

LCQ18: Arrangements for filling vacancies in Legislative Council

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Tik Chi-yuen and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (July 10):

Question:

There are views pointing out that a seat of the current-term Legislative Council (LegCo) has been left vacant for over 18 months, which has inevitably affected this Council's work in monitoring the Government's policy implementation and expressing social aspirations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of seats left vacant in the course of the term of LegCo since the first LegCo and the period for which each of the seats was left vacant;

(2) of the number of LegCo by-elections held by the Government since the first LegCo, and the number of seats involved and the expenditures incurred in each by-election; the considerations or criteria based on which the Government decided to hold such by-elections; and

(3) given that in the reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council on the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-2025, the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs has indicated that the Government will maintain close communication with the Electoral Affairs Commission and will consider matters related to the by-election of the current-term LegCo based on the actual situation, of the latest progress of the relevant work and the considerations or criteria for deciding whether or not to hold the by-election?

Reply:

President,

Our reply to Dr the Hon Tik's question is as follows:

(1) Since the establishment of the first term of the Legislative Council (LegCo) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the first term of LegCo), a total of 51 seats have been left vacant during the term of office. In view that by-elections must be arranged in accordance with the law and the actual situation, by-elections for filling previous vacancies were not necessarily conducted within a short period of time. Statistics show that 58 per cent (30 seats) of the aforesaid 51 vacancies were left vacant for over 1 year.

(2) and (3) The Government has held a total of 10 LegCo by-elections involving 20 seats since the first term of LegCo. The expenditure of by-

election is affected by multiple factors, including the number of seats involved, the constituency concerned, the number of electors, the number of polling stations, the booking situation of venues, and the required manpower, etc. Therefore, the total expenditure of different by-elections varies. We will continue the principle of enhancing the efficiency and managing our finances prudently, so as to enable future public elections to be conducted successfully while achieving cost effectiveness.

Regarding the current vacancy of the LegCo, the Government will continue to maintain close communication with the Electoral Affairs Commission, and will consider the relevant arrangements as appropriate and as practicable based on the actual situation.

SEE to attend Forum on Global Action for Shared Development in Beijing

â€‹The Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, will depart for Beijing this afternoon (July 10) to attend the second High-level Conference of the Forum on Global Action for Shared Development.

During his stay in Beijing, Mr Tse will call on the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and the National Energy Administration to continue strengthening co-operation and exchanges. He will also visit the Earth System Science Numerical Simulator Facility of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to learn about the latest developments of the country in areas such as combating climate change and atmospheric environment management.

â€‹The Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Environment), Miss Janice Tse, the Commissioner for Climate Change, Mr Wong Chuen-fai, and officers from the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Environmental Protection Department and the Hong Kong Observatory will also join the visit.

Mr Tse will return to Hong Kong in the evening on July 13. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, will be the Acting Secretary for Environment and Ecology.

SB launches online exhibition of

fourth anniversary of promulgation of Hong Kong National Security Law (with photos)

Marking the fourth anniversary of the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL), the Security Bureau (SB) today (July 10) launched the updated NSL online virtual exhibition with enriched content to introduce the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) which took effect upon gazettal in March this year. Other new additions include the mascot Security Bear as well as comics and animations with national security as the theme to promote national security education in an interesting and lively way.

In addition to the content related to the NSL in the updated exhibition, a new virtual exhibition hall has been added to introduce the features and main offences of the SNSO. Supplemented with simple and easy-to-understand questions and answers, information in the hall will enable members of the public to understand more fully the legal system and enforcement mechanisms of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in safeguarding national security.

The updated exhibition continues to use the Hong Kong Palace Museum embellished with Chinese cultural elements as its virtual background, with the Security Bureau's mascot Security Bear joining to accompany visitors during the tour to enhance their enjoyment. In addition, the virtual exhibition has launched for the first time serialised national security-themed comics and animations, illustrating the importance of safeguarding national security and law-abiding awareness in an easy-to-understand manner. Visitors, especially youth, can also gain more relevant knowledge through mini-games featuring the Security Bear.

There are nine zones in the updated virtual exhibition. Apart from the new content mentioned above, the exhibition covers information on the importance of the NSL, the legal system and enforcement mechanisms, major provisions and effectiveness, the work of various disciplined forces in safeguarding national security, reference materials and the winning entries of the Let's Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security Programme.

To enhance the understanding of members of the public regarding the legislative background, importance and significance of the NSL, the SB launched the NSL online virtual exhibition in July 2021, which has registered more than 580 000 visits thus far. The public is welcome to visit nslexhibition.hk.



Exhibition of the 4th Anniversary of the Promulgation of the Hong Kong National Security Law



Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (July 10). The arrangements will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

The following road closure and traffic diversions will be implemented from 6pm onwards:

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the slip road leading to Aberdeen Tunnel will be closed, except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the slip road leading to Aberdeen Tunnel will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Traffic along eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road, except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

The following road closure and traffic diversions will be implemented from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

1. Road closure

- The slip road connecting Wong Nai Chung Road and Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the slip road connecting Wong Nai Chung Road and Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and Parsee Cemetery;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of Hong Kong Jockey Club will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;

- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

[InvestHK welcomes WeBank to establish](#)

technology company headquarters in Hong Kong

The Government today (July 10) welcomed WeBank Co, Ltd (WeBank), a world leading digital bank founded in Shenzhen, as it established its technology company headquarters in Hong Kong. WeBank plans to invest up to US\$150 million and create high-skilled technology jobs in the city. The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (FSTB) and Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) have been working together to assist WeBank to set up its technology company headquarters in Hong Kong.

The Director-General of InvestHK, Ms Alpha Lau, said, "The establishment of WeBank's operation in Hong Kong has been the result of extensive co-ordination between the FSTB and InvestHK to ensure that the company is well positioned for success upon commencing its activities in our city. The numerous strategic enterprises that have recently announced the opening of international research and development (R&D) centres and headquarters in Hong Kong is clear evidence that our city possesses clear advantages in enabling globally scaled companies to achieve their ambitions. InvestHK warmly welcomes WeBank and remains fully committed to facilitating the establishment and growth of forward-thinking enterprises in our dynamic and vibrant business environment."

The President of WeBank, Mr Li Nanqing, said, "Hong Kong has emerged as a centre of excellence in global business connectivity and financial technology innovation. It offers us an ideal environment to advance our innovation and expand our international footprint. We are excited to contribute to and benefit from the city's dynamic fintech ecosystem, robust infrastructure, and strategic connectivity. We look forward to collaborating with local partners, stakeholders and attracting talent on this exciting next step of our journey."

WeBank's technology company headquarters in Hong Kong will serve as a base for its R&D activities and provide commercialising technology solutions for global markets. As a key participant, contributor and beneficiary in the Belt and Road Initiative, Hong Kong was chosen by the bank for its high aspirations and readiness to embrace frontier technologies and build a vibrant fintech ecosystem, as well as Hong Kong's well-established international financial services sector.

WeBank is well known for bringing inclusive financial services to over 4.5 million micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and nearly 400 million individuals in Mainland China. Recognised this year by International Data Corporation as the benchmark for the global development of digital banking, WeBank demonstrates leading fintech innovation capabilities in core and cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, cloud computing, and big data. As at today, WeBank has filed over 3 800 patent applications.