

Government sternly reiterates follow-up actions on incidents concerning construction quality of SCL project are underway

In respect of the unfounded accusations regarding follow-up actions on incidents concerning the construction quality of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project made by a person who is not familiar with prosecution procedure and repeatedly disregard facts, and who made sweeping attacks on the Commission of Inquiry (the Commission) to mislead the public, a Government spokesman today (July 8) rebuked the remarks and set the record straight.

The Government spokesman reiterated that the investigations and prosecution work on the SCL project are still ongoing. The Police are still conducting relevant criminal investigations. The possibility of further prosecutions has not been ruled out. The Government will also take appropriate actions according to the project entrustment agreement with the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL).

Separately, the Buildings Department (BD), after consulting the Department of Justice (DoJ), instigated prosecution action against the contractor of the construction works at the Hung Hom Stabling Sidings (HHSS) under the SCL Project for material deviation from the approved plans in accordance with the provision of the Buildings Ordinance. The court has earlier handed down a judgment of conviction (Case No. KCS 512088/2020). The DoJ has already lodged an application to review the sentence with the Magistrates' Courts. The BD will also refer the case to the Contractors' Disciplinary Board for instigating disciplinary proceedings.

The Commission was appointed by the Chief Executive in Council on July 10, 2018 under the Commissions of Inquiry Ordinance (Cap. 86) to inquire the construction quality incidents of the SCL project. As for the remarks questioning the work of the Commission, the spokesman said that the Commission has already submitted a final report to the then Chief Executive on March 27, 2020. The main investigation results covered (i) the unauthorised changes to construction details of the station box structure and the extent of coupler connection failures therein; (ii) missing Request for Inspection and Survey and Check forms for the North Approach Tunnels (NAT), the South Approach Tunnels and the HHSS, defective construction of the connection joints of NAT and the overrun tracks, unauthorised design changes, failure to ensure quality testing of all rebars used on site; (iii) completeness of MTRCL's and the Government's project management systems; and (iv) safety and fit for purpose of the station, NAT, South Approach Tunnels and HHSS structures.

The Government also established an Expert Adviser Team on August 15, 2018, for comprehensively reviewing the project management system of the

MTRCL as well as recommending the MTRCL and relevant government departments additional managing and monitoring measures necessary in taking forward the SCL project.

The spokesman said that before the commissioning of the SCL, the Government and the MTRCL had fully followed up and implemented all the recommendations proposed by the Commission and the Expert Adviser Team.

The spokesman stressed that the Government had taken thorough and serious follow-up actions in ensuring the construction quality, operational safety of the Station and the pursuit of legal liability of the incidents. The Government must sternly defuse the unfounded accusations against the Government and misleading the public.