

Berlin-based The D0 School opens regional headquarters in Hong Kong

German social enterprise The D0 School announced today (November 13) that it has opened its Hong Kong campus as its regional headquarters, using the city's global hub status to spread its influence across the Asia-Pacific region.

The D0 School, founded in 2013, supports businesses, entrepreneurs and young talents in turning ideas into action, creating movements of change and enabling social impacts. With its unique methodology, it helps executives and other individuals enhance their innovative ability through various social and corporate engagement activities including top management meetings, intrapreneurship academies, co-creation sprints and more.

The Head of The D0 School Hong Kong, Dr Anson Wong, said, "We already have partnered with various corporations and institutions on different projects here in Hong Kong. In order to nurture existing partnerships in the city and around the region, we decided to open our Hong Kong campus and use it as the focal point to manage all operations in this part of the world."

Dr Wong added, "Hong Kong positions itself as a leading regional business centre and strategic hub for growth. It is a critical base for us to develop new programmes and explore new partnerships. The Hong Kong campus allows us to fully deliver programmes with a local team supported by our international network of experts and innovators."

Associate Director-General of Investment Promotion Dr Jimmy Chiang said, "Hong Kong is a popular location for overseas and Mainland companies, as well as entrepreneurs from around the globe to set up or expand their business. This dynamic setting provides The D0 School with plenty of opportunities to create specific programmes for corporate leaders and entrepreneurs who are looking for new solutions to their business challenges."

About The D0 School

Established in 2013, The D0 School is a global organisation based in Berlin, Germany, that enables a purposeful economy that is sustainable and innovative. It has offices in New York, Berlin, Hamburg and Hong Kong. It has run programmes in over 30 countries, catalysed hundreds of new products and services, and impacted the lives of millions of people around the world. For more information, please visit www.thedoschool.com.

About Invest Hong Kong

Invest Hong Kong is the department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responsible for attracting foreign direct investment and supporting overseas and Mainland businesses to set up or

expand in Hong Kong. It provides free advice and customised services for overseas and Mainland companies. For more information, please visit www.investhk.gov.hk.

LCQ11: Reduction of waste plastics

Following is a question by the Hon Kenneth Leung and a written reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has indicated that as the disposal of plastic bags rose again in two consecutive years in 2016 and 2017, it will review the effectiveness (including the charge amount and exemption issues) of the existing Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme (Charging Scheme). On the other hand, currently there is no legislation regulating the use of disposable plastic products (including packaging materials, tableware and containers). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective quantities of waste plastics (i) disposed of at landfills and (ii) recovered, in each month between January last year and October this year, with a tabulated breakdown by type (including plastic bags, disposable tableware and packaging materials);
- (2) of the progress of the EPD's review of the Charging Scheme; whether the Government will consider taking measures which are more aggressive (e.g. a total ban on the use of plastic bags); if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the justifications for that;
- (3) as some green groups have pointed out that since the problem of abusive use of packaging materials is serious, and it is difficult to recover and reuse such materials, packaging materials inflict more harm on the environment than plastic bags do, whether the Government has formulated measures to reduce the use of plastic packaging materials; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether it will consider including disposable plastic products in a producer responsibility scheme to require various parties such as manufacturers, sellers and consumers to share the cost of handling related waste, with a view to achieving reduction of waste plastics at source; if so, of the details; if not, the justifications for that; and
- (5) as it is learnt that quite a number of countries have implemented or will implement a timetable for a gradual ban on the use of plastic products which are disposable or difficult to recover, whether the Government will draw up a

timetable on reduction of waste plastics; if so, of the details; if not, the justifications for that?

Reply:

President,

Environmental pollution by plastic products, in particular, marine pollution, has become a topic of concern in recent years. To alleviate its impact on ecology and environment, the Government will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach by taking forward initiatives on various fronts, e.g. introducing legislation and policies, strengthening education on and support to community, etc., in order to promote a "plastic-free" culture, minimise the use of one-off disposable plastics and create a circular economy for plastic materials. To this end, concerted effort by the Government, various trades and the general public is required to achieve a more satisfactory outcome in tackling the challenges posed by waste plastics.

My reply to the question raised by the Hon Kenneth Leung is as follows:

(1) The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) compiles statistics on waste plastics disposed of at landfills based on findings of an annual survey. Due to limitation in data collection, we are unable to provide the disposal figures on a monthly basis and can only provide the average monthly figures. In 2017, the average monthly quantities of waste plastics disposed of were as follows:

Plastics	Average monthly disposal quantity (tonnes)
Plastic bags	24 120
Plastic tableware	5 040
Polyfoam – tableware	1 180
Polyfoam – others	1 350
Non-polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic bottles	2 190
PET plastic bottles	4 150
Others (Note)	26 560
Total	64 590

Note: Other waste plastics include packaging materials, toys, off-cuts, scrap, etc.

As for the quantities of waste plastics recovered, we maintain breakdown on plastic recyclables recovered for either local recycling or export, but not by their original uses, and are thus unable to provide the corresponding breakdown. In 2017, the average monthly quantity of waste plastics recovered was 9 640 tonnes.

Compilation of the statistics for 2018 is underway and the statistics are expected to be published by the end of this year.

(2) to (5) We are studying and formulating various initiatives to tackle the issue of waste plastics, but given the many variables in play, we are currently unable to formulate a specific target for gradually reducing the quantity of waste plastics disposed of at landfills and the timetable for implementing the target. We would proactively take forward the works below:

(i) Under the Plastic Shopping Bag (PSB) Charging Scheme, the current minimum charge of 50 cents has remained unchanged for over ten years. There are views on whether the charge should be adjusted. There are also views that the current exemption over PSB used for food hygiene purposes, especially the use of PSB to carry frozen or chilled foodstuff, may need to be tightened to further encourage reducing the use of PSB. We are reviewing the operation and effectiveness of the charging scheme along these directions so as to consider the room for further improvement. We plan to consult the public in 2020 on the outcome of the review in order to map out the way forward.

(ii) Packaging reduction is a global trend. This subject has always been a concern to members of the public and green groups in Hong Kong. The Government plans to collaborate with the retail trade to explore and implement practical measures on promoting and encouraging the reduction of plastic packaging materials. We are now actively engaging the sector for commencing the work concerned.

(iii) The Government has indicated earlier to press ahead with the introduction of a producer responsibility scheme on plastic beverage containers first. We will consider, similar to the arrangement in other jurisdictions, providing an economic incentive to encourage the public to return used plastic beverage containers for recycling. The application of Reverse Vending Machines will also be explored to enhance recovery efficiency of used plastic beverage containers. Having regard to the consultant's proposal and stakeholders' views, we will map out the way forward for public consultation.

(iv) With reference to the research and development in other countries or places on the control of disposable plastic items, we are commencing a study on controlling or banning disposable plastic tableware to explore, inter alia, the necessity and feasibility of such control or ban, and the scope, regulatory mechanism and applicable substitutes concerned should such control or ban is deemed necessary and feasible. The study is scheduled for completion in late 2020.

(v) Starting from January 2019, the Government has taken the initiative in banning plastic straws and polyfoam food containers in canteens mainly serving government staff. Besides, when inviting tenders for new or renewing existing contracts, the Government will stipulate the requirement for restaurant operators in suitable government venues to avoid using disposable plastic tableware wherever practicable.

(vi) We also collaborate with the catering sector to promote and encourage reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware. Our efforts include formulating guidelines for the catering sector, co-organising the "Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware" campaign with the trade, encouraging customers to bring their own tableware, etc. The two phases of the campaign have saved a total of about 2.4 million sets of disposable tableware.

(vii) Green awareness has to be fostered from childhood. In this connection, we will step up our efforts in nurturing a "plastic-free" culture in schools. The EPD will work with the Education Bureau to launch a "Plastic-free" School Lunch Pilot Scheme, encouraging primary and secondary schools to use reusable lunch boxes in serving school lunch for their students, and cultivating students' green habit of bringing along their own reusable cutlery. We will also provide fridges, rice steamers, dish washers and sterilisers to schools in need, so as to encourage students to bring their own tableware. To inculcate the green habit of "bringing your own bottle" in the youth from their childhood, we will also invite about 80 primary and secondary schools to join a two-year pilot programme, under which smart water dispensers with their exteriors designed by these schools' students will be installed at the schools, and the schools are supported to carry out relevant education and experiential activities.

(viii) To enhance the recovery rate of waste plastics, the Government is preparing to provide free collection services for all sorts of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources. The waste plastics so collected will be further treated and processed to become recycled raw materials or recycled products. A two-year Pilot Scheme on Collection and Recycling Services of Waste Plastics will be gradually rolled out in the Eastern District, Sha Tin and Kwun Tong by end of this year to the first half of 2020. Drawing from the practical experience gained under the Pilot Scheme, we will then gradually extend the services to cover the whole territory.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley cancelled

Owing to the cancellation of race meeting in Happy Valley today (November 13) by the Hong Kong Jockey Club, the "Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley tomorrow" issued by the Police at 3.30pm yesterday (November 12) has been cancelled.

LCQ22: Provision of parking spaces

Following is a question by the Hon Luk Chung-hung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

It is learnt that car parking spaces in Hong Kong are persistently in short supply, and the shortfall of parking spaces for commercial vehicles is particularly severe. The Transport Department (TD) is taking forward pilot projects of automated parking systems (APSs) involving six sites (pilot projects) with a view to providing more car parking spaces. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the shortfall of car parking spaces in each District Council (DC) district in each of the past three years, together with a tabulated breakdown by whether the parking spaces in question are for use by (i) private cars or (ii) commercial vehicles; if such figures are not available, whether it will compile such statistics expeditiously;

(2) whether it has set the target completion dates for the assessments on the technical feasibility and financial viability for the various pilot projects; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) of the new initiatives which will make use of innovation and technology, apart from the introduction of APSs, to be taken by TD in the coming three years for providing more car parking spaces;

(4) as it was pointed out in Report No. 72 of the Director of Audit published in April this year that, as at the end of last year, a number of car parking spaces in five government car parks had been occupied prolongedly by abandoned vehicles, whether the relevant government departments regularly deployed staff to conduct inspections on government car parks in the past three years, to prevent the prolonged occupation of car parking spaces by abandoned vehicles; if so, of the details (including the numbers of inspections conducted and prosecutions initiated);

(5) as the Government will explore, under the principle of "single site, multiple uses", the provision of new public car parks in about 20 works projects, of the public facilities involved in such works projects and the respective numbers of car parking spaces to be provided; and

(6) of the respective numbers of car parking spaces (i) to be added and (ii) to be cancelled, in each DC district in each of the coming three years?

Reply:

President,

Given the hard fact that land resources are limited in Hong Kong,

coupled with the need to cater to competing demands for land for community and economic development, objectively speaking, it is virtually impossible for the Government to increase car parking spaces continuously to catch up with the growth rate of the vehicle fleet.

The Government's current policy on the provision of parking spaces is to accord priority to considering and meeting the parking demand of commercial vehicles (CVs), and to provide an appropriate number of private car parking spaces if the overall development permits, but at the same time not to attract passengers to opt for private cars in lieu of public transport, so as to avoid aggravating the road traffic. The Transport Department (TD) is conducting a consultancy study on parking for CVs to comprehensively assess the shortfall situation, and formulate short-, medium- and long-term measures to address the anticipated demand.

My reply to the various parts of the Hon Luk Chung-hung's question is as follows.

(1), (5) and (6) The numbers of parking spaces by vehicle types in various districts of Hong Kong as at August 2019 are at Annex. As the demand for parking spaces in various districts fluctuates with time and is not static, TD is not able to provide information on the shortfall of parking spaces in each District Council (DC) district.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the parking needs of different districts and to take forward measures to increase the provision of parking spaces, including taking forward pilot projects on automated parking systems (APSs).

In accordance with the "single site, multiple uses" principle, TD is proactively exploring the incorporation of new public car parks in about 20 suitable works projects involving "Government, Institution or Community" facilities, public open space, etc. Subject to technical feasibility, it is expected that the relevant projects will provide a total of around 5 100 parking spaces by batches.

Since the number and progress in the provision of new parking spaces through the various measures hinge on a host of factors, TD is not in a position to make a precise projection on the number of parking spaces to be provided in each of the coming three years.

(2) TD is conducting a consultancy study on APSs to ascertain the feasibility and applicability of APSs in Hong Kong. The study is scheduled for completion in early 2020.

Meanwhile, TD is taking forward six APS pilot projects so as to acquire and consolidate experience in building, operating and managing different types of APSs and the associated financial arrangements. This will pave the way for wider application of APSs in government and privately operated public car parks in future.

So far, TD has identified four sites for launching APS pilot projects,

having regard to such criteria as parking demand, geographical environment, planning restrictions and impact on local traffic, etc. The identified sites include a short-term tenancy (STT) site in Tsuen Wan, an open space at the junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po, the proposed government building on Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan and the proposed government building on Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan. For the STT site in Tsuen Wan, TD has already secured support from the Tsuen Wan DC, and it is expected that tender invitation for the site may take place in early 2020. As regards the pilot project in Sham Shui Po, TD is currently assessing the technical feasibility after securing support from the Sham Shui Po DC. For the proposed government buildings in Sheung Wan and Chai Wan, TD will consult relevant DCs in due course.

(3) To promote smart mobility and assist motorists in finding parking spaces, TD has disseminated parking vacancy information of public car parks to the public through its "HKERouting" mobile application since 2016. Subsequently, TD launched in July 2018 an all-in-one mobile application "HKEMobility", integrating "HKERouting" and two other mobile applications in relation to public transport and driving information, to provide one-stop public access to traffic information. As at end September 2019, "HKEMobility" provided parking vacancy information of 330 public car parks.

On the other hand, TD plans to install a new generation of parking meters by batches starting from the first half of 2020. The new parking meters will be equipped with sensors to detect whether individual parking spaces are occupied, and such real-time information and data will be disseminated through "HKEMobility" and the Government's Public Sector Information Portal "data.gov.hk". We expect that the installation works for the new parking meters will be fully completed in the first half of 2022.

With the provision of more real-time parking vacancy information of public car parks and on-street metered parking spaces equipped with the new generation of parking meters through "HKEMobility", motorists will be able to locate vacant parking spaces more conveniently, thereby reducing the traffic generated by vehicles circulating on roads in search of parking spaces.

(4) Currently, the day-to-day management and operation of government car parks under TD, including the handling of abandoned vehicles, are discharged by outsourced contractors. TD has been deploying staff regularly to inspect each of its car parks one to two times per month to monitor the work of the operators, including manpower deployment, inspection of crucial facilities in the car parks, follow-up of repair items, collection of parking fees, handling of abandoned vehicles and the overall operation of the car parks, etc. In response to the Audit Commission's recommendation, TD has requested the operators to submit monthly reports on their handling of abandoned vehicles starting from February 2019 with a view to enhancing the monitoring of the operators' arrangement in this respect. In addition, in order to speed up the process for handling abandoned vehicles, TD has enhanced the procedures whereby the operators can act in accordance with the "Conditions of Parking and Use" displayed at the car parks concerned. When an abandoned vehicle is found, the operator will send a letter to the address registered by the car owner concerned by registered mail, asking him/her to settle the

parking fees payable and remove his/her vehicle from the space it has been occupying, so as to vacate the parking space for public use as soon as possible. As at end October 2019, there were no outstanding cases of abandoned vehicles in TD's multi-storey car parks.

LCQ10: Impacts of public order events on railway services

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hak-kan and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

Since June this year, members of the public have taken to the streets for many times to stage demonstrations. Radical demonstrators wantonly vandalised MTR station facilities, resulting in temporary closure of a number of MTR stations and reduction in railway services. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows, since June this year,

(i) the number of MTR station facilities vandalised, as well as the repair and reprovisioning costs thus incurred by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL);

(ii) the number of train trips cancelled and the number of passenger trips affected;

(iii) the number of reports made by MTRCL to the Police for assistance;

(iv) the number of MTRCL staff reported to have sustained injuries; and

(v) the additional manpower engaged by MTRCL, with a breakdown by job type;

(2) of the respective numbers of persons arrested, prosecuted and convicted since June this year for alleged vandalism of railway facilities; the penalties imposed on those convicted;

(3) whether it knows if MTRCL has sought compensation from the convicted persons mentioned in (2); if MTRCL has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) as it has been reported that MTRCL specially arranged, during demonstrations, trains to carry demonstrators to other MTR stations for leaving, whether it knows the relevant details (including the number of trips arranged); whether MTRCL was required, in respect of this arrangement, to

seek prior consent from the relevant government departments and report to those departments afterwards; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(5) whether the number of general crimes which happened in MTR stations has shown an upward trend since June this year; if so, of the details, and whether it has assessed if the closed-circuit television systems in a number of MTR stations having been vandalised is one of the causes; and

(6) of the new measures in place to ensure the normal operation of railway services and to protect the personal safety of passengers?

Reply:

President,

The continuous large-scale public order events taking place since this June have had an unprecedented impact on the services of the Mass Transit Railway (MTR). The station facilities, such as ticket machines, add-value machines, entry/exit gates, CCTV cameras, fire services installations, etc, at the MTR stations were often targeted for destruction in protests over recent months. Petrol bombs were hurled at and fires set to the stations and their entrances/exits, causing significant damage to MTR property and posing serious threat to the safety of MTR passengers, staff and other people on the scene.

My reply to the question raised by the Hon Chan Hak-kan is as follows:

(1)(i) As of November 7, among the 93 heavy rail and 68 light rail stations, a cumulative total of 85 heavy rail and 60 light rail stations were vandalised, involving numerous facilities such as entry/exit gates (about 1 600 times), ticket machines, Octopus add-value machines/enquiry processors and Customer Service Centre facilities (961 times), Octopus fare processors on light rail platforms (952 times), CCTV cameras (about 1 100 times), escalators (77 times), lifts (about 50 times), glass panels at station entrances/exits (1 076 times) and roller shutters of station entrances/exits (137 times). Various vandalised station facilities are still in need of repair, and many components and parts are yet to be manufactured and shipped to Hong Kong for re-installation and test-run. The repair and replacement fees will be assessed and confirmed in due course.

(ii) The regular service hours for MTR railway lines and stations have been from approximately 5am to approximately 1am, with more than 8 000 train trips daily. In the first half of 2019, MTR provides service to an average of 5.5 million passenger journeys a day. However, from June this year onwards, the MTRCL has adjusted its train services as necessary during public order events to strengthen the protection to the safety of passengers, staff and the railway. Such adjustments included bypassing certain stations, closing certain station entrances/exits or a whole station, suspending operation of an entire railway line when many of its stations were being attacked, or even terminating service of the whole railway network early. Due to variations in the scale of each public order event, the number of stations attacked and

their distribution, areas of stations affected, the damage they sustained, the scenes of the attacks and the conditions in the vicinity, coupled with chaos caused by sudden incidents at the scenes, immediate on-the-spot response was necessary. As such, it is difficult for the MTRCL to compile exact statistics on the number of train trips cancelled.

The recent continuous attacks of rioters to stations have indeed imposed grave danger to passengers, MTR staff and railway safety. MTR was also unable to provide services, making the general public unable to commute and live as usual. The patronage of August to September this year has dropped 8 per cent compared to that of last year. Moreover, in a long weekend in early October, the situation has worsened. Damages brought by and arson act of rioters escalated which seriously harmed railway safety. At the end, the MTRCL has no choice but to suspend all railway services on October 4 (Friday) evening and on the whole day of October 5 (Saturday), while the Airport Express could only resume limited service (point-to-point service between Hong Kong Station and the Airport Station) in the afternoon of October 5. If we take the average 5.5 million passenger journeys of MTR in the first half of 2019 as the calculation basis, a large number of passenger was affected that weekend.

Taking into account the actual condition of the railway system and upon conducting risk assessment, the MTRCL has decided to end all train services early (except for the Airport Express) since early October so as to allow time for repair and reduce risks. Take for example the ending of all railway services at 11.30pm daily between November 4 and 8, the number of train trips affected every day was over 330.

(iii) From June to early November, the MTRCL has made reports to the Police over 900 times regarding vandalism and arson inside MTR stations, station staff being threatened, trespassers on railway tracks, etc.

(iv) There were over 20 cases in which the MTRCL frontline staff were harassed and injured, including being pushed and shoved when handling disputes and being hit by hard objects hurled by the protestors.

(v) In respect of the MTRCL manpower, as many facilities have been repeatedly vandalised, the maintenance team of the MTRCL has to carry out overnight repair work. Contractors are engaged while maintenance workers are also redeployed from other departments of the MTRCL through flexible arrangement to assist in the repair work in order to expedite the progress. The frontline station staff and maintenance staff have been overstretched owing to numerous acts of vandalism and nuisance. Besides, the MTRCL is highly concerned about the violent incidents and the rampant fare evasion inside MTR stations. Hence, a Special By-laws Enforcement Team is newly set up in recent months to help enforce the MTR By-Laws. The team consists of some 160 members who are MTR staff on permanent establishment from the By-laws Inspection Unit/Customer Service and Revenue Protection Unit or security personnel provided by the contractors. More professional security personnel, from initially 100 to currently around 1 000, have been arranged to provide additional support at MTR stations to ensure the safety of the passengers and the staff. In the light of recent public order events, the MTRCL has strengthened its manpower inside stations and platforms to, inter alia,

manage passenger flow, maintain station order and assist in station operations.

(2) Police do not maintain a breakdown of the number of people arrested, prosecuted and convicted for damaging MTR facilities. Overall speaking, as at October 31, 2019, the Police arrested a total of 3 001 people in the public order events in relation to the amendments of the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, among whom 510 were charged with offences such as "criminal damage" and "arson". According to the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200), a person guilty of destroying or damaging property and arson shall be liable on conviction to a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Among them, from June to September 2019, 164 criminal damage cases were reported in Police's Railway District, most of which involved damaging MTR facilities, with only very few involving damaging private properties.

(3) The MTRCL has made reports to the Police regarding vandalism and arson inside MTR stations, station staff being threatened, trespassers on railway tracks, etc. The MTRCL reserved the rights to sue and claim compensation for any loss suffered.

(4) The MTRCL has been committed to providing safe and reliable railway services for passengers. That said, in order for the MTRCL to provide railway services, the railway itself should first and foremost be able to operate safely. The MTRCL and relevant government departments (including the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Transport Department and the Police) have closely monitored the situation of public order events and conducted risk assessment so as to implement appropriate measures to strengthen the safety of passengers, staff and the railway.

During large-scale public order events from June to mid-August, the MTRCL has, in the light of the Police's dispersal actions in the vicinity of individual stations, made corresponding train service arrangements, i.e. directing the trains with passengers to bypass the stations while at the same time dispatching empty trains directly to those stations to pick passengers up. The MTRCL has all along maintained communication with relevant government departments and implement the above arrangements in order to prevent more passengers from entering into the affected stations, while at the same time assisting to disperse passengers who got stuck at those stations. The MTRCL has not kept record of the corresponding special train service arrangements.

Since July, damages and disturbance occurred in railway area and violent incidents later on further escalated. When violent situations occur in stations, the safety of passenger was endangered. The best solution to ensure safety is to avoid passengers appear or stay in the affected stations. Thus, the MTRCL must, when necessary, adjust its service within a short time (or even without prior notice) in response to such sudden and emergency situations, including bypassing certain stations, closing certain station entrances/exits or the whole station, suspending operation of an entire railway line when many of its stations were being attacked, or even terminating service of the whole railway network early.

The MTRCL will continue to make the best endeavour to provide services

to the public under safe condition and as far as practicable. Government departments and the MTRCL will, in the interest of safety, continue to assess the risk of upcoming public order events, so as to adopt suitable operational arrangement for the public.

(5) From June to September 2019, 536 crimes were reported in Police's Railway District, among which 164 were criminal damage cases (most of which involved damaging MTR facilities, with only very few involving damaging private properties). This represents a significant increase of 72 per cent (318 per cent for criminal damage cases) over the 311 cases reported during the same period in 2018 (among which five were criminal damage cases).

In the unlawful assemblies over the past few months, many of the violent protestors who engaged in violent acts used facial covering to hide their identities and extensively damaged the closed circuit television systems in public areas (including the closed circuit television equipment in most MTR stations), which hindered the Police's enforcement actions and made it more difficult for evidence gathering, such that they might evade liability.

Masked violent protesters' repeated acts in vandalising MTR facilities wantonly pose serious threat to the safety of MTR passengers and their staff, as well as the railway operation. Such acts also seriously affect the commuting by members of the public. The Government has repeatedly stressed that regardless of their demands, protesters should not resort to violence and illegal acts. Beautifying violence or illegal acts would only give rise to more violence, and ultimately it would be the whole society and the general public being suffered. The Government will not tolerate any illegal or violent acts, or acts that prejudice public safety or public order, and will take stringent follow-up actions.

(6) The MTRCL will keep in view the latest situation, and enhance security measures at stations to ensure the safety of passengers, MTR staff and the railway, taking into account the risk assessment results, practical needs and the actual conditions of station entrances/exits. In addition to engaging additional station security staff and related manpower as mentioned in the above reply to part (1) of the question, the MTRCL has also stepped up station security by installing and strengthening roller shutters, protecting glass panels and other facilities at entrances/exits of different stations. The MTRCL is also reviewing long-term measures of station security. Moreover, the MTRCL will continue to, having regard to the actual circumstances, maintain close liaison with bailiffs and the Police in taking appropriate action according to the Interim Injunction Order granted by the Court (which prohibits a person from unlawfully, intentionally and wilfully obstructing or interfering with the proper use of the stations and trains of the railway network, as well as the West Kowloon Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, and prohibits a person from damaging any property or train, using any threatening language or behaving in a riotous or disorderly manner at any MTR station, and obstructing or interfering with any staff of the MTRCL under the circumstances specified in the Order).

As regards to the enforcement work in railway areas, the Police have set up the Railway District to maintain railway network's safety and order. The

Police will, having regard to the operational needs, continue to deploy suitable manpower to take all practical and legitimate measures to prevent and detect crimes and to maintain public safety and public order.