

# Result of tender of People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on June 19, 2024

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

Result of the tender of the People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on June 19, 2024:

## Tender Result

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Tender Date : June 19, 2024  
Bills available for Tender : Six-month RMB Bills  
Issuer : The People's Bank of China  
Issue Number : BCHKFP24012  
Issue Date : June 21, 2024  
Maturity Date : December 20, 2024 (or the closest coupon payment date)  
Application Amount : RMB 51,860 million  
Issue Amount : RMB 20,000 million  
Average accepted Coupon Rate : 2.49 per cent  
Highest accepted Coupon Rate (Bills' Coupon) : 2.59 per cent  
Lowest accepted Coupon Rate : 1.75 per cent  
Allocation Ratio (At Highest accepted Coupon Rate) : Approximately 35.30 per cent

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## LCQ9: Combating touting activities in booking of recreation and sports venues

Following is a question by the Hon Luk Chung-hung and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (June 19):

Question:

It has been reported that recently, there has been a relapse in the situation where hirers tout their booked sessions for using the recreation

and sports facilities for profits (touting). The publicly-funded recreation and sports venues have been reduced to "cash cows" for "venue touting gangs" to make profit out of nothing. For example, the Government's indoor basketball courts, which charge between \$57 and \$148 per hour, have been touted at between \$800 and \$1,200 for two hours. In addition, some "venue touting gangs" have resorted to human wave tactics and computer programmes to access the intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system "SmartPLAY" of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) extremely quickly in the early morning each day to book 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the tennis courts for prime time and then resell them at a higher price. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as there are views pointing out that although the situation of touting has improved since the launch of SmartPLAY, the LCSD staff members as supervisors have failed to effectively stop touting activities, how the Government ensures that the LCSD staff members will strictly discharge their duties to accurately combat touting activities;

(2) as it has been reported that some people use other people's identity cards to check-in repeatedly at self check-in devices at the ball courts under the LCSD, and some hirers just wander around the venues during the booked session without using the facilities, but rather transfer the venues to suspected buyers by way of touting, whether the Government will consider installing closed-circuit televisions at the LCSD venues, so as to prevent the aforesaid activities; and

(3) of (i) the number of cases investigated by government departments in respect of touting-related activities and, among them, (ii) the number of cases where prosecutions were instituted and (iii) the number of successful cases of conviction in the past five years, and set out the breakdown in the table below?

Type of cases	2020	.....	From 2024 to present
(i)			
(ii)			
(iii)			

Reply:

President,

My reply to the questions raised by the Hon Luk Chung-hung is as follows:

(1) The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has all along been paying close attention to the unauthorised transfer of user permits or touting activities in relation to sports and recreation facilities. In recent years, the LCSD has adopted a multi-pronged approach in combating touting activities, including enhancing the booking arrangements, imposing penalty

arrangements and stepping up inspections. To combat the touting of sports and recreation facilities more effectively, the LCSD has already incorporated functions addressing the touting of venues when the SmartPLAY system was launched, including:

(i) Requiring real-name registration;

(ii) Adding a new function of allocating certain popular recreation and sports facilities by ballot instead of the first-come-first-served allocation mechanism;

(iii) Requiring the hirer to fill in the account numbers of four other SmartPLAY users with whom the hirer will use the facility when submitting balloting application for turf soccer pitches or booking on a first-come-first-served basis. Three out of these four SmartPLAY users are required to check in together with the hirer and be present during the use of the booked session;

(iv) Requiring members of the public to declare and undertake that they will be present during the use of the booked session(s) and that the user permit will not be transferred by any means in the course of booking facilities via the SmartPLAY system and checking in. Any one failing to do so may commit the offence of fraud under section 16A of the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) and be liable to prosecution and imprisonment of up to 14 years upon conviction; and

(v) allowing hirers to cancel bookings up to one day before the booked session via different channels, including the internet/mobile app/smart self-service stations (SSS), but the cancelled session(s) will not be immediately released for booking on the new system to prevent using the cancellation of booking as a means of transferring the user permit of the booked session for touting activities. Cancelled session(s), including those of turf soccer pitches, will be posted on the LCSD website and under the section titled "Cancelled sessions to be released for booking" on the system at 1am on the following day. They will be available for booking again from 7am on the same day through various booking channels on a first-come-first-served basis.

To stamp out login by computer programs effectively, the SmartPLAY system adopts a new generation of Web Application Firewall and anti-bot solution. Once unusual login or booking is detected, the anti-bot solution will conduct analysis and intercept bot access instantly.

The LCSD has stepped up the monitoring of unauthorised transfer and touting of sports and recreation venues, including closely monitoring social media platforms, collecting information such as venues and sessions of suspected touting cases on a regular basis and working closely with the law enforcement agency to take appropriate follow-up actions on suspected cases of unauthorised transfer. The LCSD will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the anti-touting measures, and will further enhance the SmartPLAY system and roll out more stringent administrative measures to combat touting when needed.

Meanwhile, as stipulated in the Conditions of Use of LCSD Recreation and

Sports Facilities, hirers must check-in for the use of the facilities with their original Hong Kong Identity Cards (HKIDs) at the SSS or Self-service Check-in Device (CID) before using the facilities, and be present during the booked session(s). Any hirer who has failed to take up and/or be present during booked session(s) on two occasions within 60 consecutive days will be suspended from booking LCSD fee-charging facilities for 90 days.

The LCSD has formulated operational guidelines for venue staff of sports and recreation facilities. Venue staff are required to follow the relevant procedures when handling hirers' check-in of venues and keep proper records. They are also reminded, from time to time, to strictly follow the prevailing guidelines to inspect the use of sports and recreation facilities. The LCSD has also issued guidelines requiring district management staff to strengthen the venue management and arrange on-site inspections, especially for venues with a high risk of touting activities. Venue supervisory and frontline staff have been reminded to strictly enforce the relevant guidelines and ensure that the relevant official records (e.g. Sign-in Registration by Hirer/Users, Monthly Register of Block Bookings, etc) are properly maintained. In addition, the Quality Assurance Section of the LCSD will conduct surprise inspections of sports and recreation venues at different times to ascertain whether venue staff have followed the departmental guidelines when hirers check-in to take up booked facilities and when conducting random checks on hirers' use of venues. If irregularities are found, venue staff will be instructed to rectify immediately and the relevant summaries will be forwarded to the management of the respective districts for follow-up. Such reports will be submitted to the Head of Department for scrutiny in due course.

(2) Hirers of sports and recreation facilities are required to check-in with their original HKIDs at the SSSs or CIDs installed at leisure venues in person. Any person who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, uses or has the custody or is in possession of another person's identity card commits an offence.

At present, some of the sports and recreation venues under the management of the LCSD are installed with closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) cameras to deter illegal activities and monitor the venues. CCTVs in some of these venues cover the vicinity of the SSSs or CIDs. However, CCTVs can capture a large number of images of individuals or their personal data and the vast majority of the hirers are law-abiding. In order to avoid excessive collection of personal data, the LCSD has also adopted other methods that do not involve privacy concerns to effectively monitor the use of the venues by the hirers. These include arranging venue staff to carry out random inspections of the signers' HKIDs at the SSS or CIDs to verify whether they are the actual hirers of the facilities.

Venue staff will, from time to time, inspect whether the hirers are using the facilities at the venue during the booked sessions. If it is found out that the hirers are not using the facilities at the venue during the booked sessions, or if there is sufficient evidence to prove that the hirers have transferred the user permits in breach of the Conditions of Use, the

LCSD will follow up in accordance with the established mechanism.

(3) Information on the investigation cases related to touting in the past five years is set out below:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 to present
(i) Number of investigation cases#	90	740	232	177	130
(ii) Cases with penalties awarded#	0	2	0	2	13

#Note: The investigation cases only include those referred through the 1823 system, brought up by the Office of The Ombudsman or reported directly by members of the public by letters or e-mails to venue staff for investigation and penalty. There are no prosecution or successful conviction cases for touting in the past five years. Besides, the LCSD is analysing the booking patterns of hirers through the SmartPLAY booking system data to identify suspected touting activities.

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## [LCQ14: Consolidating Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, in the Legislative Council today (June 19):

Question:

It has been reported that as pointed out by the statistics of a research institute, the throughput of Hong Kong's container terminals fell out of the world's top 10 ranking last year. The Secretary for Transport and Logistics has pointed out in March this year in his blog that according to the projection made by an authoritative media outlet in the international maritime industry, the ranking of Hong Kong's container throughput in 2023 is one place lower than that of 2022. There are views that given the rapid development of the Mainland ports, coupled with the Mainland's relaxation of the Cabotage rule, tax concessions and price advantage, there is an increasing number of goods being directly exported overseas, which has resulted in the declining transshipment hub status of Hong Kong ports. On consolidating Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as there are views that the National 14th Five-Year Plan has established Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre, which has thus transformed the competitive relationship between Hong Kong ports and those in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area into co-operative relationship, and the Transport and Logistics Bureau signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Greater Bay maritime co-operation with the Guangzhou Port Authority in May last year, whether the authorities have reviewed the effectiveness of the co-operation between the two sides so far, and whether the competitiveness of Hong Kong's shipping industry has been enhanced;

(2) as it has been reported that a number of Mainland ports have already set up automated terminals, but according to the Action Plan on Maritime and Port Development Strategy promulgated by the Government in December last year, taking into account the exorbitant investment required for automation and digitalisation and the short-term impacts on profits resulting from upgrades, private terminal operators have been adopting a cautious attitude towards the adoption of such technologies, how the authorities will push forward the automation of Hong Kong container terminals with a view to increasing the competitiveness of the shipping industry; whether it has set a timetable for the automation of Hong Kong container terminals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) given that Hong Kong has been designated by the Baltic and International Maritime Council as one of the four arbitration venues and its status is on a par with London, New York and Singapore, and the Government has been promoting high value-added maritime arbitration services, but it is learnt that Hong Kong merely handled about 100-odd cross-border maritime arbitration cases each year in recent years, which is a far cry from the almost 2 000 caseload handled by London, and the effectiveness of the promotion work appears to be unsatisfactory, whether the Government will enhance the promotion strategy to attract enterprises to use Hong Kong's maritime arbitration services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Department of Justice (DoJ), our reply to the various parts of the question raised by Hon Liao is as follows:

(1) The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is committed to reinforcing Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre. The Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 (the National 14th Five-Year Plan) and the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area have shown express support to the position of the Hong Kong Port and the development of high value-added maritime services in Hong Kong for better integration into the country's development. The Transport and Logistics

Bureau (TLB) promulgated the Action Plan on Maritime and Port Development Strategy on December 20, 2023, which sets out 10 strategies and 32 action measures in four directions to support the sustainable development needs of the maritime and port industry in Hong Kong, enhance the long-term competitiveness of the industry, as well as consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre.

Hong Kong will continue to capitalise on its distinctive advantages under the "one country, two systems" principle and serve as a maritime super-connector among cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The TLB and the Guangzhou Port Authority signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Greater Bay maritime co-operation in May 2023 to establish a mechanism for communication and co-operation on port and maritime-related matters. Regular meetings and exchanges are held to examine ways to enhance co-operation, boost publicity and promotion, and encourage further talent exchange. For example, the HKSAR Government is actively exploring the establishment of a joint maritime talent training mechanism with port cities in the GBA with a view to facilitating the collaboration of maritime training institutions in Hong Kong and the GBA, strengthening teacher exchanges and providing maritime training courses in multiple places so that maritime practitioners and students in the GBA can receive the required training at the appropriate time.

To foster exchanges between Hong Kong and other cities in the GBA, the HKSAR Government will explore establishing liaison and co-operation mechanisms with ports and cities in the GBA to make good use of the complementarity of the respective strengths, step up bilateral co-operation, etc. The HKSAR Government will also continue to explore further areas for collaboration between Hong Kong and other ports and cities in the GBA along with the industry to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong Port as well as the GBA port cluster as a whole.

(2) The HKSAR Government is encouraged by the continual investment of resources by terminal operators over the years in technological development for improving terminal facilities, thereby contributing to Hong Kong's status as a regional hub through efficient services. For instance, the terminals have introduced remote-controlled rubber-tired gantry cranes and automated container stacking system since 2018. The container loading and unloading operations, which were originally controlled manually from the crane cabin, can gradually be transformed into fully remote-controlled operations. Through computer monitoring, operation priorities can be adjusted as needed, and optimal stacking positions and combinations of containers can be arranged to enhance operational efficiency and productivity. Remote crane operation not only improves operational efficiency, but also enhances industrial safety and the working environment for employees. The terminal operators are also conducting trials on autonomous electric trucks to ensure safe and smooth operation before they are gradually applied to daily container operations, thereby further enhancing the level of terminal automation.

The HKSAR Government is actively promoting the development of smart port to strengthen port competitiveness by setting up a digitalised port community

system (PCS) to facilitate the flow and sharing of data among stakeholders in the maritime, port and logistics industries. The HKSAR Government has set up a data sharing platform for trial by phases starting from January 2023. At present, the platform for tracking the delivery processes of cold-chain cargoes (including local imports and cross-boundary deliveries, as well as full and consolidated containers of export cargoes) has been rolled out for trial in the industry. The HKSAR Government's target is to expand the PCS to a wider range of products and delivery processes beyond cold-chain products by 2025. With streamlined port operations and optimised multi-party co-ordination, port efficiency will be enhanced, thereby enhancing the overall competitiveness of the Hong Kong Port. Meanwhile, the HKSAR Government encourages the industry to leverage the existing digital solutions and technologies to enhance cargo handling efficiency and promote the interconnectivity of port, airport and logistics data.

(3) Maritime disputes are one of the major areas of arbitration in Hong Kong. With a well-developed judicial system, professional maritime legal services, the only Chinese-English bilingual common law system in the world and a rich selection of arbitral institutions, Hong Kong is listed by the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) in the BIMCO Law and Arbitration Clause 2020 as one of the four designated arbitration venues in the standard contracts for the global maritime industry, alongside with London, New York and Singapore, and is also an important maritime dispute resolution centre in the Asia-Pacific region. According to information published by the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), 16 per cent of the arbitration cases submitted to HKIAC in 2023 involved maritime disputes, being the third most common type of disputes handled by HKIAC in that year.

To complement the strategic positioning of Hong Kong as an international maritime centre and a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region under the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the HKSAR Government has been striving hard to promote Hong Kong's maritime legal and arbitration services through organising and supporting various promotional events. The key maritime legal and dispute resolution promotional activities in recent years include organising the Mock Arbitrations on Maritime Disputes and summits and seminars on maritime arbitration held during the annual Hong Kong Maritime Week organised by the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board as well as the Hong Kong Legal Week, the DoJ's annual flagship event, with a view to promoting the important role of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services in supporting the development of the maritime industry in Hong Kong. The DoJ has also invited various representatives from the maritime legal and dispute resolution industry to make bilingual videos which were published on the DoJ's social media platforms to further promote Hong Kong's maritime arbitration services.

Looking forward, the HKSAR Government will step up efforts to actively strengthen collaboration with the local and international legal and arbitration sector to promote Hong Kong's maritime legal and arbitration services and further consolidate Hong Kong's status as an international maritime centre and a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region. The HKSAR Government will focus on



highlighting the advantages and benefits of Hong Kong's arbitration services during promotion, including its designation as one of the four arbitration venues by BIMCO, its robust legal framework, the neutrality of its legal system, and its internationally-recognised professional expertise in maritime law. All these would reinforce Hong Kong's position as a preferred destination for maritime arbitration. In respect of Mainland enterprises, the HKSAR Government will focus on promoting how Hong Kong's professional services, including legal services, can support their expansion into global markets.

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## [LCQ20: Preventing the circulation of counterfeit banknotes](#)

Following is a question by Professor the Hon Priscilla Leung and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Joseph Chan, in the Legislative Council today (June 19):

Question:

It has been reported that various versions of counterfeit \$500 denomination banknotes appeared in the market in Hong Kong in recent months. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has grasped the latest number of counterfeit banknotes in circulation in the market in Hong Kong, as well as information such as the sources, circulation channels and production technologies of such counterfeit banknotes; whether the Government has analysed the causes of the problem of counterfeit banknotes and its impact;

(2) of the policies and measures currently in place to tackle and prevent the counterfeiting of banknotes; whether there is an effective co-operation and co-ordination mechanism among the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the police and the note-issuing banks to supervise and regulate the issuance and circulation of Hong Kong currency, and to combat and detect criminal activities involving the counterfeiting of banknotes;

(3) whether it has engaged in exchanges and co-operation with relevant Mainland and international institutions and organisations to prevent and combat the cross-boundary circulation of counterfeit banknotes and crimes;

(4) whether it has stepped up education and publicity among members of the public and shop operators to increase their vigilance against counterfeit banknotes and their ability to identify counterfeit banknotes;

(5) whether it has adequate equipment and resources to assist members of the

public and shop operators in distinguishing between genuine and counterfeit banknotes; and

(6) whether it has strengthened the research and development and innovation in the field of banknotes, and considered introducing more advanced and secure security technologies and features (e.g. the use of biometric technologies, smart chips and nanomaterials), so as to enhance the security features and credibility of banknotes?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Security Bureau, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and the Hong Kong Police Force, the consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) Compared to other jurisdictions, the overall counterfeit rate in Hong Kong is relatively low. For example, there are three pieces of counterfeit note per one million banknotes in circulation in 2023, compared to 25 pieces for the United Kingdom, 16 pieces for the Euro area, six pieces for Canada and five pieces for Australia.

On the statistics of seizure of counterfeit banknote, the Police seized a total of 10 191 counterfeit Hong Kong dollar banknotes in 2023; and 7 803 such banknotes in January to May 2024, with the increase mainly due to the large number of counterfeit \$1,000 and \$500 notes seized in several fraud cases. In the past two years, about 70 per cent of the counterfeit banknotes were seized by the Police during law enforcement operations, while the rest was received by banks and the retail sector in the course of their daily business and passed to the Police for handling. Most of the seized counterfeit Hong Kong dollar banknotes were of poor quality and lacked security features. Some bore the words "practice notes" (i.e. tools used by bank staff in the Mainland to practice counting banknotes), which were distinctly different from the genuine banknotes.

(2) to (5) The Government attaches great importance to combatting crimes involving counterfeit banknotes, and will, through continuous monitoring of counterfeit trends in Hong Kong and other jurisdictions, and actively maintaining close communication with other central banks and law enforcement agencies, ensure that appropriate measures are taken to tackle and forestall counterfeiting in a timely manner. The HKMA, the Police and the note-issuing banks (NIBs) have maintained close liaison with each other in combatting criminal activities involving counterfeit banknotes. The NIBs will immediately notify the Police and the HKMA should they find any high-quality counterfeit notes. The Police will also regularly share with the HKMA the latest intelligence on counterfeit banknotes, and work with the HKMA to analyse the counterfeits' quality and assess the risks of the security features of Hong Kong banknotes being successfully imitated. In addition, targetting offenders who produce and distribute counterfeit banknotes, the Police conducts intelligence exchanges with Mainland and overseas law-

enforcement agencies, and assists the HKMA in conducting tests on suppliers of banknote authentication devices to ensure their effectiveness in accurately identifying counterfeit banknotes.

The HKMA and the Police jointly conduct seminars on a regular basis on the design and security features of Hong Kong banknotes for staff of the banking sector and other commercial entities (e.g. retail and catering chain groups) to help enhance their knowledge and skills in authenticating banknotes, as well as their understanding of counterfeit-related legislation (e.g. on how to handle suspected counterfeit notes).

On promotion, the HKMA provides information on the design and security features of Hong Kong banknotes to members of the public through its website and Information Centre. Leaflets on the security features of Hong Kong banknotes are also provided to retailers, schools and the public if needed. The Police is continuously stepping up online and offline publicity to raise public awareness of counterfeit banknotes. In view of the rising trend of recent seizure of counterfeit \$500 and \$1,000 banknotes, the Police issued "Four tips on identifying counterfeit banknotes" and a related promotional video on its Facebook page in February and April this year respectively, educating members of the public on how to identify counterfeit banknotes, and reminding that if they receive a suspected counterfeit banknote, they should immediately pass it to the Police or a bank for action and should not attempt to use it.

(6) The HKMA attaches importance to the technological development concerning banknote design and security features, and has been actively engaging the banknote industry (including suppliers of banknote printing machines, materials, security features, etc.) to keep abreast of the latest research and development of security features and their effectiveness. The HKMA also conducts exchanges with other central banks in this regard.

Based on the HKMA's understanding, biometrics, smart chips and nanomaterials have yet to be applied to the technology on the security features of banknotes. The HKMA will continue to monitor relevant technological development, and suitably adopt the latest technology for enhancing the resilience of Hong Kong banknotes against counterfeiting.

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## **LCQ10: Cultural, recreational and sports facilities in New Territories South East geographical constituency**

â€‹Following is a question by the Hon Stanley Li and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the

Legislative Council today (June 19):

Question:

Some members of the public have relayed that the cultural, recreational and sports facilities in the New Territories South East geographical constituency (NT South East GC) for the 2021 Legislative Council General Election are inadequate. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of cultural, recreational and sports facilities in the NT South East GC which have been planned but not yet constructed, and set out in a table the following information of such facilities: (i) planning year, (ii) facility project, (iii) construction time, (iv) expected completion time and (v) expected number of service recipients;

(2) of the respective numbers of cultural, recreational and sports facilities in shortfall in Sai Kung, Tseung Kwan O and Ma On Shan in the NT South East GC based on the relevant standards of provision in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines; whether it has formulated key performance indicators for assessing the work of town planning and development; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) given that there are four transitional housing projects in the NT South East GC, and among them, some have leased on a temporary basis the sites originally earmarked for cultural, recreational and sports facilities, how the Government balances the public's demand for both transitional housing as well as cultural, recreational and sports facilities in planning such transitional housing; and

(4) upon expiry of the lease for the transitional housing projects mentioned in (3) on the sites earmarked for cultural, recreational and sports facilities, of the specific indicators to be put in place by the Government to serve as reference in considering lease renewal; in the event of non-renewal, of the details of and timetable for taking forward the work on the sites concerned by the Government for their original uses that have been earmarked?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau (HB), my consolidated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Stanley Li is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Government has all along been committed to the planning and construction of various cultural, sports and recreation facilities in the territory to meet the needs of the public.

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) stipulates the Government's general guidelines for determining the scale, locations, and site requirements of various land uses, community facilities and

infrastructures according to the population and other factors. Policy bureaux and departments have all along been formulating, reviewing, and revising the relevant parts of HKPSG as appropriate, taking into account their respective policies and development requirements for the concerned facilities, including cultural and sports facilities. The Government has already reserved sufficient land in the relevant areas in accordance with HKPSG and bureaux/departments' requirements for development of suitable cultural and sports facilities, so as to cater for the need of the existing and planned population.

When planning new and improving existing facilities, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), apart from making reference to the HKPSG, will consider other factors including policy objectives and priorities, utilisation rate of existing facilities, demographic changes within the districts, public demand for facilities, views of District Councils and stakeholders, land availability, and technical feasibility, etc.

South East New Territories includes Sai Kung District and Sha Tin Districts, which currently have populations of around 503 100 and 702 800 respectively. Major public works projects for cultural, recreation and sports facilities currently in progress or under planning in both districts are provided at Annex I. The comparison by district between the provision of major cultural, sports and recreation facilities under the LCSD and the provision as recommended by the HKPSG is at Annex II.

Under the fiscal consolidation programme, the Government will review the order of priority, necessity and importance of the works projects under planning, such as conducting reviews on how to use public resources more effectively and the cost effectiveness of projects. For projects that are currently under preliminary planning or at the conceptual stage, the implementation schedule will be adjusted in light of their importance and other factors. Since some projects are still at the preliminary planning stage, the construction and completion schedule are not available for the time being.

(3) The Government has been promoting the development of transitional housing in the past few years, making better use of short-term available land and premises to provide short-term accommodation to those in need, and alleviate the hardship of the inadequately housed families and individuals that have been waiting for traditional public rental housing for a long time. Transitional housing projects, including the four projects in the New Territories South East geographical constituency (NT South East GC) mentioned in the question (i.e. "Yin Ting Terraced Home" at Tong Yin Street, Tseung Kwan O; "Yap Ting Terraced Home" at Chi Shin Street, Tseung Kwan O; "Po Ting Terraced Home" at Po Lam Road North, Tseung Kwan O; and "T-Loft@Lok Wo" at Lok Wo Sha Lane, Ma On Shan), aim at making optimal use of the "window period" of suitable lands or premises, during which the long-term development has not been taken forward yet. Therefore, the implementation of the original land use planning will not be hindered.

(4) As mentioned above, the four transitional housing projects in the NT

South East GC mentioned in the question aim at making optimal use of the "window period" before the long-term planned uses of the sites concerned are implemented, in order to help those with pressing housing needs. The four government sites are currently leased under short-term tenancy, which will expire in June 2027 and thereafter be renewed quarterly.

According to the information of the Planning Department, the site of "Po Ting Terraced Home" has been reserved for village-type development, the site of "Yin Ting Terraced Home" will be developed into a civic centre, the site of "Yap Ting Terraced Home" is planned for a sports centre-cum-indoor heated swimming pool, and the site of "T-Loft@Lok Wo" is planned for a sports centre. The development of the above three sites, which are planned for cultural, recreation and sports facilities in the long term, are still at the preliminary planning stage and their schedule is not available for the time being. We will continue to maintain close communication with the HB for timely return of the sites for their long-term uses.

We have to stress that the transitional housing initiative is a short-term relief in nature. If the long-term development of the site or premises of a certain project is yet to be finalised or implemented, and the owner of the land/premises concerned agrees to renew the lease of the respective project, the HB will then, subject to the status of the project and other factors including public demand for transitional housing, consider providing policy support to the non-government organisation concerned for maintaining the operation of the project to serve those in need. If the long-term development needs to be taken forward, the land/premises concerned will be returned to the relevant bureau or department in a timely manner.