

# LCQ10: Work on overseas Chinese affairs

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Starry Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Question:

There are views that the Mainland has a mature development of the work on overseas Chinese affairs, which has achieved remarkable results in guiding and supporting the vast number of overseas Chinese to actively participate in building up our country. Overseas Chinese also play an important role in promoting Hong Kong's economic development, promoting the cultural exchange between China and the rest of the world, and enhancing international understanding of China and Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number and types of overseas Chinese organisations currently registered in Hong Kong; whether there is a dedicated department responsible for liaising with such organisations regularly and promoting the initiatives; of the results achieved by the relevant initiatives in the past three years;

(2) whether InvestHK and the various overseas Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) have mechanisms of liaising regularly with the local overseas Chinese organisations; how support is provided for those organisations to tell China's stories well and promote Hong Kong in their localities; whether key performance indicators are set in respect of the liaison work with those organisations and evaluation is conducted on the effectiveness of the relevant work;

(3) whether it will consider reviewing the overseas Chinese policy of Hong Kong comprehensively, including studying the current population, distribution and development needs of overseas Chinese and establishing a database on overseas Chinese, so as to make long-term development planning; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) whether it will consider studying the experience of the Mainland in the work on overseas Chinese affairs to strengthen support for overseas Chinese organisations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) whether it will consider strengthening the coordination of resources of various departments, coordinating the various ETOs and strengthening the liaison with overseas Chinese, and formulating specific measures to support overseas Chinese organisations in promoting the economic development of Hong Kong and telling the stories of China and Hong Kong well; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Regarding Dr the Hon Starry Lee's question, after consultation with the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB), the Security Bureau, and the Labour and Welfare Bureau, a consolidated reply is as follows:

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government attaches great importance to liaison with overseas Chinese and the overseas Chinese community in foreign countries and those returned to the Mainland. At present, the 14 overseas Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) and five Mainland Offices (MOs) of the HKSAR Government have been taking forward their external liaison and promotion work via different channels through their respective networks. The ETOs have established extensive network with different contacts, covering overseas Hong Kong people and overseas Chinese organisations, in addition to stakeholders from various sectors, to ensure that all sectors fully dovetail with the relevant policy measures of the HKSAR Government; actively promote Hong Kong's unique advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world under "one country, two systems", and actively promote the opportunities brought by national strategies such as the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

In addition, through the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents of the ETOs and MOs, Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) also leverages Hong Kong's roles as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder", as well as collaborates with relevant organisations, chambers of commerce (including local Chinese chambers of commerce and overseas Chinese chambers of commerce in the Mainland) and professional bodies, etc, to organise different kinds of investment promotion activities, including meetings, conferences, roadshows, seminars and exhibitions, so as to proactively provide potential investors in overseas with the latest information on Hong Kong's business environment and attract overseas enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. InvestHK will continue to maintain close communication with stakeholders, including local Chinese chambers of commerce and overseas Chinese chambers of commerce in the Mainland, to strengthen co-operation and exchanges. At the same time, the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents will recruit talents from different places, including overseas Chinese and Hong Kong people who study or work in foreign countries or the Mainland, encouraging them to return to Hong Kong to unleash their potential. Also, the MOs have exchange and contact with the national and regional overseas Chinese organisations, and invite them to participate activities organised by the MOs to contribute to the development of the country and Hong Kong.

The Resolution of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization adopted at the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC clearly supports Hong Kong in building herself into an international hub for high-calibre talents. Since the end of 2022, the HKSAR Government has rolled

out an array of measures to "trawl for talents", including the Top Talent Pass Scheme, and has enhanced various existing talent admission schemes and updated the Talent List, with a view to attracting global talents, including overseas Chinese, to complement the local workforce and strengthen the local talent pool. In addition to a series of measures to "trawl for talents", the Government has been attracting global talents and nurturing local talents by means of promoting education and technology innovation. For Chinese nationals living overseas who have obtained foreign permanent residence or have lived overseas for not less than one year immediately before the application can apply to work in Hong Kong through different schemes according to different qualifications, such as the Top Talent Pass Scheme, General Employment Policy, Technology Talent Admission Scheme, Immigration Arrangement for Non-local Graduates and Quality Migrant Admission Scheme. In terms of study, if Chinese passport holders have obtained foreign permanent residence, they can apply to study in any private higher education institutions and accredited colleges and universities registered in Hong Kong. Chinese passport holders who have obtained foreign permanent residence and live overseas can apply to come to Hong Kong as dependents. Holders of Chinese passports who have lived overseas for not less than one year immediately before the application can also apply to come to Hong Kong to join their sponsors as dependents. The second generation of Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents who have emigrated overseas can also apply to return to work in Hong Kong through the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents.

We also attach great importance to the communication and co-operation with overseas Chinese organisations in Hong Kong. Their members include returned overseas Chinese, relatives of overseas Chinese and descendants of overseas Chinese. They have a network of kinship, clansman relationship and friendship with overseas Chinese in the Mainland and foreign countries. They have connection with overseas Chinese at home and abroad to form a world-wide network. Many overseas Chinese organisations in Hong Kong have all along supported "one country, two systems". Many returned overseas Chinese have actively participated in the country's reform and opening up, hugely invested, and made a lot of contribution to the modernisation of the country and the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. They form an important force of love of both the Motherland and Hong Kong. In fact, the HKSAR committee members of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese are also electors of the Fifth Sector of the Election Committee, who can nominate and elect the Chief Executive and Legislative Council Members. It demonstrates that both our country and the HKSAR attach great importance to it. Regarding the number and types of overseas Chinese organisations registered in Hong Kong, the Police do not maintain statistics on the overseas Chinese organisations registered or exempted from registration under the Societies Ordinance (Cap. 151).

The HYAB together with the Home Affairs Department (HAD) maintain close liaison with all sectors of the community and various organisations. At the district level, the district offices of HAD collaborate with local organisations to take forward all sorts of community building initiatives from time to time. In addition, the HAD provides funding support through the Clansmen Culture Promotion Scheme for clansmen associations in Hong Kong to

organise activities that promote and preserve hometown culture, unite clansmen in Hong Kong and promote exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland, thereby facilitating patriotic education and promoting the spirit of loving the Country, Hong Kong and the hometown.

The HKSAR Government's work on overseas Chinese affairs mentioned above has been effective. We will review the progress of relevant work from time to time, and make adjustments and improvements when necessary. The HKSAR Government will continue to strengthen ties and co-operation with various sectors, and unite the of love of both the Motherland and Hong Kong from different sectors, so as to make contribution to the development of Hong Kong and tell good stories of China and Hong Kong.

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## **Phishing instant messages related to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited**

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

â€‹The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited relating to phishing instant messages, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the instant messages concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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# Result of the tender of the People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on December 18, 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 December 18, 2024:

## Tender Result

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Tender Date : December 18, 2024

Bills available for Tender : Six-Month RMB Bills

Issuer : The People's Bank of China

Issue Number : BCHKFP24019

Issue Date : December 20, 2024

Maturity Date : June 20, 2025 (or the closest coupon payment date)

Application Amount : RMB 57,619 million

Issue Amount : RMB 20,000 million

Average accepted Coupon Rate : 2.37 per cent

Highest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.55 per cent  
(Bills' Coupon)

Lowest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.00 per cent

Allocation Ratio (At Highest accepted Coupon Rate) : Approximately 8.01 per cent

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# LCQ18: Professional development of veterinary nurses and assistants

Following is a question by the Hon Benson Luk and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Question:

According to the statistics of the Census and Statistics Department in 2018, the total number of cats and dogs kept by households in Hong Kong exceeded 400 000. It is learnt that according to the estimates of the veterinary sector, there are currently about 200 veterinary clinics in Hong Kong but only 2 000-odd veterinary nurses and assistants, with probably as many as 1 000-odd vacancies. On the other hand, Hong Kong does not currently operate any registration system for veterinary nurses and assistants, and there are views that this not only fails to ensure the quality of the profession, but also discourages aspiring persons from joining the profession as they cannot envision their career development path. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the current number of veterinary nurses and assistants in Hong Kong; whether it has assessed if the local courses currently provided for veterinary nurses can meet the needs of the profession; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the Government has plans to increase the number of recognised courses for veterinary nurses and assistants offered by tertiary institutions or vocational and professional education and training institutions, and ultimately establish the qualification framework levels for such courses based on the Generic Level Descriptors; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether the Government has plans to establish an officially recognised registration system for veterinary nurses in the long run to enhance their professionalism and reliability, thereby improving the quality of the healthcare services of veterinary clinics and boosting the confidence of pet owners in such services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Veterinary Surgeons Board of Hong Kong (VSB) is a statutory body established under the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance (Cap. 529) (the Ordinance), and is responsible for the regulation, registration and disciplinary control of veterinary surgeons. All veterinary surgeons must obtain the qualifications for registration specified under the Ordinance

before practising in Hong Kong, and should also comply with the Ordinance and Code of Practice for the Guidance of Registered Veterinary Surgeons (the Code), etc., promulgated by the VSB.

The consolidated reply of the Environment and Ecology Bureau to the question from the Hon Benson Luk is as follows:

The Ordinance stipulates that persons who are not registered veterinary surgeons (hereafter referred to as veterinary assistants) are allowed to perform certain veterinary acts on the premises of the practice, and under the direction/supervision/direct and continuous supervision of registered veterinary surgeons, but these acts do not include diagnosing, prescribing medication or performing a surgical operation. The Code also stipulates that veterinary surgeons should assess the capabilities of the person under their instruction or supervision, and ensure that the person performs the duties in an appropriate manner. The Ordinance currently does not require veterinary assistants to conduct registration or enrolment; the VSB does not maintain relevant figures.

In response to the community's concern about veterinary assistants, the VSB has set up a working group to conduct a survey on the number of veterinary assistants in Hong Kong as well as the current situation of and demand for the relevant accredited courses in veterinary nursing. The VSB will collect relevant information for further analysis, and make reference to the practices in different regions, in order to explore the feasibility of setting up a registration system for veterinary assistants (e.g. considering the setting up of a voluntary enrolment register before statutory requirements are in place). The preparatory work is currently under way and the VSB plans to commence the information collection and survey in the first half of 2025.

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## [LCQ17: Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge](#) [Hong Kong Port](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hok-fung and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Security, Mr Michael Cheuk, in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Question:

Recently some members of the public have relayed to me that there is room for improvement in the clearance arrangements and facilities at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Hong Kong Port. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government will study reserving a small number of daily quotas under the Quota-free Scheme for Hong Kong Private Cars Travelling to Guangdong via the HZMB for use by those who have an urgent need to go north on the same day after paying the relevant administrative fees; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) as some members of the public have relayed that they had been made to wait for an extra of at least 15 minutes or more when queuing up for clearance at the HZMB Hong Kong Port, and they subsequently learnt that it was the time of shift changeover of staff, whether the authorities have provided guidelines for frontline staff currently, so that waiting vehicles are transferred to other queues during shift changeovers; if not, of the reasons for that;

(3) of the number of disputes involving vehicles queuing up for clearance at the HZMB Hong Kong Port that have occurred in the past year, and, among such cases, the number of those relating to the work handover during shift changeovers of port staff; whether the Government will deploy more staff for on-site co-ordination during peak hours or the time of shift changeovers;

(4) as it is learnt that the HZMB Zhuhai Port adopts a queuing arrangement of aggregating all vehicles waiting for clearance into a single queue before distributing them evenly among three kiosks, so as to even out the waiting time of each vehicle, whether the Government will adopt similar measures; if so, of the implementation timetable;

(5) as some members of the public have relayed that there are insufficient toilet cubicles at the HZMB Hong Kong Port and there is room for improvement in the hygiene conditions, whether the Government will provide more of the relevant facilities shortly; and

(6) as it is proposed under the Administrative Measures for Motor Vehicles of Guangdong Province Entering and Exiting the Automated Car Parks at Hong Kong Port via the HZMB Zhuhai Port (Draft for comments) issued by the Department of Transport of Guangdong Province last month that entering and exiting the automated car parks at Hong Kong Port via the HZMB Zhuhai Port should be made the first stage of the Guangdong private cars coming to Hong Kong scheme, and there are views that the knowledge of motorists from other Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area about the road traffic rules in Hong Kong may be varied, whether the Government will require those who apply for the scheme to watch videos serving to popularise the road traffic rules in Hong Kong beforehand, so as to ensure driving safety?

Reply:

President,

The Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles (the scheme) has been well received by the public since its implementation on July 1 last year. Cross-boundary passengers and vehicles using the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Hong Kong Port have been continuously on the rise. The Government has



been closely monitoring the operation of the control point and has made arrangements as appropriate to cope with the increasing service demands.

In consultation with the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, and the Health Bureau, my reply to the question raised by the Hon Chan Hok-fung is as follows:

(1) To ensure smooth implementation of the scheme, the governments of Guangdong and Hong Kong have agreed that northbound Hong Kong vehicles must reserve a specified date and time for travelling via the specified booking system. For each reservation received, it will take some time for the Transport Department (TD) to consolidate relevant information for transferring to the computer system of the relevant departments of both Hong Kong and the Mainland sides, so as to inform them whether bookings have been made for the vehicles passing through the port. To allow greater flexibility in travel arrangement, the TD has enhanced the booking arrangements since February 2024 by significantly shortening the time required for travel booking, from two calendar days to at/before noon on one calendar day before departure. The TD is paying close attention to the implementation of the scheme in collaboration with the relevant authorities of Hong Kong and the Mainland. Enhancement measures will be considered and implemented in a timely manner to provide greater convenience and better travel experience to citizens.

(2) to (4) The Customs and Excise Department, the Immigration Department, and the Department of Health, which implement customs clearance, immigration control and quarantine measures at the HZMB Hong Kong Port, jointly manage the operations of the private car clearance kiosks. The departments stay in close communication to adjust the number of immigration vehicle lanes in a timely manner having regard to the traffic flow of various types of cross-boundary vehicles in order to maintain a smooth operation at the port. During shift changeovers, staff of the relevant departments take over the operation of the clearance kiosks in an immediate manner to ensure that the services and operations of all vehicle lanes will not be affected. Therefore, shift changeovers of staff will not cause extra queuing time. Over the past year, the relevant departments have not recorded any dispute cases involving or stemming from vehicles queuing up for clearance.

The relevant departments of the HZMB Hong Kong Port will continue to implement various enhancement measures to increase the clearance capacity of the control point, such as flexibly deploying manpower, making use of innovative technology, optimising workflow, exploring various queuing methods, and operating additional private car clearance kiosks during the rush hours of peak periods to cope with the service demands. They will notify the staff of the venue management services company as appropriate for on-site co-ordination should the circumstances so warrant, with a view to ensuring that cross-boundary private vehicles can queue up for clearance in a safe and smooth manner.

(5) Currently, there are 26 sets of toilets in total inside the Passenger

Clearance Building (PCB) of the HZMB Hong Kong Port. In this connection, the Government Property Agency (GPA) has required the contractor to clean the toilets in a timely manner having regard to their hygiene conditions. The GPA will continue to review the usage and hygiene conditions of the toilets inside the PCB and will discuss with the relevant departments on the feasibility of increasing the toilet facilities as necessary. Meanwhile, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will monitor the usage of its public toilets and enhance the cleansing work. It also plans to set up additional portable toilets near the public toilets during peak periods to meet the needs of travellers.

(6) The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) is developing the automated car parks located on the HZMB Hong Kong Port Island. Upon arrival of Hong Kong Port Island via the HZMB, vehicles will access the automated car parks directly through designated routes, with clear traffic signs set up along the routes. The AAHK will also remind the applicants about the relevant road traffic rules of Hong Kong through the car park booking system.