

Missing man in Sham Shui Po located

Â Â Â Â A man who went missing in Sham Shui Po has been located.

Â Â Â Â Lo Wai-tong, aged 61, went missing after he left his residence on Poplar Street in the small hours on July 1. His family made a report to Police on the same day. Â

Â Â Â Â The man was located on Lai Chi Kok Road this morning (July 3). No suspicious circumstances were detected.

LCQ3: Use of private properties for immersive cultural and recreational activities

Following is a question by the Hon Kenneth Leung and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (July 3):

Question:

It is learnt that various kinds of immersive arts, cultural and recreational activities have emerged around the world in recent years, including a blend of scenography and technology to enhance audience engagement and interaction. However, some industry players have relayed that the development of the immersion industry has been hindered due to a lack of suitable venues for immersive performances (e.g. black box theatres) in Hong Kong, coupled with the fact that some private properties such as industrial buildings can hardly serve as venues for exhibitions and performances. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total number of applications received by the authorities for redevelopment and wholesale conversion of industrial buildings since the Revitalisation Scheme for Industrial Buildings was reactivated in 2018, and the area of the additional venues used for arts and cultural or sports and recreational purposes as a result of the Scheme;

(2) as it is learnt that many immersive arts, cultural and recreational activities have a quota on the number of participants, whether the authorities will consider including small-scale exhibitions and performances as permitted uses under the arrangement for the relaxation of waiver application for existing industrial buildings (on the premise that such

activities comply with the safety requirements), so as to provide more room for operation of the arts and cultural sector as well as the creative industries; and

(3) as it is learnt that immersive arts, cultural and recreational activities are well received by members of the public, whether the authorities have put in place measures to encourage and facilitate the formation of new industries by such activities; if so, of the details of the relevant software and hardware support facilities (e.g. venues, techniques and talent training); if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

With regard to the Hon Kenneth Leung's question, after consulting the Development Bureau, the reply is provided as follows:

(1) The Government reactivated the Revitalisation Scheme for Industrial Buildings in 2018 mainly to make more effective use of existing industrial buildings to optimise the use of precious land resources, and to address fire safety and unauthorised use issues more effectively.

On the redevelopment of industrial buildings, Development Bureau's policy is to allow relaxation of the maximum permitted non-domestic plot ratio up to 20 per cent to provide incentives to promote the redevelopment of industrial buildings. As at end June 2024, the Town Planning Board approved 71 applications for relaxation of plot ratios for redevelopment of industrial buildings, which are expected to provide about 1.5 million square metres of new commercial or industrial floor space upon completion. Among them, the commercial floors space of redeveloped industrial buildings can also be used for arts and cultural purposes or as places of recreation, sports and entertainment, etc. However, the final use of the floors is a commercial decision of the owners concerned, and the Government does not have a breakdown of the amount of floor area of redeveloped industrial buildings used for arts and cultural purposes or as places of recreation, sports and entertainment.

For wholesale conversion of industrial buildings, the Development Bureau will exempt waiver fees on the condition that not less than 10 per cent of the floor area of the converted industrial building will be used for purposes designated by the Government (e.g. arts and cultural studios, incubators for innovation and technology start-ups). As at end June 2024, the Lands Department has received nine applications for wholesale conversion of industrial buildings. Among the approved applications, the proposed uses of the two converted buildings include non-industrial uses such as offices, restaurants, recreational, sports and cultural venues, and the total gross floor area involved is about 15 000 square metres, of which 10 per cent (about 1 500 square metres) is required to be used for government-designated uses (including arts and cultural studios).

(2) At present, industrial building owners may redevelop or convert their industrial buildings for non-industrial uses through the two measures mentioned in the first part of the reply. However, the Government also understands that some industrial buildings may not be able to be redeveloped or converted due to reasons such as fragmented ownership. In response to the community's demand for safe and lawful use of industrial building units, and to meet the changing social and economic needs of Hong Kong and optimise the use of valuable land resources, the Government will therefore exercise discretion to allow the co-existence of industrial and non-industrial uses. Specifically, without prejudice to public safety and provided that the use concerned is one of the uses always permitted in respect of the site as specified in the Outline Zoning Plan, the units of an industrial building may be used for the five specified non-industrial uses, which include "Art Studio", "Office (Design and Media Production)" (Note 1) , without requiring the owners to apply for a short-term waiver from the Lands Department and pay waiver fees. However, as the industrial building itself is supposed to be used for industrial purposes, the risk of fire and other accidents involved is relatively higher. Therefore, in view of public safety considerations, the uses covered by the above relaxation measures do not include any uses or activities that directly provide services or goods to attract public visits, such as public performances, operation of interest classes, exhibitions and sales activities.

(3) Nowadays, it is popular to incorporate elements of immersive experience into arts and cultural activities through the use of technology such as digital technology and simulation of the environment, to allow participants to be immersed in a certain scene or scenes with different senses. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) also organises activities that incorporate immersive experiences from time to time. For example, the large-scale outdoor art project "Art@Harbour" has been organised since 2022. Multiple outdoor art installations and digital art façades featuring the integration of art, science, and technology are displayed on both sides of the Victoria Harbour, offering the public new interactive experiences in art appreciation. The outdoor exhibition "teamLab: Continuous" under "Art@Harbour 2024" made good use of outdoor space and the view of the Victoria Harbour. The artwork triggered a mesmerising display of kaleidoscopic colours and soothing soundscapes through participants' interaction, bringing an immersive sensory experience for the public through digital technology.

The Government has been promoting the application of technology in arts and cultural creations through different policies and resources, and supports the integration of arts and technology to provide audiences with immersive experiences. The Government allocated \$30 million in the 2022-23 Budget to launch an Arts Technology Funding Pilot Scheme to encourage the nine major performing arts groups to further explore the application of arts technology in their stage productions and presentations, bringing a richer experience to the audiences. In addition, the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme has introduced the arts technology category in 2021-22 to encourage the application of technology in various arts projects. An example is a project with veteran Cantonese opera artist Yuen Siu-fai singing nan-yin, with the integration of immersive projection techniques, computer special effects,

animation, and AI technology, etc, to tell the stories of Hong Kong history from 1841 to 1997.

The Government also provides facilities for the development and application of arts technology at its venues and has earmarked \$70 million for upgrading the performance venue equipment of the LCSD, so that arts groups can better use technology to enhance audiences' experiences.

The East Kowloon Cultural Centre (EKCC) under the LCSD will become a major arts technology venue and incubator. It is equipped with the latest stage equipment and systems as well as a testbed studio called "The Lab", which provides a platform and a base for arts practitioners and technology professionals for experimentation to facilitate their research and development on the application of arts technology.

The Government has set up the EKCC Academy for Arts Technology to provide structured trainings for nurturing talent and produce a wide range of arts technology programmes, fostering exchange and collaboration between artists and technology professionals, at the same time expanding the audience base. The first batch of Arts Tech Trainees has reported duty in February this year and are expected to join the workforce in early 2026, so as to meet the great demand.

The Government will continue to welcome and support more immersive arts and cultural activities to be held in Hong Kong through first-class venues as well as hardware and software support facilities.

Note 1: The remaining uses are "Offices (Audio-visual Recording Studio)", "Office (used by "specific creative industries" including design and media production companies, printing and publishing, film companies and industry organisations related to the film industry), as well as "Research, Design and Development Centre".

LCQ15: Patriotic education

Following is a question by the Hon Stanley Ng and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (July 3):

Question:

On April 29 this year, the Working Group on Patriotic Education held its first meeting and decided to set up four sub-groups (i.e. school education; local community; history, politics, economy and culture; and media publicity) to carry out patriotic education work. There are views that history, politics, economy and culture are significant aspects, and in particular, the

history of the War of Resistance (the War) is an important resource for patriotic education. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of patriotic education bases or organizations subvented by the Government in Hong Kong; the patriotic education activities held by these bases and organizations, and whether it has assessed the effectiveness of such activities;

(2) as it is learnt that many patriotic groups in the community have taken the initiative to organize various patriotic education activities and even established their own patriotic education centres, of the amount of resources allocated or to be allocated by the Government for collaboration with patriotic forces in the community including district organizations and patriotic trade unions, and whether it has formulated corresponding performance indicators; how the Government will make better use of patriotic forces in the community to promote patriotic education;

(3) as there are many patriotic education demonstration bases, as well as memorial halls and museums of the War on the Mainland, and there are also valuable resources for patriotic education such as the Opium War Museum in Humen, Dongguan and the Dongjiang Column Memorial Hall in Shenzhen, how the Government will make use of such resources to promote the development of patriotic education in Hong Kong (e.g. whether there are specific plans, cooperation directions and cooperation targets);

(4) as there are views that the numerous relics and heritages related to the history of the War in Hong Kong are important resources for patriotic education, whether the Government has formulated a list of these education resources; if so, whether it can provide the list to this Council; how the Government will make planning for, consolidate and utilize these education resources to promote patriotic education in Hong Kong; and

(5) whether the Government will consider organizing model exhibitions of the country's military equipment to revisit history while showcasing the country's increasing strength through the evolution and development of military equipment and China-made equipment used in major battles by the country and Hong Kong, so as to strengthen national and patriotic education; if so, of the details of the relevant plan; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted relevant bureaux and departments, the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Stanley Ng is as follows:

Patriotic education is rich in content, covering many facets including the history, culture, traditions and values, and symbols and signs of our country. Currently, different policy bureaux and departments have set up various kinds of schemes to sponsor local community groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to organise diversified promotional and

publicity activities on different subjects, with a view to enhancing the sense of national identity and patriotism of the general public. For instance, the Community Participation Scheme set up under the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education sponsors organisations for activities in promoting civic and national education; the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Youth Development Commission also put in place various funding schemes, including the Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland and the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland, to provide funding support to NGOs in organising exchange activities or internship projects, so as to facilitate young people to visit the Mainland in person and learn and understand the country's development; the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, through the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme, provides sponsorship to NGOs in the community to stage promotional activities in a diversified manner and conduct research on the Constitution, the Basic Law and the Hong Kong National Security Law; the Home Affairs Department (HAD) launched the three-year Clansmen Culture Promotion Scheme this March to provide funding support for clansmen associations to organise activities promoting hometown culture in order to foster the spirit of patriotism; the HAD will also hold a number of patriotic education celebratory activities with local organisations across 18 districts around the National Day; the Education Bureau (EDB) provides funding for non-profit making organisations to organise Mainland exchange activities for primary and secondary students through the Passing on the Torch: National Education Activity Series Subvention Scheme, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of our country's development and cultivate patriotism; and the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) provides funding for the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China to organise the Greater Bay Area Youth Sports Exchange Programme to strengthen exchanges and enhance the friendship between young athletes from Guangdong Province and Hong Kong through sports training and competitions. Relevant bureaux and departments will continue to co-operate with NGOs and community groups (including providing sponsorships for them to organise various kinds of national education related activities) to jointly promote national and patriotic education, and will review the effectiveness of such activities from time to time.

Organisations that wish to organise patriotic education related activities can use or rent suitable venues according to their needs. The HKSAR Government offers numerous premises, for example, the base for youth development and national education in Tsing Yi, which was converted from part of the community isolation facility, allows youth uniformed groups, schools and NGOs to hold flag raising and foot drill training, national education, and other youth development-related activities, etc. At the same time, through introducing the origin and special historical significance of community isolation facilities which were constructed under the Central Government's support, it allows youths to understand the care for Hong Kong by the Central Government, thus enhancing their sense of national identity. Whereas the Civic Education Resource Centre at Youth Square can, apart from having a collection of reference materials and teaching kits on civic education and youth development, be used for holding talks, training courses, film shows and seminars, etc. The thematic exhibition area and the permanent

interactive exhibition area showcase interactive exhibits to promote core civic values, positive personal values and national knowledge. This year's exhibitions include Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Roving Exhibition and Rule of Law Exhibition.

In addition, there are currently various museum resources which can be effectively utilised for patriotic education. These include the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Hong Kong Palace Museum and the Hong Kong Science Museum, covering a wide range of themes, such as the history of the War of Resistance, Chinese history, Chinese culture, and the technology achievements of the country. By exploring the rich collections of these museums, citizens and students can gain a better understanding of the history and achievements of our country, with a view to strengthening their sense of national identity and enhancing patriotism. Of particular note is that the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (MCD) will be converted into the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence in September this year, with focus on the history of the War of Resistance. Through public and educational activities, the museum aims to enhance patriotism among the public regarding the war and to pay tribute to its martyrs. The HKSAR Government will also revitalise and convert Block 58 of the former Whitfield Barracks in Kowloon Park into the Chinese Culture Experience Centre, and organise a variety of activities and workshops for promoting Chinese culture. Moreover, the Government will set up a museum to showcase the developments and achievements of our country, covering areas such as its history, politics, economic development and culture. We encourage schools and organisations to make good use of these resources, allowing students and citizens to gain comprehensive understanding of our country, its history, and the Chinese culture from different perspectives.

In addition to the resource centres and museum as mentioned above, groups and individuals in the community can also make use of local historical sites and landmarks to enrich the content and experiences of patriotic education, such as the Law's House (currently the Hong Kong Sha Tau Kok Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall) at Sha Tau Kok that was used by the Hong Kong and Kowloon Independent Brigade of the East River Column as its base of operations and transportation checkpoint, as well as the Memorial Monument for Martyrs during World War II at Wu Kau Tang. In this regard, the Chinese Culture Promotion Office and the MCD under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will join forces to design and organise guided tours by making use of the historic sites in association with the War of Resistance to boost the understanding and awareness of the war history among the public.

On utilising patriotic resources in the Mainland, as well as relics and heritages related to war history in Hong Kong, currently, relevant bureaux and departments have plans to commence work:

(a) In better utilising Mainland patriotic resources, the EDB has been collaborating with the education authorities of different Mainland provinces and municipalities to organise Mainland exchange programmes and study tours for students to enable them to gain first-hand experience of our country's development and achievements, thereby enhancing their sense of national identity. Mainland exchange programmes (MEPs) for students offer more than

100 000 exchange quotas every year, allowing every student to join at least one MEP in the respective primary and secondary stages. In addition, since the previous school year (2022/23 school year), EDB has launched Mainland study tours for the senior secondary subject of Citizenship and Social Development (CS). From the previous school year to July 2024, a total of around 95 000 senior secondary students have participated in the CS tours and very positive feedback has been received from teachers and students. The EDB will incorporate more visiting spots with "red resources" appropriately into the routes of MEPs and study tours, allowing students to experience the arduous struggles and patriotic sentiments of the revolutionary predecessors. Starting from the coming school year (2024/25 school year), the EDB will include visits to Sihang Warehouse Battle Memorial as part of MEPs and add a new route of CS tour to Jiangxi Province with visits to the source of Dongjiang water and the starting point of Long March, with a view to stepping up the promotion of patriotic education. The EDB also organises Mainland study activities for teachers. The tours include visits to valuable resources for patriotic education. For example, to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Long March, EDB organised the Retracing the footsteps of revolutionary predecessors: from Yan'an to Xi'an – a study tour for Chinese history teachers in April this year to enhance teachers' understanding of the history of the Chinese Communist Party, the spirit and significance of the Long March. Besides, the MCD, after being converted into the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence on September 3 this year, will regularly hold thematic exhibitions related to the War of Resistance in the Special Exhibition Gallery, and collaborate with cultural institutions and museums from the Mainland. The LCSD will jointly present a thematic exhibition with the Shenzhen Municipal Cultural Relics Bureau this September. The exhibition, to be jointly organised by the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence, the Dongjiang Column Memorial, Shenzhen and the Memorial Hall of Chinese Cultural Celebrity Rescue, will introduce the joint resistance efforts of the East River Column in both Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

(b) In making good use of local relics and heritages related to war history, the Tourism Commission under the CSTB, in collaboration with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, has been taking forward the Enhancement of Hiking Trails – Phase II which covers hiking trails relating to war history, namely Lion Rock Historic Walk, Shing Mun War Relics Trail and Luk Keng War Relics Trail. Over the years, the MCD has organised various thematic lecture series related to the history of the War of Resistance, including, The War of Resistance against Japan and Hong Kong (September 2021), Women in Troubled Times: Hong Kong Women during the War of Resistance (October to December 2023), Popular Religion in Hong Kong during Wartime (January to March 2024), Literature and Other Publications in Hong Kong during the War of Resistance (April to June 2024). Moreover, during the years of 2022/23 and 2023/24, a series of programmes titled Fight as One: Anti-Japanese Guerrillas were held, including thematic lectures, travelling exhibitions, and site visits, etc. These activities aimed to deepen the public's understanding on the history of the War of Resistance in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong and Kowloon Independent Brigade of the East River Column. We will consider working out a list on related relics for easy reference by

schools and organisations.

Regarding the suggestion to organise exhibitions showcasing models of the country's military equipment, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Hong Kong Garrison organises barracks open days around July 1 every year. Since 2021, the Hong Kong Garrison Exhibition Center was set up at Ngong Shuen Chau Barrack, displaying historical photos, antiques and models of the PLA's military equipment. Through the visits, relevant groups can deepen their understanding of the remarkable achievements of the country, the nation's military history and the work of the Hong Kong Garrison. Besides, within the MCD, there is currently a gallery dedicated to the Hong Kong Garrison. This exhibition introduces the responsibilities of the Garrison, which has been in charge of Hong Kong's military facilities and defence since 1997, serving as a crucial cornerstone for maintaining Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. The exhibition is supplemented with historical photos, artifacts, models of PLA vessels (including landing ship, patrol boat, missile boat, and the aircraft carrier "Liaoning"), films, and interactive programmes. These displays help the public understand the evolution of national military equipment, thereby enhancing their national confidence and patriotic spirit. The MCD will explore the feasibility of collaborating with Mainland cultural institutions and museums to organise exhibitions showcasing the models of the country's military equipment, providing Hong Kong citizens with a deeper understanding of the evolutionary development of the country's defence capabilities.

LCQ1: Developing low-altitude economy

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Siu-hung and a reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (July 3):

Question:

â€‹In the "two sessions" this year, the State President stressed the need to develop new quality productive forces. There are views that new quality productive forces generated by low-altitude economy (LAE) industries will accelerate the synergistic and diversified economic development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and Hong Kong should proactively dovetail and co-ordinate with various GBA Mainland cities, make good planning starting from the top-level design and start formulating industry policies, so as to expeditiously promote the development of Hong Kong's and cross-boundary LAE. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that LAE development involves different policy areas, whether the Government will consider setting up an inter-departmental working group on LAE to effectively co-ordinate various policy bureaux and government

departments to take forward LAE development; if so, of the details and the implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will review the relevant legal framework, and consider making good planning starting from the top-level design, formulating strategies for LAE development, and introducing industry policies and implementation plans covering areas such as infrastructure, industrial application, innovation and technology, safety management, and insurance laws and regulations; and

(3) whether it will consider exploring the development of infrastructure for LAE in the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, including information infrastructure such as common take-off/landing points, communications, navigation, surveillance and meteorological maps, and expeditiously kick-starting local and cross-boundary pilot projects on LAE?

Reply:

President,

The Premier of the State Council, when delivering the Government Work Report in the second annual session of the 14th National People's Congress, mentioned the need to actively foster the development of low-altitude economy as one of the new growth engines. In order to tie in with the overall national development strategies, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has also been proactively promoting the development of low-altitude economy on various fronts.

With continuous technological development and innovation, the concepts of low-altitude economy and low-altitude flying activities, which are centrally driven by Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), have gained widespread attention in the Mainland and internationally in recent years. Low-altitude economy brings emerging development opportunities to Hong Kong. However, given the relatively complex airspace and geographical environment in Hong Kong, the Government needs to ensure that the relevant flying activities are conducted in an orderly and risk-controlled manner.

In consultation with the Development Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Civil Aviation Department (CAD), the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Chan Siu-hung is as follows:

(1) The overall development of low-altitude economy is a huge systematic project which requires co-ordination in different areas, including regulations, formulation of aviation safety policies, technological research and development, infrastructural support, land planning and commercial applications. The Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) has been working closely with the relevant bureaux and departments to make co-ordination and remove barriers under different policy areas to support the development of low-altitude economy. At the same time, the TLB and the CAD are actively exploring ways to promote low-altitude flying activities from the perspectives of regulations, technical requirements and airspace management, etc.

(2) Low-altitude airspace dedicated to low-altitude flying activities has always been available in Hong Kong airspace, and low-altitude flying activities, including helicopter flights and small unmanned aircraft (SUA) operations, have been taking place in Hong Kong airspace for many years. With the expected gradual increase in low-altitude flying activities, the CAD is working with the industry under the framework of the existing SUA Order (Cap. 448G) to explore ways to further facilitate and widen the applications of SUA, e.g. beyond-visual-line-of-sight operations, as well as to further expedite the application process by different means. Apart from SUA, different types of AAM are also emerging, including larger, i.e. weighing more than 25 kilograms manned and unmanned aircraft. At present, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has yet to formulate international standards and recommended practices for AAM. In the long run, in order to ensure that a legal framework is in place for the operation and applications of AAM, the Government will review the existing civil aviation and other relevant legislation and regulatory regimes based on different considerations, including aviation safety, airspace management, privacy, insurance requirements, customs, immigration and quarantine procedures for cross-boundary flying activities, so as to support the latest development of low-altitude economy.

(3) In terms of infrastructure, with the gradual increase in AAM activities, low-altitude airspace management will also require the gradual establishment of corresponding software and hardware infrastructure systems and supporting facilities, including global navigation satellite systems and related differential positioning facilities; radio mobile communication network systems, high-speed data transmission systems, cloud computing and big data platforms, smart low-altitude traffic management systems and data exchange platforms, flight plan management systems, network security provisions; cross-boundary system connections. These systems and facilities will need to interface and exchange data with existing systems, such as air traffic management system, airport drone detection system, meteorological system and "eSUA".

Among the various infrastructure facilities, mobile radio communications network is indispensable for promoting low-altitude flying activities. At present, the relevant spectrum supply and network coverage, including commercial 4G and 5G networks in Hong Kong can adequately support general operations of unmanned aircraft. In addition, the regulatory regime in relation to communications, i.e. the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106), does not impose any restriction on the development of low-altitude economy and its related applications. The Office of the Communications Authority will continue to closely monitor the development trends of the telecommunications industry in the Mainland and around the world, including 5G and 6G technologies, in order to ensure that Hong Kong's spectrum planning is in line with that of the Mainland and other advanced economies.

Furthermore, new large-scale land development projects, like the New Development Areas of the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, can provide a large amount of land and space, such as sufficient open space, community and commercial land, etc, which should be able to cope

with the land and space requirements of the infrastructure relevant to low-altitude economy. In terms of town planning, the infrastructures and uses related to the low-altitude economy, such as vertiports and charging facilities, can generally be accommodated under the permitted uses of the relevant zoning or their ancillary uses. In other words, there is scope for these new development regions to provide the necessary land and infrastructure for promoting low-altitude economy.

Regarding the promotion of pilot projects on low-altitude economy, the Mainland is now primarily using civil unmanned aircraft pilot areas as a basis for establishing low-altitude economy development zones and test flights areas, thereby fostering the development of low-altitude economy. As different application scenarios involve different requirements on aircraft loading, flight range, flight duration, operational reliability and safety, the Government will implement pilot projects on low-altitude economy in a gradual and orderly manner, starting with the transport of goods by unmanned aircraft, and then gradually widening and enriching the application scenarios of AAMs from the near to the far, and from the light to the heavy. The Government will continue to work on various fronts to capitalise on the Mainland's strengths and promote low-altitude economy as one of the growth engines of new quality productive forces.

Thank you, President.

LCQ17: Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited

Following is a question by the Hon Mrs Regina Ip and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, in the Legislative Council today (July 3):

Question:

The Chief Executive announced the establishment of the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC) in the 2022 Policy Address, and nearly two years later, the HKIC finally signed a strategic partnership agreement (the Agreement) with the innovation and technology (I&T) enterprise, SmartMore Corporation Limited (SmartMore), last month, marking the first time the HKIC signs a strategic partnership agreement with a technology enterprise. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the specific amount of the HKIC's investment in SmartMore under the Agreement; if the amount of investment cannot be disclosed, of the reasons for that; whether it has drawn up a timetable for disclosing the arrangements under the Agreement;

(2) given that in the reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council on the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-2025, the Government has indicated that the Board of Directors of the HKIC will formulate appropriate disclosure arrangements for the HKIC in accordance with factors such as the actual needs of its investment operation, of the current progress of the relevant work; when the Government plans to disclose the investments made by the HKIC in various enterprises and explain how such investments will bring into play its role of channelling capital and leveraging market resources;

(3) as it is learnt that SmartMore has undertaken in the Agreement to establish the first artificial intelligence (AI) research institute in Hong Kong to nurture local AI talents, whether the Government has assessed the economic benefits that the project will bring to Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) whether, in addition to the establishment of an AI research institute, there are other plans under the Agreement to build an I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(5) as it is learnt that an AI-powered real-time translation service was provided on the spot at the signing ceremony of the Agreement, and SmartMore's official website has uploaded both the Chinese and English versions of the press release on the signing ceremony, but the HKIC's official website has only uploaded the Chinese version of the press release and the speech delivered by its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) one week after the signing ceremony, and there are views that the relevant practice may hinder the HKIC's external publicity work, of the reasons why the HKIC did not upload the English version of the press release and the speech delivered by its CEO; and

(6) whether the HKIC has formulated measures to step up its external publicity work; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; whether the Government has formulated corresponding performance indicators for the HKIC; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), the reply to the six parts of the question is as follows:

(1) The HKIC plans to join hands with SmartMore in accelerating the advancement in the continued development and application of cutting-edge technologies in artificial intelligence (AI) large language models (LLM) in Hong Kong, with a view to contributing to the economic and social developments of Hong Kong. Key content of the strategic partnership agreement was disclosed on the date of signing, which includes the establishment of the first AI Research Institute by SmartMore in Hong Kong to focus on nurturing Hong Kong young talents for AI development, putting Hong Kong as the priority location for initial public offering in its future development plan, and deployment of resources to enhance the computing power of Hong Kong. Owing to

the confidentiality clauses regarding the commercially sensitive information in the agreement, details on the investment amount cannot be disclosed.

(2) The HKIC has started to implement certain direct and co-investment projects in June this year covering the themes of Hard and Core Technology, Biotech, New Energy and Green Technology. All of these investment projects target companies that are at the forefront of technology or operate in critical sectors, and are medium to long term investments. The HKIC aims to exert its influence as "patient capital", accelerating the construction of the information innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem in Hong Kong and generating investment return by way of investing and signing collaboration agreements. The HKIC will have appropriate disclosure arrangements in its annual report regarding its operations and investment.

(3) "Science and technology is primary productive force, talent is primary resource, and innovation is primary driver of growth". Talent is a key element in I&T. Nurturing talents in the specialised field of AI is very important for the fostering and continued development of the relevant ecosystem in Hong Kong. SmartMore will establish the first AI Research Institute in Hong Kong, which will focus on nurturing Hong Kong's young talents for AI development. The relevant Research Institute will be situated in a reputable university in Hong Kong, with details being discussed in depth. Talent development is an important factor for the HKIC when selecting strategic partners or investment projects.

(4) Other key content of the strategic partnership agreement includes putting Hong Kong as the priority location for initial public offering in SmartMore's future development plan, and deployment of resources to enhance the computing power of Hong Kong. SmartMore's strategic partnership with the HKIC means that SmartMore is plugged into the I&T ecosystem of Hong Kong as well as the broad network of the HKIC, benefiting from more cross-jurisdictional and cross-sectoral resources. The HKIC's investment strategy includes bringing more collaborative opportunities and development potential to its investee companies and strategic partners, and creates more value for Hong Kong on that basis.

(5) The Chinese and English bilingual press release for the signing of the strategic partnership agreement between the HKIC and SmartMore has been uploaded to the official website of the HKIC. Regarding the speech, its release adheres to the customary practice of the Government, under which the deployed version was used.

(6) The HKIC conducts publicity and promotion work on an on-going basis for its investment strategy under which the ecosystem construction is driven by capital. Such work covers the participants and potential participants of the ecosystem of cutting-edge technologies locally, in the Mainland and overseas, with a view to allowing them to develop a deeper understanding. It is believed that targeted publicity will help attract the relevant enterprises to Hong Kong.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the HKIC only assumed office in

last October. Considering that the HKIC is still in its initial operation, the Board of Directors acknowledges that full deployment of capital takes time, and that it also takes time for the invested capital to yield reasonable return. Meanwhile, another important policy objective of the HKIC's investment is to help enhance Hong Kong's medium to long term competitiveness. Therefore, the CEO's work objectives and performance indicators set by the Board of Directors primarily include the establishment of governance and investment mechanisms as well as the team; construction of extensive and close connections with the investment, industry, academic and research sectors in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas; identification of high quality investment projects, enterprises and partners; and promotion of the I&T ecosystem construction in Hong Kong.