

Adjustment mechanism of remuneration of CE and PAOs

A Government spokesman expresses regret over a newspaper report today (May 19) alleging that the politically appointed officials (PAOs) would receive a pay rise this year, saying that the report is misleading and deliberately distorts the adjustment mechanism of the remuneration of the Chief Executive (CE) and PAOs in order to attack the officials of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government.

The spokesman said, "To show that the governing team is fighting the disease and riding out the difficult times with the public, the CE and all PAOs announced in February 2020 that they would donate one month's remuneration to the Community Chest of Hong Kong for charity purposes. The CE further announced on April 8, 2020 that she and the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Financial Secretary, the Secretary for Justice, 13 Directors of Bureaux and the Director of the CE's Office would take a 10 per cent pay cut for the coming 12 months to show togetherness with the people."

"Subsequently, the CE announced on June 9 of the same year that the remuneration of the CE and all PAOs would not increase in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (C) under the established mechanism, in order to show solidarity with the community to tide over the difficult times."

The spokesman explained that the estimated expenditure for the salaries of the CE, the Secretaries of Departments, the Directors of Bureaux and the Director of the CE's Office in 2021-22 is slightly higher than the revised estimates in 2020-21 because the voluntary pay cut of 10 per cent will end by the end of this June and that the estimated expenditure for the remaining nine months (i.e. July 2021 to March 2022) is calculated based on the level excluding pay cut factor.

The remuneration of the CE and PAOs has all along been adjusted according to the established mechanism. The mechanism is in accordance with the recommendations of the Independent Commission on Remuneration Package and Post-office Arrangements for the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, and the Independent Commission on Remuneration for Members of the Executive Council and the Legislature, and Officials under the Political Appointment System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2005 and 2016 respectively, and was approved by the Legislative Council Finance Committee (LegCo FC) in the respective years of 2005 and 2017.