

Government follows up on positive results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing

The Government announced today (May 25) that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department have been collecting sewage samples for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in some areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results with relatively high viral loads in the following areas, the Housing Department and the respective District Offices will commence distributing about 180 000 sets of the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to residents, cleaning workers and property management staff working in the following areas for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons:

- Islands District – The Visionary, Century Link and Century Link II
- Sha Tin District – Lee On Estate, Saddle Ridge Garden, Kam Ying Court, Monte Vista, Kam Lung Court, Park Belvedere and The Met. Blossom
- Kwai Tsing District – Kwai Chung Plaza, Yee Fat Building, Shui King Building, Kam Shek Building, Kwai Po Building, Kwai Lai Building, Kam Wa Building, Kwai Fu Building, Tin On House, Sin Hua Bank Building, Kam Luk Building, Kwai Fat Building and Kwok Po Building

Members of the public may refer to (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html) for enquiries relating to the use of the RAT kits.

When using an RAT kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose of them properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

People who obtained a positive result through an RAT for the first time can report via the online platform "Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test" (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If

individuals encounter difficulties using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will contact the relevant person later to finish the report procedure.

LCQ20: Vaccination requirements for persons arriving in Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Lai Tung-kuok and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

In accordance with the current requirements of the Government, all persons arriving in Hong Kong from foreign places have to provide recognised vaccination records, and the types of vaccines administered as well as the places or organisations issuing the vaccination records must respectively be on the "List of COVID-19 Vaccines Recognised for Specified Purposes" (List of Recognised Vaccines) and the "List of Places or Organisations of Issuance of Recognised Vaccination Records" (Recognised List). There are views pointing out that even though the Government has relaxed the infection control requirements since the 1st of this month to allow non-Hong Kong residents to enter Hong Kong, it has not concurrently expanded the respective scopes of the List of Recognised Vaccines and the Recognised List. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the average time taken from the commencement of the negotiation to the conclusion of an agreement between the Government and each of the places or organisations on the recognition of vaccination records since the introduction of the Recognised List;

(2) of the places or organisations with which it is negotiating on the recognition of vaccination records, and whether it has anticipated (i) the respective time needed for reaching relevant agreements and (ii) the number of recognised places or organisations that can be added by the end of this year;

(3) as it is learnt that a number of vaccines not included on the List of Recognised Vaccines have been granted full authorisation or emergency authorisation for use by quite a number of countries or places, whether the Government has plans to include such vaccines on the List of Recognised Vaccines; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) given that if the vaccination records currently held by Hong Kong

permanent residents are not issued by the places or organisations on the Recognised List, they cannot board any flights for Hong Kong even though the vaccines that they have administered are approved by the Government, whether the Government has plans to relax the entry requirements for these residents shortly, such that they will be allowed to board the flights for Hong Kong irrespective of their places of departure and the places or organisations issuing the vaccination records; if so, of the details and implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The global epidemic situation is still ongoing. Hong Kong continues to prevent the importation of cases under the policy direction of dynamic "zero infection", and implements stringent prevention and control measures for persons arriving from overseas places. Under the prevailing inbound control measure requirements, all persons arriving from overseas places can only board a flight for Hong Kong if they are fully vaccinated and hold recognised vaccination records.

Recognised vaccination records include (1) vaccination records issued by Hong Kong, (2) vaccination records or certifications issued by Mainland or Macao authorities or an institution recognised by Mainland or Macao authorities (including Chinese Embassies or Consulates General overseas), (3) vaccination records or certifications issued by an authority or recognised institution of a country where its national regulatory authority is designated by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a stringent regulatory authority (SRA), (4) vaccination records or certifications issued by a relevant authority or recognised institution of a country with which Hong Kong has reached a recognition agreement arrangement with its government, or (5) vaccination records issued by an organisation with which Hong Kong has reached a recognition agreement arrangement. In respect of (3), the 27 member states of the European Union (EU) are countries where their national regulatory authorities have been designated by the WHO as SRAs, and the EU Digital COVID Certificate (EU DCC) mechanism has already been implemented among EU member states. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government also accepts vaccination records recognised under the EU DCC mechanism as recognised vaccination records required for the purpose of boarding flights for Hong Kong from overseas places.

Fully vaccinated persons means persons who have received the necessary doses as stipulated in guidelines of a COVID-19 vaccination course 14 days prior to their arrival in Hong Kong. The vaccines administered for the relevant persons have to be vaccines listed on the Government's List of COVID-19 Vaccines Recognised for Specified Purposes.

As for lifting the ban on non-Hong Kong residents (non-HKRs) entering Hong Kong, the Government explained when announcing the arrangement earlier that the relevant restriction was originally intended to limit the volume of inbound passengers from overseas places, but considering that the public

health risk associated with non-HKRs is the same with that of HKRs coming from the same places, that the overall volume of inbound passengers is controlled by the number of designated quarantine hotels (DQHs), and that overseas inbound passengers are still subject to stringent inbound control measures, the Government, under the premise that the risks could be properly managed, has allowed non-HKRs who have stayed in overseas places in the past 14 days to enter Hong Kong and be subject to the same boarding, quarantine and testing arrangements as HKRs, and to undergo compulsory quarantine in DQHs under closed-loop management upon arriving at Hong Kong.

The reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Government has been in discussion with various places on the arrangements for the recognition of vaccination records. In general, the HKSAR Government would invite Consulates General of various places to provide relevant information on their vaccination records, including samples of vaccination records, brands of vaccines locally administered, verification methods of vaccination records, whether digital or paper-based records are issued, etc. Consulates General of some places would also proactively approach the HKSAR Government to provide the above information. As the time taken for the governments or the Consulates General of various places to provide the above information varies, the time taken for the HKSAR Government to conduct discussions with the Consulates General of various places is also different. In general, upon the provision of aforementioned information by the Consulates General, subject to review and verification, the HKSAR Government would recognise the concerned records, and would update and announce the List of Places or Organisations of Issuance of Recognised Vaccination Records accordingly.

As of May 25, 2022, the List of Places or Organisations of Issuance of Recognised Vaccination Records has included 116 places or organisations of issuance of recognised vaccination records, including the vast majority of places which have frequent contact with Hong Kong, including the Mainland, Macao, Australia, Canada, member states of the EU, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Vietnam, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, etc. As per the figures of visitor arrivals in Hong Kong in 2019, over 95 per cent of visitor arrivals were from places which are currently on the List. On the other hand, the Government is still waiting for the replies from around 20 places regarding information on vaccination records.

(3) As regards the List of COVID-19 Vaccines Recognised for Specified Purposes (the List), apart from the COVID-19 vaccines already recognised for use in Hong Kong, vaccines on the WHO Emergency Use Listing or Pre-qualification lists, vaccines recognised for use by Stringent Regulatory Authorities as designated by the WHO or the National Medical Products Administration, as well as vaccines recommended by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel are also listed. In fact, in addition to the two COVID-19 vaccines made available

in Hong Kong, according to the latest statistics from Our World in Data, vaccines recognised and used by other major countries/economies have already been included in the List. In other words, for the purpose of inbound travels, Hong Kong has recognised nearly all COVID-19 vaccines which are widely used in the world. As regards formulating the above definition for the List, it is to ensure that the COVID-19 vaccines included are safe, efficacious and of good quality. The Government has uploaded the List to the COVID-19 thematic website, and will update the List from time to time.

(4) Under the premise of maintaining the measures to prevent the importation of cases and proper management of risks, the arrangement of recognised vaccination records can help confirm the authenticity of vaccination records held by inbound persons, and provide clarity to inbound persons on the format of records recognised.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation of different places in accordance with the principle of guarding against the importation of cases. A basket of factors, including public health factors such as epidemic situation in particular places, testing rate, vaccination rate, volume of arrivals and actual imported cases, as well as the developments of the local epidemic situation and relevant local socio-economic factors, will be considered under the risk-based principle to adjust the boarding, quarantine and testing requirements for overseas arrivals based on risk levels as the situation warrants.

LCQ7: Promoting market integration in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

The Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on Accelerating the Establishment of a Unified Domestic Market (the Opinions) published on April 10 this year put forward the demand of breaking local protectionism and market segmentation, as well as promoting the alignment of quality standards with international standards. Moreover, the Opinions put forward integrating major regional strategies, encouraging regions such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) to give priority to commencing work on developing regional market integration and to establish robust regional co-operation mechanisms, on the premise of

maintaining a unified domestic market. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that in June last year, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) launched a "GoGBA" one-stop online platform (GoGBA) in collaboration with the authorities of the Guangdong Province and relevant trade associations, as well as established the "HKTDC GBA Centre" in Shenzhen, so as to support Hong Kong enterprises to expand into the GBA market, whether it knows the details of the services provided/activities held so far under these two projects, and whether the HKTDC will evaluate the effectiveness of GoGBA to date and roll out improvement measures;

(2) as a study has pointed out that the major challenges faced by Hong Kong-invested manufacturing enterprises in expanding into the GBA market include high credit risk and greater difficulty in obtaining export credit insurance (ECI), which have weakened their incentive to do so, whether the Government will review the functions of the Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation, and urge it to launch ECI products suitable for such enterprises and to explore strengthening the co-operation with the China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will collaborate with the authorities of the Mainland cities in the GBA to commence a study on the formulation of unified economic and trade rules as well as market standards for the GBA, so as to promote market integration in the GBA in respect of system establishment?

Reply:

President,

Hong Kong is an important platform for economic and trade exchange between the Mainland and the international community. We strive to strengthen regional co-operation and actively expand our global economic and trade network on one hand. On the other hand, we capitalise on the new development pattern featuring dual circulation, which enables domestic and foreign markets to interact positively with each other under the National 14th Five-Year Plan, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) development as an entry point, to assist Hong Kong enterprises in capturing the enormous business opportunities for better integration into the overall development of the nation.

Our reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

(1) To strengthen support to Hong Kong enterprises in exploring the domestic Mainland market, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) launched in June 2021 the "GoGBA" one-stop platform, including the "GoGBA" website and WeChat mini-programme, to provide important GBA business and trade information such as market insights and business networks as well as practical tools for business trips. In addition, the HKTDC has established the "HKTDC GBA Service Centre" in Shenzhen to organise activities including

seminars/workshops, professional training and business missions, and to provide Hong Kong enterprises with consultation services, industry-related updates and business matching to assist Hong Kong enterprises in understanding the Mainland's market, regulations, policies, concessions and institutions, with a view to enhancing their capabilities in developing the Mainland market. The HKTDC has also set up jointly with its Mainland partners the "GoGBA Business Support Centres" in Qianhai (Shenzhen), Nansha (Guangzhou), Hengqin (Zhuhai), Dongguan and Zhongshan to provide Hong Kong enterprises with policy and market consultation services.

These services have been well-received by the trade since their launch. As at mid-May 2022, over 180 000 views of the "GoGBA" website and WeChat mini-programme were recorded. The "HKTDC GBA Service Centre" has so far organised over 40 activities, with about 2 100 Hong Kong enterprises patronising its services and participating in its activities.

The HKTDC has kept on reviewing the effectiveness of these services and strengthening support to Hong Kong enterprises. Among others, the HKTDC will expand its "GoGBA Business Support Centres" network to Foshan, and organise the Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation Week within 2022 staging flagship events to promote Hong Kong services and brands. Furthermore, from 2022-23 to 2024-25, the Government provides an additional funding of \$45 million per annum (i.e. a total of \$135 million) to the HKTDC for implementing the "Support Scheme for Pursuing Development in the Mainland". Through its network of 13 Mainland offices, the HKTDC will partner with relevant Mainland-based Hong Kong business organisations to organise training and exchange programmes, business missions as well as promotion activities to support Hong Kong enterprises, professional services practitioners and entrepreneurs to seize the business opportunities in the GBA and other Mainland markets.

(2) The Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation (ECIC) actively supports Hong Kong businesses (including the manufacturing industry) in expanding in the vast Mainland market and endeavours to assist the trade in facing credit risks. In response to the challenges brought about by the China-United States trade conflict and the epidemic, the ECIC has proactively launched a series of support measures, assisting the trade in market expansion amidst the volatile trading environment. In fact, quite a number of exporters have already expanded their businesses in domestic sales through the ECIC's insurance products. In 2020-21, the Mainland was the ECIC's largest market for the year, accounted for 43 per cent of the ECIC's total insured business and amounted to \$56.2 billion. In addition, the ECIC has proactively enhanced its insurance coverage for sales between an exporter's Mainland subsidiary, in which one has ownership of over 50 per cent, and Mainland buyers. Under the extended coverage, the ECIC provides credit insurance protection for Hong Kong enterprises' goods produced on the Mainland for overseas or Mainland markets.

To provide support for exporters to further expand in the Mainland market, the ECIC is actively studying possible ways to gain better access to the credit information of Mainland companies including strengthening co-

operation with relevant agencies such as credit agencies and its Mainland counterparts to supplement buyer information; to share risk with reinsurance companies; and to foster exchanges with its Mainland and international counterparts (including the China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation), etc. The Government will continue to maintain close communication with the ECIC, striving to provide products and services that cater to Hong Kong businesses for them to seize the golden opportunities in the Mainland market.

(3) To strengthen economic co-operation and integration between the Mainland and Hong Kong, the Government has been promoting trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation, reducing and removing barriers to trade and investment, and enhancing the level of market integration between the two places through the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). Under the framework of the CEPA, all goods of Hong Kong origin can enjoy zero tariff treatment upon importation into the Mainland. The Mainland also implements various preferential and facilitation measures for Hong Kong service suppliers in most areas of services trade, such as removing or relaxing restrictions on equity shareholding, capital requirements and business scope in the establishment of enterprises; relaxing qualification requirements for the provision of services by Hong Kong professionals; and relaxing the geographical and other restrictions for Hong Kong's exports of services to the Mainland market. In addition to those applicable Mainland-wide, some liberalisation measures are implemented on a pilot basis in the GBA to help drive forward market integration in the GBA.

The Government will continue to participate in the development of the GBA through various channels including the CEPA, with a view to strengthening the regulatory interface and system connectivity of the economy of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. Moreover, the Government will strive for a higher level of liberalisation by the Mainland to Hong Kong under the framework of the CEPA, including introducing more liberalisation measures in the GBA, with a view to encouraging more Hong Kong and overseas enterprises to make good use of Hong Kong as a platform to grasp the opportunities in the GBA as well as the whole Mainland market. We will also participate in and support the work of the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in setting GBA standards for different products and business services.

LCQ13: Development of Northern Metropolis

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Lo Wai-kiok and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

Regarding the development of the Northern Metropolis, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will set up a task force to be led by senior government management to remove red tape for handling matters relating to land resumption in the New Territories, and to formulate timetables and performance indicators for the relevant work; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that the building of the Northern Metropolis involves massive expenditure, whether the Government has examined different financing options as well as their merits and demerits; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) given that the building of the Northern Metropolis involves the "Twin Cities, Three Circles" strategic development layout of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen boundary area, whether the Government will expeditiously discuss with the Shenzhen Municipal Government and the relevant Mainland authorities the various cross-boundary co-operation arrangements; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Chief Executive released the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (the Development Strategy) in the Policy Address in October 2021, which proposed a number of land development, railway and conservation projects in the Northern Metropolis in response to the needs of Hong Kong's medium to long term land requirements and sustainable development. The Government is actively following up on the relevant proposals.

In response to the three parts of the question, having consulted the relevant bureaux, the reply is as follows:

(1) The Government is driving at high level the work to streamline and remove obstacles in the development process. Apart from streamlining and rationalising administrative processes, the Development Bureau is working closely with relevant bureaux and departments to give priority to reviewing development approval process under various legislations (such as the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131), the Lands Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124) and the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370)), with a view to streamlining or shortening statutory procedures of town planning applications, gazettal of road works, land resumption, etc. We have briefed the Panel on Development of the Legislative Council (LegCo) on the initial idea of the legislative proposals in March this year (Note). These proposals, if approved and implemented, will be able to expedite various government development projects in the pipeline, including the development of the Northern Metropolis.

Concerning the proposal of setting up a high-level dedicated government institution in taking forward the development of the Northern Metropolis, the

Chief Executive has indicated earlier that this matter involved government's organisation set up and should be considered by the next-term Government.

(2) The Development Strategy is a conceptual strategic plan. There are a number of land development projects in the Northern Metropolis and some of them have already been commenced. These projects will be implemented according to schedule and in phases with full regard to the consideration of financial viability and sustainability. We keep an open mind on the options of financial arrangements for future projects. In fact, the Financial Secretary announced in the 2022-23 Budget to set aside \$100 billion from the cumulative return of the Future Fund to set up a dedicated fund to ensure sufficient capitals to support the development needs under the Development Strategy and to expedite the projects in the Northern Metropolis. With the implementation of the land development projects in the Northern Metropolis, we can also generate income from private development projects within the districts.

(3) The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has exchanged views with the relevant authorities in Shenzhen following the release of the Development Strategy. We will continue to keep close communication with the relevant Mainland authorities in taking forward the proposals under the Development Strategy. For instance, the Planning Department holds regular meetings with the Planning and Natural Resources Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality to exchange views on planning matters of common interest. Furthermore, the Governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen have embarked on the studies on cross-boundary railway projects, with a view to improving connectivity between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Note: Please refer to the paper submitted to the LegCo's Panel on Development (www.legco.gov.hk/yr2022/english/panels/dev/papers/dev20220322cb1-78-2-e.pdf) for details.

LCQ6: Implementation of GREEN@COMMUNITY at public housing estates

Following is a question by the Hon Andrew Lam and a reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

To strengthen the support for waste reduction and recycling at the district level, the Environmental Protection Department is implementing a

community recycling network, namely GREEN@COMMUNITY, to promote different initiatives across the territory, which comprise Recycling Stations, Recycling Stores and Recycling Spots. There are views pointing out that with nearly 1.3 million public housing households in Hong Kong, the provision of more such recycling facilities at the relevant housing estates will significantly enhance the effectiveness of waste reduction and recycling work. Regarding the implementation of GREEN@COMMUNITY at public housing estates (PHEs), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that some districts are currently not provided with Recycling Stations, whether the Government will set up such facilities at locations in the vicinity of PHEs in these districts, and organise relevant public education activities through such facilities in preparation for the implementation of the municipal solid waste charging; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will set up Recycling Stores and Recycling Spots at PHEs; if so, of their coverage and the timetable; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will expeditiously introduce into PHEs smart reverse vending machines, so as to dovetail with the implementation of GREEN@COMMUNITY and other related measures; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In order to assist and encourage the public in actively practising waste reduction and recycling, as well as to complement the future implementation of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) charging, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has been enhancing the support on waste reduction and recycling at district level, including sustained expansion and upgrading of the community recycling network GREEN@COMMUNITY.

Currently, GREEN@COMMUNITY comprises facilities at three levels, including Recycling Stations with larger areas, indoor and outdoor space for environmental education use; Recycling Stores usually located closer to residents, and Recycling Spots which operate weekly at fixed locations and time in the form of kerbside collection booths. As of end April 2022, there are 11 Recycling Stations, 32 Recycling Stores and over 120 Recycling Spots, i.e. over 160 collection points in total under GREEN@COMMUNITY. All recycling points under GREEN@COMMUNITY collect at least eight common recyclables including waste paper, plastics, metals, glass containers, fluorescent lamps and tubes, rechargeable batteries, small electrical appliances and regulated electrical equipment, and provide GREEN\$ (Greeny Coins) to encourage more members of the public to practise source separation of more types of recyclables for turning them into resources. All facilities under GREEN@COMMUNITY are operated by non-profit making organisations which provide various kinds of environmental education activities such as upcycling workshops, second-hand markets, briefings on environmental information, to

encourage the public to establish green living habit. GREEN@COMMUNITY also makes good use of technology. Starting from end 2020 under a Pilot on Smart Recycling Systems, GREEN@COMMUNITY has been testing smart recycling systems (such as smart balances, recycling bins, gift redemption units), with Internet of Things (IoT) as skeleton technology, for local application and assessment of its benefits.

In addition to sustained upgrading of GREEN@COMMUNITY's services in all 18 districts in the territory, the EPD has also been promoting the Programme on Source Separation of Domestic Waste at residential estates/buildings, through provision of recycling bins to facilitate citizens to practise recycling conveniently.

Over 30 per cent of Hong Kong's population lives in public rental housing (PRH). Therefore, the EPD has been closely collaborating with the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) to enhance community recycling and environmental education support in PRH.

Our reply to the questions raised by the Hon Lam is as follows:

(1) On Recycling Stations, GREEN@WONG TAI SIN at Po Kong Village Road will commence construction in mid-2022. In addition, the Invigorating Island South initiative has also identified preliminarily a piece of land at Ap Lei Chau for development of another Recycling Station, namely GREEN@SOUTHERN. For those five districts which currently do not have any Recycling Stations, i.e. Central and Western, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City, Tsuen Wan and North Districts, there are 13 Recycling Stores within the districts to provide residents with environmental education and recycling support.

In addition to community environmental education activities organised through the GREEN@COMMUNITY, the EPD has been organising waste reduction and recycling activities for PRH in collaboration with the HA, with a view to strengthening the environmental awareness of residents in PRH. The EPD Green Outreach has already extended its outreach service to all 18 districts in Hong Kong (including PRH), to provide on-site technical and educational support on waste reduction and recycling, enhance effectiveness of recycling arrangement in estates, help identify proper outlets for recyclables, etc. to community stakeholders such as resident organisations and property management companies. To get prepared for the implementation of MSW charging, the EPD and the HA have also collaborated since end 2018 in launching the Trial Project on Municipal Solid Waste Charging at Public Housing Estates in phases, to cover about 150 PRH blocks in Hong Kong. The first two phases of the trial project covering a total of 53 PRH blocks have been concluded. The third phase, covering a total of 51 PRH blocks, commenced in January 2022 and planned for completion in nine months. However, it was suspended due to severe epidemic situation. With recent relaxation of social distance restriction measures, the third phase of trial projects has progressively resumed and will complete in November 2022. The fourth phase covering a total of about 50 PRH blocks will commence in end 2022, right after the completion of the third phase.

(2) All PRH in Hong Kong have joined the Programme on Source Separation of Domestic Waste launched by the EPD. The HA requires its cleaning contractors to send various kinds of clean recyclables to downstream recyclers for proper recycling and conservation of valuable resources. In response to the change in recycling markets in recent years, the EPD is liaising with the HA in connection with a new service on one-stop collection of recyclables (especially those with low market values such as waste plastics, glass containers, fluorescent lamps and tubes, rechargeable batteries) from PRH by the EPD's operators (including the operators of GREEN@COMMUNITY), to help ensure that all recyclables will be properly treated and recycled. Separately, the operators of GREEN@COMMUNITY have already set up some Recycling Spots at or near PRH. Currently, about 80 PRH estates are covered by GREEN@COMMUNITY collection points. At the same time, the HA is in discussion with the EPD on suitable locations in PRH within a pilot district, for setting up a network of several mini Recycling Stores, considering and suiting the spatial characteristics of PRH. These mini Recycling Stores will help promote and support more PRH residents in establishing a clean recycling habit.

(3) With the support of the HA, the EPD has preliminary identified more than 10 PRH estates to set up a network of smart recycling application points, which will progressively in place from the second half of 2022.

Thank you, President.