for major international sports events in the coming few years, including the 2022 Hangzhou Asian Games and Asian Para Games, the 2024 Paris OG and PG, as well as the 15th National Games to be co-hosted by the Guangdong Province, Hong Kong and Macao. The approval by the FC on the funding allocation is being sought.

14. Retirement support is one of the major factors that athletes would consider when deciding whether to become full-time athletes. Therefore, the Government will continue to provide support for retired athletes (including athletes with disabilities). This year, more than 70 retired athletes have joined the Retired Athletes Transformation Programme

(RATP), which was launched in 2018. They are employed by eligible schools and sports organisations to assist in promoting sports and identifying potential sports talents. In the light of the increasing number of elite athletes, the number of retired athletes participating in the RATP would be doubled in the future. We will review our retirement support with a view to providing more career transformation opportunities to them as appropriate.

15. In addition to the existing policy objectives of supporting elite sports, maintaining Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events and promoting sports in the community, we will explore ways to further promote sports development in Hong Kong through enhanced professionalism in sports sector and development of sports as an industry. The commissioning of the Kai Tak Sports Park in 2023 and opportunities arising from the Greater Bay Area will foster more diversified development in sports and provide young people as well as retired athletes with job and development opportunities. A working group chaired by the Secretary for Home Affairs will discuss with the business and sports sectors on how to further support the development of the sports industry in Hong Kong.

II. Hosting the 15th National Games in 2025

16. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) is grateful for the trust and support of the Central Government in allowing Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao to co-host the 15th National Games in 2025. We will spare no effort to work closely with the relevant ministries of the Central Government, and the governments of the Guangdong Province and Macao SAR to organise the 15th National Games, which will be “simple, safe and wonderful”.

III. Sports Development in Schools

17. Apart from that, the Government encourages schools to attach greater importance to sports development. The Home Affairs Bureau and the Education Bureau will examine ways to improve the physical fitness and participation in physical activities through the schooling years of children and adolescents (including the curriculum, extra-curricular and holiday activities), and provide them with more opportunities to take part in different kinds of sports programmes and competitions, so as to lay a good foundation for students in sports from an early age.

IV. One-stop Online Resources Centre “Leisure and Cultural Services Department Edutainment Channel”

18. Last year, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) launched its one-stop online resources centre, the LCSD Edutainment Channel (the Channel) to give the public access to sports and cultural resources anytime anywhere. The Channel can more effectively promote recreation, sports, culture and arts through combining education with entertainment. Since its launch, a total of around 600 videos have been uploaded to the Channel which are well received by members of the public with over 14 million views as at August 2021. Following the encouraging response to the Sports 101 video series, we plan to add to the 19 sports videos already released with videos of other sports (around 45 types) to go live in an orderly and timely manner starting from the fourth quarter of 2021 to further enrich the content of the Channel. Moreover, the Channel will also include event highlights of the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020 to give the public a fuller understanding of the achievements of Hong Kong athletes in the international sports arena.

V. "Inclusive Park for Pets"

19. As a new attempt of LCSD in recent years, the "Inclusive Park for Pets" aims at enabling park users and members of the public who bring their pets into LCSD's parks to use park facilities together in an inclusive environment. Following the successful implementation of the Trial Scheme of “Inclusive Parks for Pets” since January 2019, LCSD computerize the six “Inclusive Parks for Pets” under the trial scheme and provided another 35 “Inclusive Parks for Pets” in various districts starting from February 2021. To meet public aspiration for opening up more parks for them to visit with pets, the LCSD has plan to provide over 60 additional “Inclusive Parks for Pets” in 18 districts in 2022 after consultation with local community, making a total of more than 100 “Inclusive Parks for Pets” across the territory. Ancillary facilities of the venues concerned will also be enhanced.

20. Ongoing sports-related initiatives under HAB are set out in paragraphs 7 to 19 of **Annex**.

Arts and Culture

I. Developing into an East-meets-West Centre for International Cultural Exchange

21. The cultural industries in Hong Kong have been given a boost of confidence by the 14th Five-Year Plan for its support towards Hong Kong developing into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. To realise our new positioning in culture development, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government will work on five directions, namely (1) developing world-class cultural facilities and a pluralistic cultural environment; (2) strengthening our connections with overseas arts and culture organisations; (3) enhancing cultural exchange and co-operation with the Mainland; (4) leveraging technology; and (5) nurturing talent. Concrete measures include expanding the diversity and contents of famous arts and culture brands like Art Basel Hong Kong and Hong Kong Arts Festival, and holding large-scale arts markets to attract high-end visitors. We will also showcase the arts and cultural achievements of Hong Kong and promote cultural exchanges through activities such as the “Hong Kong Week”, and co-operate with Mainland and overseas cultural institutions and museums to solicit the exhibition of their precious cultural relics in Hong Kong and to lend Hong Kong arts and cultural collections for their exhibition. Furthermore, the Government will further expand Hong Kong’s cultural links with the Mainland and overseas by working in collaboration with governments and cultural organisations of Mainland provinces and municipalities and overseas countries to provide more performance opportunities for local arts groups and broaden the audience of Hong Kong’s arts and cultural programmes.

22. The Government will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to nurture talent in different areas, such as arts administration, arts technology (arts tech) and script production. To promote the development of arts tech, the Government will include arts tech experts in the Talent List under the “Quality Migrant Admission Scheme” with a view to promoting the growth of the industry through the introduction of high-quality arts tech experts.

II. Cultural Facilities

23. The construction of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre (EKCC) is underway and it is scheduled to open in phases in 2023. The EKCC will combine arts with technology. In addition to retrofitting the venue with equipment that is advanced in innovative technology, a testbed designated

as The Lab will be set up as an incubator for the development of arts tech. Artists may make use of all-round computerised stage facilities and systems of projection, tracking, execution and real-time webcast to inject novel ideas and effects into their artistic creations. The EKCC will play a facilitating role in incubating and developing local artists and young people while nurturing audience to usher Hong Kong into a smart era of creativity and performing arts, with a hope to further enhancing the city's status in the international arts arena.

III. Activity Centre for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture

24. The LCSD plans to set up an Activity Centre for the Promotion of Chinese History and Culture. The Centre will have access to the collections of the Hong Kong Museum of History for organising educational and promotional activities. To enhance the public's knowledge of Chinese history and traditional cultures, precious artefacts bearing witness to the city's history and the connection to our country's historical and cultural progresses will be presented. The Centre will also serve as an alternative extra-curricular learning platform for students to nurture their interest in research on Chinese history and culture as well as their manifestation in Hong Kong, and in the related conservation work.

25. The on-going initiatives of the Home Affairs Bureau in supporting and promoting the development of arts and culture, such as the continued support for local arts groups, the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District and other cultural facilities, are set out in paragraphs 20 to 30 of Annex.

Community Building

Tso/Tong

26. A considerable amount of tso/tong land in the New Territories is available for development. Tsos/tongs are private organisations, the appointment of manager and the sale of land owned by a tso/tong are subject to the consent of the relevant authority under the existing legislation. Currently, the New Territories District Officers (DOs) are responsible for processing the applications concerned. Since the relevant legislation does not set out specific requirements for the processing of applications in relation to tsos/tongs, DOs can only process applications according to the general principles behind previous court judgments.

27. With a view to unlocking the development potential of tso/tong land, we will set up a working group with the Development Bureau and Heung Yee Kuk within this year to examine the existing administration of tsos/tongs and make improvement recommendations on the premise of respecting the tradition of tsos/tongs and protecting the legitimate interests of tso/tong members. It is expected that the review will be completed and specific amendment proposals will be formulated within a year.

28. HAB's on-going initiatives on district administration and community building are enclosed in **Annex** paragraphs 31 to 33.

Advice Sought

29. Members are invited to note the initiatives of HAB as set out above.

Home Affairs Bureau
October 2021

On-going Initiatives

Youth Development

Youth Development Commission

YDC was established in April 2018 to provide a platform for the formulation and coordination of youth-related policies, and to steer the implementation of relevant measures by policy bureaux and departments. To enable the YDC to communicate with young people in a more open, direct and interactive manner and as a new measure, the YDC has arranged policy thematic meetings since last year to invite relevant policy bureaux, YDC members and young people to engage in focused discussions on relevant topics and policies of specific policy areas, particularly those in relation to young people's concerns about education, career pursuit, home ownership as well as encouraging their participation in politics and policy discussion and debate. For example, at the past three meetings, we discussed topics including youth employment, multiple pathways other than employment and nurturing young people's positive thinking. Through the relevant meetings, the Government and the YDC listened to young people's views directly, thus enabling us to implement relevant policy measures more effectively and with more thorough consideration. Subject to the development of the epidemic, the YDC will continue to serve as a bridge to strengthen communication with young people through various online and physical channels.

Broadening Horizons of Young People

2. The Government is dedicated to helping our young people broaden their horizons. To this end, the Government has been actively launching internship and youth exchange programmes of various types and themes in the Mainland and overseas, benefitting over 70 000 young people each year before the pandemic. Among others, the Thematic Youth Internship Programmes to the Mainland were expanded from two programmes in 2017 to a total of seven in 2019, with five more in the pipeline. In light of the development of the COVID-19 pandemic, we requested all funded organisations of exchange and internship projects to suspend or postpone their projects in late January last year. At the same time, we have permitted funded organisations to organise local activities that do not involve crowd gatherings, such as online briefing sessions, seminars and training courses, for participants to learn about the culture, history, social features, people's way of life, latest development, etc. in the Mainland and overseas countries

(particularly the exchange/internship destinations). We will re-launch various programmes subject to the development of the pandemic, as well as enhance the breadth and depth of all programmes to help young people widen their exposure, accumulate work experience and gain an understanding of the development opportunities of our country and around the world.

Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities

3. Life planning is a continuous and life-long process. It is also a crucial part of young people's transition from schools to the workforce. YDC injected additional resources to enhance the Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities in 2019 to sponsor 24 NGOs in organising life planning activities in collaboration with 360 secondary schools. In view of the COVID-19 outbreak, we allocated additional resources to the NGOs in March last year so that they could make use of technology and e-learning to organise more life planning activities that would enhance young people's well-being, stress management and positive thinking during the pandemic. In addition, as a response to the discussions during the aforementioned online policy thematic meeting, YDC further enhanced the funding scheme and introduced the Individual Study and Career Support Service for Secondary School Students and Leavers in November last year. Under the support service, the 24 currently funded NGOs were provided with one-off additional funding for a period of one year to provide comprehensive, in-depth and sustainable counselling services, particularly for secondary school students who have yet to have a clear progression or employment path as well as students in need.

YDC Youth Ambassadors Programme

4. The YDC Youth Ambassadors (YAs) Programme introduced in 2018 aims at identifying and nurturing, in a systematic manner, more young talents who were committed to and passionate about serving the community. YDC has successfully recruited around 100 YAs. A series of training sessions and activities, including thematic seminars and exchanges and training outside Hong Kong have been organised for the YAs. Arrangements have also been made for them to serve as volunteers in large-scale and international events organised by the Government. In addition, we arranged the YAs to actively participate in anti-epidemic volunteer work jointly with charitable organisations last year to visit people in need in different districts, distribute anti-epidemic materials and show care. We will recruit a new batch of YAs subject to the development of the epidemic.

Youth Hostels

5. To relieve the short-term accommodation needs of working youth, the Government has been actively taking forward the Youth Hostel Scheme (YHS). Considerable progress was made in recent years, including relaxing the requirement to allow YHS tenants to apply for public rental housing, commencing the operation of the first youth hostel in Tai Po, starting the construction of three youth hostels in Yuen Long, Sheung Wan and Jordan, with the largest youth hostel in Yuen Long commencing next year to provide 1 680 places. We will continue to take forward all youth hostel projects in collaboration with the NGOs concerned to provide a total of at least 3 300 places.

Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth

6. The current-term Government strives to encourage the participation of young people in policy discussions. We have regularised the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth (“MSSY”) since 2018. Young people aged between 18 and 35 with a commitment to serve the community are recruited on a regular basis to participate in government advisory committees. Given the positive feedback, starting from Phase IV, the number of participating committees in each phase has been increased from 10 to 15. At present, around 440 posts are held by young people who have been appointed to advisory and statutory bodies (“ASBs”) directly or indirectly through MSSY. The overall ratio of youth members in ASBs has increased from 7.8% in 2017 to 14.8% as at mid-2021, gradually moving towards the target of 15% set by the current-term Government.

Sports

Elite Sports

7. In 2020 and 2021, due to the pandemic, our athletes lost their opportunities to attain sporting results because most major international events were cancelled or postponed. Nevertheless, we have maintained the current athlete categories of elite athletes in 2021 and will extend such arrangement to 2022, so that the direct financial support to athletes will not be affected.

Strengthening the Support to Sports Sector

8. To support the further development of sports, the Government has

substantially increased the yearly subvention for the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) and 60 “national sports associations” (NSAs) since 2020-21. The total amount of subvention will be increased progressively from about \$300 million in 2019-20 to more than \$500 million in 2023-24. The additional allocation for NSAs aims to enhance the promotion and development of sports in the community, youth training programmes, public participation, squad training at all levels, overseas exchange programmes/competitions; and enhance the corporate governance of NSAs. NSAs can also make use of the additional resources to improve their manpower and staff remuneration. As for SF&OC, the additional subvention is mainly for the further promotion of sports development in Hong Kong, provision of more exchange programmes for our young athletes and enhancement of the anti-doping scheme, etc.

Governance of NSAs

9. To enhance the governance of NSAs, HAB has been providing a time-limited funding of \$5 million per year for five years to SF&OC since 2020-21 for reviewing the operation and internal monitoring mechanism of all NSAs. SF&OC has established a dedicated team to carry out the review. The major components of this review include the formulation of a code of governance, and an audit on the Articles of Association of all NSAs, composition of their executive boards and election mechanism, financial reporting and auditing mechanism, selection of athletes and appeal mechanism, etc. The dedicated team conducted a briefing for all NSAs on in November 2020 to give them an in-depth understanding of the objectives and scope of the review. As at the end of August 2021, the team has completed the review of 30 NSAs. SF&OC has set up an Independent Steering Committee to supervise the working direction of the dedicated team from a strategic perspective and monitor the progress of the review exercise. To set a good example, SF&OC will also conduct a review on its own operation and internal monitoring mechanism and make improvements as appropriate. We will closely monitor the progress of the review exercise.

Support for Disability Sports

10. Promoting participation in sports by persons with disabilities (PWDs) is one of the major sports development initiatives taken forward by the Government. Based on the recommendations made in the consultancy report on the study on “Sport for People with Disabilities in Hong Kong” and comments received in the public consultation, HAB has developed a detailed work plan in collaboration with the stakeholders and implemented various measures for the promotion and development of disability sports by phases.

In the coming year, we will continue to implement the outreach services on recreation and sports and plan to extend the outreach programmes to PWDs with hearing impairment in workshops or centres by providing them with training on recreation and sports activities. Besides, we will continue to assist the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee & Sports Association for the Physically Disabled in its re-organisation with an aim to establishing the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee as an independent body in mid 2022 in order to support athletes with disabilities in a more focused and systematic manner, including the handling of matters relating to classification of para-sports, promotion and development of different kinds of para-sports of Paralympic Games, etc.

Promotion of Sports Development in Schools

11. It has been the Government's policy to encourage schools to open up their facilities for hire by community organisations as a means to fostering collaboration between schools and the community. To encourage schools to further open up their facilities, the Education Bureau (EDB) and HAB jointly launched the "Opening up School Facilities for Promotion for Sports Development Scheme" at the beginning of the 2017/18 school year to provide a subsidy to schools which opened up their facilities for organising sports activities by sports organisations. The objective is to increase the provision of sports facilities, while enhancing the sporting culture in schools and encouraging students to develop a healthy sporting habit on the other. With the Scheme completing its third year of commissioning, the Government has introduced a number of enhancement measures. Schools that have successfully opened up their facilities are now entitled to apply for subsidies that allow the construction or improvement of sport facilities, and purchase of sport equipment. Also, to utilise the school facilities for more sports programmes, the Scheme continues allowing other organisations with experiences of holding sports programme to join. Among the 126 schools that had indicated interest in joining the Scheme in the 2020/21 school year, we are pleased to report that 168 squad training, young athletes training programmes and district sports activities have been held in 45 schools, partnering with 33 sports organisations. As at 15 September 2021, 115 schools have indicated interest in joining the Scheme in the coming school year of 2021/22. Around 340 programmes are planned to be held in 70 schools by 42 sports organisations. EDB and HAB will continue improving the Scheme to encourage the participation of more schools and sports organisations.

Territory wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community

12. A healthy lifestyle (including regular and appropriate amount of exercise) is conducive to enhancing physical fitness, while good physical fitness improves the quality of life. In this connection, the Government carried out the Territory-wide Physical Fitness Test for the Community in 2005 and 2011 respectively, where data on the physical fitness of the public was collected and analysed. To develop benchmarking data and continuously monitor the physical condition of the public, HAB proposed in 2018 to carry out the Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the Community (Survey) again. We hope that the regular and standardised territory-wide physical fitness survey would facilitate the formulation of long-term goals and policies of the promotion of sports in the community. The Advisory Committee for the Survey comprising members of the Community Sports Committee, representatives from professional organisations and multiple Government bureaux and departments (such as HAB, LCSD, the Department of Health and EDB) has been established in 2019 to provide advice on the implementation, promotional strategies, data collection and report writing of the Survey. The data collection of the Survey has already started in July 2021 and the results of the Survey are expected to be announced in 2022.

Major Sports Events

13. The HAB is committed to developing Hong Kong into a centre for major international sports events. Introduced in 2004, the “M” Mark System supports local NSAs to host major sports events in Hong Kong through provision of matching fund and direct grant. In order to enhance support for NSAs to stage international sports events, the Government allocated \$500 million to implement a new “Major Sports Events Matching Grant Scheme” in April 2019 to encourage further sponsorship from the business sector to promote the launch of more local top-level competitions.

14. In 2020-21, all major sports events were cancelled in the light of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. For “M” Mark events affected by the pandemic, the Government has rolled out special support measures, including providing a special direct grant to the relevant NSAs, in order to help alleviate their financial burden.

15. With the improvement in the epidemic situation in recent months and the launch of “safety bubble” arrangements, the 2021 Tissot UCI Track Cycling Nations Cup, Hong Kong, China as well as the Group J fixtures of the 2021 AFC Cup were successfully held in Hong Kong in May and June

2021 respectively. The Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2021 will take place in October 2021. Various major sports events, including the Harbour Race, the Tennis Open, the Golf Open, the Hong Kong Sevens and the FIVB Volleyball Nations League to be held by the end of this year to mid of next year, are under planning. We will closely monitor the epidemic situation and where situation allows, continue to assist different NSAs in formulating infection prevention and control measures in compliance with the requirements of the health authorities with a view to resuming the organisation of more major sports events in a gradual and orderly manner.

Increase and Enhance Sports and Recreation Facilities

16. The Government is actively implementing the Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities (Five-Year Plan). Among the 26 projects, 20 of them have obtained funding approval from the LegCo, involving a total of around \$7.7 billion in total. Facilities in seven of these approved projects have been opened or scheduled for opening this year for public use while the pre-construction activities/construction works for another nine projects have commenced. Construction works for the remaining approved projects will commence within this year. Projects with approved funding from the LegCo will provide 3 heated swimming pools and 15 open spaces (including 1 7-a-side football pitch, 2 5-a side football pitches, 4 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 2 lawn bowling greens and 2 cycling grounds) as well as implement the pre-construction activities for the redevelopment of 1 sports ground and 1 amenity complex (comprising sports centre and swimming pool). We would endeavour to seek funding approval on other projects under the Five-Year Plan as soon as possible.

Kai Tak Sports Park

17. Occupying an area of about 28 hectares, the Kai Tak Sports Park (the Sport Park) is the largest sports infrastructures ever in Hong Kong. It will provide modern and multi-purpose sports and recreational facilities including a 50 000-seat Main Stadium, a 10 000-seat Indoor Sports Centre and a 5 000-seat Public Sports Ground. The Sports Park will also provide over 8 hectares of public open spaces, including a platform across Shing Kai Road, a landscaped garden, harbourfront promenade, outdoor courts, children's playgrounds, fitness stations, jogging trail, and cycle track. There will also be retails and dining facilities, etc.

18. The 25-year "Design, Construction and Operation" contract of the Sports Park commenced in February 2019. Regarding design, the preliminary designs on architecture, structure, building services and

landscape architecture have generally been completed; while the detailed design and approval of the façade, indoor installation and equipment, signage, security and information technology, etc. are in progress to tie in with the construction programme. As regards construction, the piling works and construction of sub-structures and basement at the Site have largely been completed while superstructure works are in progress. Production of off-site prefabricated components including the retractable roof drive system, steel trusses and reinforced concrete seating stands of the Main Stadium are also in progress, and such components are being delivered to site in batches for assembly starting from September 2021. Based on the latest progress of project implementation, the Sports Park is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2023.

Open Space Transform Public Play Spaces

19. To make the public play spaces more innovative and fun and to meet the needs of residents at the same time, the Government launched a five-year plan to transform more than 170 public play spaces under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in 2019. Implementation of the 17 and 26 transformation projects in 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively are in progress. We will expedite the transformation of public play spaces in order to let children in various districts enjoy the more challenging and fun play spaces sooner and to create more job opportunities for the construction industry.

Arts and Culture

20. To realise the positioning of Hong Kong as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange under the Outline of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 (14th Five-Year Plan), the current-term Government has committed \$20 billion for enhancing cultural facilities through improvement and additional provision of cultural facilities to tie in with the professional and industry development of arts and culture, as well as cultivation of talent.

21. Apart from hardware, the Government has provided increasing resources for arts and culture over the past few years. The overall provision for arts and culture has increased by nearly 34% from around \$4.28 billion in 2017-18 to around \$5.73 billion in 2021-22. Increased

financial support enables different arts groups to continue to shine in local and international arts scenes.

Arts Technology

22. The Government is committed to promoting arts technology (arts tech). The inter-departmental Task Force on Arts Technology, led by the Home Affairs Bureau and comprising the Innovation and Technology Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Education Bureau, the Innovation and Technology Commission and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), has worked actively in formulating strategies and measures for the development and promotion of arts tech. A total of \$100 million has been earmarked from the funds or schemes under the purview of the respective bureaux concerned for application by anyone interested in promoting arts tech. We also promote arts tech through a variety of activities and set up platforms for communication and exchanges between the arts and culture sector and the technology industry.

23. The Government coordinates and provides support for the development of arts tech in respect of venue facilities. Apart from upgrading the existing venue facilities, the East Kowloon Cultural Centre (EKCC), scheduled for opening in phases in 2023, will be positioned as a venue for the promotion of arts tech development. In addition to the installation of equipment that is advanced in innovative technology, a testbed designated as The Lab will be set up at the EKCC as an incubator for the development of arts tech. We expect that the creativity and technological knowledge brought about by the integration of arts and technology will help enhance Hong Kong's status in the international arts arena, thereby promoting the city's position as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange in accordance with the 14th Five-Year Plan.

Nurturing Talent

24. The Government has always worked together with various partners, including the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), various universities, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, major performing arts groups and the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA), to nurture outstanding arts talent and arts administrators. As the only higher education institution in Hong Kong that provides education and training in performing arts, the HKAPA ranked first in Asia for the third consecutive year and remained among the top 10 globally in the QS World University Rankings for Performing Arts

released in March 2021. To foster the development of tertiary education in the performing arts, the Government supports the provision of new teaching facilities and a student hostel for the HKAPA in the Eastern District on Hong Kong Island. The Government is working closely with the HKAPA to take forward the project.

25. Apart from the HKAPA, a number of Hong Kong universities provide programmes related to culture, arts and creative media to cultivate more local talent in arts. We will continue to review the effectiveness of existing measures so that they meet the needs of the sector and complement the long-term arts and cultural development in Hong Kong.

Cultural Exchanges

26. We will continue to support Hong Kong artists and arts groups to hold performances and exhibitions in the Mainland (in particular the Greater Bay Area) and overseas. To mark the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Government will support Hong Kong arts groups to hold performances and exhibitions in Mainland and overseas cities to showcase the creativity and vitality of Hong Kong's arts and cultural sector to audiences around the world. We will also host a number of international cultural events in 2022, including the mid-year congress of the International Society for the Performing Arts in May 2022, the 12th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum and the 3rd Museum Summit at the end of 2022. In addition, the LCSD is currently making preparation for the "Hong Kong Week" campaign to be held in Wuhan in 2022, which will promote Hong Kong's arts and culture to Mainland audiences.

Cultural Facilities

27. We endeavour to provide more cultural facilities in support of the cultural and art development of Hong Kong. Apart from the EKCC which is under construction, we are also actively planning the construction of the New Territories East Cultural Centre in Area 11 of Fanling and the Heritage Conservation and Resource Centre in Area 109 of Tin Shui Wai. Following the funding approval of the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in 2018, the pre-construction activities of the two projects are scheduled for completion in the second quarter of 2022 and mid-2022 respectively. We will seek funding approval from LegCo for the main construction works in accordance with the established procedures for public works to take forward the projects as soon as possible. For the pre-construction activities of the expansion projects of the Hong

Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Museum of History, we obtained the funding approval from the FC of LegCo in July 2020. The pre-construction activities of the projects, expected to take about three to four years, are already underway. As to the construction of Yau Ma Tei Theatre Phase 2, we plan to submit the proposal to LegCo for scrutiny in the second quarter of 2022. If the funding is approved by the FC of LegCo in the next legislative session, we expect that the construction works will commence immediately and will take about three years. Other cultural facility projects to be rolled out in the coming years include the expansion of the Hong Kong City Hall, the renovation of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre etc. These projects are in different planning stages and we will consult the relevant stakeholders when details of the projects are ready.

28. The Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) is actively developing the Smart Library System. It will also continue to plan and enhance its library facilities and services to meet community needs and promote a reading culture by organising educational activities in partnership with schools and community organisations. The HKPL also continues with its three-year “Pilot Programme for the Promotion of Local Publications and Reading Culture”, launched in April 2020 to support the publishing sector to develop an electronic database of book data for local publications.

West Kowloon Cultural District

29. The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is developed as Hong Kong’s new cultural landmark. Subsequent to the opening of the Xiqu Centre and Freespace in January and June 2019 respectively, the M+ Museum is scheduled to open in November 2021 and Hong Kong Palace Museum in mid-2022 while the Lyric Theatre Complex is expected to be completed in 2024.

30. On the software side, the WKCDA will continue to strengthen co-operation with arts groups, education institutions and local communities, and to organise a variety of quality arts and cultural programmes and broaden Hong Kong’s cultural exchange with other places, with a view to enriching people’s cultural life, building audiences, nurturing local talent and promoting professional development. The Government will continue to support the WKCD project through monitoring and facilitating the planning, development and operation of arts and cultural facilities by the WKCDA, seeking funding approval from the FC of LegCo for the construction of public infrastructure works in the WKCD, as well as implementing the Enhanced Financial Arrangement.

District Administration

District-led Actions Scheme

31. The District-led Actions Scheme (DAS) has been implemented for 18 districts since 2016-17. It has been very well-received by the local communities since its implementation. With a view to responding to the public aspirations more effectively, the annual recurrent provision for DAS has been increased from \$63 million to \$80 million from 2020-21 onwards to further address long-standing problems and capitalise on opportunities in the districts. The 18 District Offices are forging ahead with 54 projects under the scheme to improve environmental hygiene, enhance management of public space and capitalise on opportunities in the districts in 2021-22.

Community Building

Building Management

32. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) has been assisting owners of private buildings to form owners' corporations (OCs) under the Building Management Ordinance (Cap. 344) and providing various support services on building management, including the Building Management Professional Advisory Service Scheme (BMPASS) which targets at "three-nil" buildings¹.

33. In view of the positive results of the three phases of the pilot BMPASS introduced since 2011, the Government announced in the 2019 Policy Address Supplement that the BMPASS will be regularised. With reference to the earlier recommendation of the Legislative Council's Public Accounts Committee, HAD will implement a pilot under the regularised BMPASS to engage community organisations/non-governmental organisations with experience in building management or related fields to provide services to owners/residents of "three-nil" buildings. It is expected that the one-year pilot will first be implemented in the Sham Shui Po district in the first quarter of 2022, and be reviewed after one year of implementation to evaluate its effectiveness.

¹ "Three- nil" buildings are buildings which do not have OCs or any forms of residents' organisation, or do not engage property management companies.