

Missing girl in Kwun Tong located

Â Â Â Â A girl who went missing in Kwun Tong has been located.

Â Â Â Â Lui Yin-chi, aged 13, went missing after she left her residence in Kwong Tin Estate on April 6 afternoon. Her family member made a report to Police on the same day.

Â Â Â Â The girl turned up at police station with her family to cancel the missing person report at noon today (April 10). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

LCQ15: Reducing drug wastage

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Kin-por and a written reply by the Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, in the Legislative Council today (April 10):

Question:

It has been reported that the Hospital Authority (HA) indicated earlier that its annual expenditure on drugs exceeded \$9.6 billion, accounting for around 10 per cent of its total expenditure, and that it would further review its drug dispensing and charging systems in order to reduce unnecessary wastage. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will review the drug dispensing situation of public healthcare institutions, such as examining if there is a need to change the cap of dispensing each prescription drug item at an amount of 16 weeks for patients receiving specialist outpatient services;

(2) as it has been reported that some patients (in particular elderly patients) have accumulated large quantities of drugs at home, whether the Government has reviewed if there are issues involving the dispensing of excessive drugs by public healthcare institutions, or the patients concerned not taking drugs according to schedule; if it has reviewed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the solutions;

(3) as it has been reported that in the light of the tight supply of drugs amid the outbreak of the fifth wave of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, HA has reduced the dispensing of each prescription drug to an amount of four weeks, whether the Government has reviewed the effectiveness of such arrangement, and whether it will suggest HA regularise such arrangement; and

(4) as it is learnt that some organisations once implemented drug collection

programmes in the community to collect residual or expired drugs from patients, whether the authorities will consider drawing reference from the relevant experience to collect relevant drugs from patients; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The public healthcare services of Hong Kong are heavily subsidised by the Government (at over 97 per cent of costs) to ensure that citizens would not be prevented, through lack of means, from obtaining adequate healthcare services. With the persistently ageing population and growing prevalence of chronic diseases in Hong Kong, healthcare demand continues to escalate. To cope with the rising demand of public healthcare services, the Hospital Authority (HA) has to allocate adequate resources annually to the highly subsidised healthcare services and drugs for patients' use. Due to the increase in drug costs, introduction of necessary new drugs for patients based on clinical evidence and measures such as expansion of the HA Drug Formulary, the HA has in place a mechanism to monitor the utilisation and expenditures of drugs to drive prudent use of limited public healthcare resources.

In consultation with the HA and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Chan Kin-por is as follows:

(1) – (3) When patients attend medical consultations, doctors will prescribe appropriate drugs in suitable quantities according to professional diagnosis and patients' clinical conditions. When dispensing drugs to patients, staff of the hospital pharmacy departments will also remind patients to take drugs according to instructions on the drug labels and to avoid adjusting, on their own initiative, the frequency or dosage of the drugs to be taken. The HA has been committed to providing drug counselling, and medication review and reconciliation services as well as continuously optimising the existing drug dispensing mechanism in public hospitals, with a view to ensuring medication safety of patients and enhancing their drug compliance while preventing storage of excessive drugs at patients' homes to lower the risk of inappropriate use and reduce wastage due to excess.

To enhance medication adherence and reduce unnecessary drug wastage, the HA implemented fee charging on drugs in the Specialist Out-patient Clinics in 2003. The charging unit at the time for each drug prescription was up to 16 weeks and the unit charge was HK\$10. Upon the review of fees and charges in 2017, the unit charge was increased to \$15. The consultation fee for General Out-patient Clinics was also increased to \$50 in the same year, and such fee already covers charges for prescription drugs in unlimited types and quantities. The Government and the HA will regularly review the fees and charges and arrangements for public healthcare services, including drug charges, according to the existing mechanism. Under the current review exercise on service fees and charges, the HA, guided by the consideration of encouraging appropriate use of drugs by patients, is looking into the

charging drugs on the basis of quantity and duration and will submit a proposal to the Government.

When considering the review proposal, the Government will take into account applicable guiding principles (considering factors include costs, affordability of the citizens, appropriate use of services, resources prioritisation, support for the disadvantaged groups and public acceptance) and take into account the impact of the suggestions on citizens with different levels of affordability. The Government will also look into services with relatively distinct imbalance of resource allocation and those with wastage of resources, and assess whether it is necessary to guide proper use of public healthcare services among citizens through adjustment of charging arrangements, while at the same time further supporting those with genuine needs such as the disadvantaged groups and patients suffering from serious illnesses, so as to ensure proper use of limited resources. The Government and the HA will announce the review outcome in due course.

Besides, to enhance medication safety, the HA has been implementing the "E-Fill" Drug Refill Service progressively in public hospitals since December 2017. The hospital pharmacy departments split the prescriptions for patients participating in the "E-Fill" Drug Refill Service into smaller quantities and easily managed packing for dispensing by batches and arrange pharmacists to review the prescriptions and confirm the latest conditions of the patients before drug refill. At present, the service is available in 15 public hospitals, covering around 100 000 patients. The HA has also allocated additional resources in recent years to set up pharmacist clinics to proactively provide clinical pharmacy service to specialist outpatients in need, such as providing comprehensive drug counselling and assessment for patients to assist them or their carers on selection and proper use of medications, so as to improve drug compliance and reduce the risk of drug wastage.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, there had been disruptions and uncertainties in the supply of certain drugs to various extents and public demand for the drug paracetamol once surged. To avoid citizens storing excessive drugs unnecessarily, the HA had made arrangement to the dispensing of the drug paracetamol by batches, with a cap of a four-week supply for each fill. If patients have clinical needs, they may refill the relevant drug. Upon implementation of the above arrangement, on average about 65 per cent patients did not return to the hospitals for refill of the drug paracetamol during the first three quarters of 2023. The above experience reflects that the arrangement of appropriate dispensing of drugs on the basis of quantity and duration has a positive effect on encouraging proper use of drugs (in particular those taken only when needed) by citizens. The Government will make reference to relevant past experiences when considering the HA's review proposal.

(4) From the environmental perspective, given the small quantities of unwanted medicines disposed of from households, they are currently treated together with municipal solid waste. The EPD has set tight standards for treatment and discharge of leachate from local landfills. The findings of a scientific study on environmental waters have suggested that environmental

impact caused by residual medicines is insignificant. The EPD has no plans to establish medicines recovery arrangements.

The HA will continue to engage and liaise with the relevant departments, patient groups, professional pharmacist bodies and various stakeholders to continuously optimise the drug dispensing system and reduce drug wastage of patients through education, publicity and administrative measures. The HA will closely monitor the situation of drug use to ensure that while patients receive optimal treatments, resources are used in a highly efficient and cost-effective manner.

[Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan](#)

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on April 9 to noon today (April 10), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 231 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All

the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 41 516 samples of food imported from Japan (including 27 480 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 11 380 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

LCQ22: The work of Invest Hong Kong

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Kennedy Wong and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, in the Legislative Council today (April 10):

Question:

It has been reported that last year, Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) assisted 382 Mainland and overseas companies to set up or expand their business in Hong Kong, representing a year-on-year increase of 27 per cent. Regarding the work of InvestHK, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the average asset value of the aforesaid 382 companies, and among them, the number of companies with an asset value higher than the average level; whether it has estimated the benefits brought to Hong Kong by the aforesaid companies, including the revenue brought to and the number of jobs created for Hong Kong, by their investment; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) of the expenditures incurred last year by the offices established by InvestHK in 34 major commercial cities around the world (including staff salaries and allowances, as well as office rentals) (set out in a table); of the total current number of directorate and non-directorate staff in those 34 offices, and among them, the number of civil servants;

(3) given that the Government increased the provision for InvestHK by over \$50 million in the 2023-24 financial year for strengthening global investment promotion efforts on priority sectors relating to family offices, fintech and financial services, as well as innovation and technology development, of the funding and resources allocated as well as the specific implementation

situation in relation to such efforts; how it monitors InvestHK's status of achieving its performance indicators (including the ways to handle the situation that such indicators are not met); whether it will consider stepping up monitoring or formulating rigid targets to enhance InvestHK's work effectiveness; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) as there are views that the work of InvestHK is similar to that of the overseas Economic and Trade Offices and the overseas offices of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, and that the current organisational structure of InvestHK may not be the best setting in terms of resource utilisation and promotion effectiveness, whether the authorities will consider adjusting the organisational structure and functions of InvestHK, particularly enhancing its consultation and exchange work with Chinese representatives of the trade associations with good local knowledge in the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

On Dr the Hon Kennedy Wong's question, upon consulting the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (FSTB) and Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), my reply is as follows:

(1) Through its teams based in Hong Kong, the 17 Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents (Dedicated Teams) based in the Mainland Offices and the overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs), as well as 16 consultant offices in key locations not covered by the Dedicated Teams, InvestHK has all along been reaching out to a wide spectrum of companies in different sectors and industries around the world to attract and assist them to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong; and offering one-stop customised support services, from the planning to implementation stages.

In 2023, InvestHK completed 382 projects, an increase of 27 per cent compared with 2022. The result well exceeded the performance indicator as set out in the 2022 Policy Address (i.e. to attract at least a total of 1 130 companies to set up or expand their operations in Hong Kong from 2023 to 2025) on a pro rata basis. These projects came from all over the world, covering various sectors and companies of different sizes (including small and medium enterprises and multinational corporations). They brought in direct investment of more than \$61.6 billion and created over 4 100 jobs within the first year of operation or expansion. InvestHK does not keep information about assets of the companies concerned.

(2) InvestHK has offices in 34 major business cities around the world (including its Hong Kong head office) to attract enterprises and investment. As at April 1, 2024, the establishment of InvestHK's head office consisted of 180 posts (Note), including four directorate posts and 176 non-directorate posts. Among the 180 posts, there are 43 civil service posts, 134 non-civil

service contract posts and three post-retirement service contract posts. As regards the 17 Dedicated Teams, the 79 investment promotion staff posts are all non-directorate ones. Eight of those 79 posts are civil service posts, while the remaining 71 posts are filled by locally engaged staff. As for consultant offices, the concerned consultants are engaged by means of tender exercises.

For the expenditure of InvestHK's head office, the 2024-25 estimated expenditure of \$306.5 million includes salaries (including allowances) of about \$170 million for civil servants and non-civil service contract staff at the head office. Separately, salary expenses for other investment promotion staff and other daily office operating expenses have been subsumed under the overall estimated expenditure of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the FSTB and InvestHK respectively, and hence cannot be quantified separately.

(3) The additional allocation of \$51.5 million to InvestHK in 2023-24 was mainly used to strengthen global investment promotion work in key sectors related to family offices, financial services and fintech, and innovation and technology (I&T) development. The relevant allocation was subsumed in InvestHK's overall estimated expenditure, which included salary expenses, general departmental expenses and administrative overhead expenses, and hence could not be quantified separately by key sectors.

In assisting the FSTB in promoting family offices business, InvestHK's key projects include developing a high impact marketing and public relations strategy, organising flagship events (such as the Wealth for Good in Hong Kong Summit), launching global marketing campaigns and developing various stakeholder engagement initiatives to promote Hong Kong as a family office hub. Since its establishment, the dedicated FamilyOfficeHK team has already successfully assisted 58 family offices to set up or expand their operations in Hong Kong, while over 100 family offices indicated that they were preparing or had decided to set up or expand in Hong Kong. The FamilyOfficeHK team has already established offices in Beijing, Brussels, Dubai and Singapore, and plans to increase manpower in the Mainland (such as Shanghai) to focus on promoting Hong Kong's competitiveness as a family office hub to target clients and to tell the good stories of Hong Kong. The FamilyOfficeHK team will continue to conduct various diversified and face-to-face interactive investment promotion events (such as roundtables, seminars, conferences, media interviews, and external visits) in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas to showcase to target clients Hong Kong's competitiveness and unique advantages as a family office hub.

Besides, InvestHK also utilised the aforementioned allocation to implement proactive and forward-looking promotion strategies at key global target markets, enhance investment promotion in the Mainland and overseas, and consolidate investment promotion efforts in key sectors such as I&T, financial services as well as fintech. For example, InvestHK has strengthened its promotion work in the I&T sector by organising and sponsoring local and overseas I&T activities, so as to attract more overseas and Mainland I&T companies to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. On the fintech

front, InvestHK has organised and sponsored a number of international fintech events, for instance, the Global Fast Track Programme and the Hong Kong Fintech Week.

Riding on the good performance in 2023, InvestHK will continue to make every effort in attracting overseas and Mainland enterprises to invest in Hong Kong and implement the aforesaid performance indicator as set out in the 2022 Policy Address.

(4) ETOs, overseas offices of InvestHK and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) have different functions and serve different target audiences.

ETOs are the official representatives of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in countries under their purview, performing a wide range of functions. With the exception of the Geneva ETO which represents Hong Kong, China in the World Trade Organization and the Trade Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the other ETOs handle bilateral affairs (including those on economic and trade, as well as cultural exchanges) between Hong Kong and countries under their purviews, as well as attract enterprises, investment and talents. ETOs need to conduct and organise various activities every year on external commercial relations, public relations and investment promotion, as well as proactively meet stakeholders in the host countries and the economies under their respective purview (including government officials, councillors, business communities, think tanks, media and related organisations) through different channels in order to update them on the latest situation of Hong Kong. In addition, apart from the Geneva ETO and the Washington ETO (the latter of which is mainly responsible for liaising with the political circle in the United States), the other ETOs have all set up Dedicated Teams for attracting enterprises and investment, etc, including assisting overseas companies to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong.

As for InvestHK and the HKTDC, they mainly serve the business community and are responsible for investment promotion and trade promotion respectively. InvestHK's consultant offices are set up in key locations not covered by the Dedicated Teams. Both InvestHK and the HKTDC are responsible for different aspects of work, and jointly contribute to consolidating and strengthening the bilateral economic and trade relations between Hong Kong and other overseas countries.

Through the Dedicated Teams, InvestHK currently 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 professional bodies, etc, to organise investment promotion activities, including meetings, conferences, roadshows, seminars and exhibitions, so as to proactively provide potential investors in the Mainland and overseas with the latest information on Hong Kong's business environment and attract Mainland and overseas enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. InvestHK will continue to maintain close communication with stakeholders, including overseas chambers of commerce, to

strengthen co-operation and exchanges.

Note: These posts include those that have been seconded from InvestHK to the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises. The seconded posts will be returned to the department in due course.

LCQ12: Follow-up actions in respect of construction sites with frequent incidents

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, in the Legislative Council today (April 10):

Question:

It has been reported that in March this year, a curtain wall component broke during lifting and fell at the construction site (the site) of the redevelopment project of the Mariners' Club in Tsim Sha Tsui, hitting passers-by. Besides, incidents have occurred frequently at the site in recent years, including bamboo scaffolds catching fire in September 2022, the outbreak of a No. 4 alarm fire in March last year, as well as members of the public reporting in September last year about the dubious quality of steel reinforcing bars (rebar) used in the project. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that in the light of the aforesaid reports, the registered structural engineer (RSE) of the aforesaid project proposed that relevant rebar samples be taken out by randomly opening up the cast structures at the site for testing, and the Buildings Department (BD) advised on January 20 this year that the proposal was being scrutinised, whether construction works is still being carried out at the site; if so, whether the BD will consider requiring the suspension of construction works at the site and allowing the resumption of construction works only after the rebar samples have been verified that they are in compliance with the relevant specifications;

(2) regarding the situation of the site, whether the authorities have comprehensively reviewed if the site has other potential safety hazards with the relevant Authorised Persons, RSEs and registered contractors; if the authorities have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether new mechanisms are in place to take follow-up actions in respect of construction sites with frequent incidents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government attaches great importance to the safety and quality of building works. In so far as private development projects are concerned, the Buildings Department (BD), by virtue of the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123), requires the registered building professionals (RBP) (including Authorised Persons (AP), registered structural engineers (RSE), registered geotechnical engineers, etc) and the registered contractors (RC) responsible for building works to properly supervise the building works in accordance with the respective supervision plans prepared by them and submitted to the BD under the Code of Practice for Site Supervision 2009, so as to ensure that the works comply with the BO. In addition to complying with the BO itself and its subsidiary regulations, the building works should also comply with the approved plans of the works concerned, and any conditions imposed or orders made by the BD under the BO. The BD also exercises a gatekeeping role vigilantly upon completion of building works. When the RBP and RC apply for the Occupation Permit (OP), they should certify the new building has been completed in accordance with the provisions of the BO and its regulations and the plans approved, and ensure that the building is in compliance with regulations and structurally safe.

The replies to the various parts of the question are as follows:

(1) Regarding the report on the quality of some of the steel reinforcing bars (rebar) used at the captioned site, the BD has scrutinised the testing proposal and supplementary information provided by the project RSE and has accepted the proposal. The proposal included randomly opening up the reinforced concrete structural walls and beams which have been completed cast from 29/F to 39/F for inspection and taking some 80 rebar samples for testing. The BD has also approved the temporary safety measures required during rebar sampling so as to ensure that the overall structural safety of the building would not be affected by the sampling works. Having obtained the BD's approval of the plans and consent to commence the works, the RC is currently conducting the sampling works on site under the supervision of the RSE or his representative. BD officers are also deployed to monitor the works.

The RSE anticipated that the concerned rebar sampling works will be completed at the end of this month. The samples will be sent to a laboratory under the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme for testing of rebars and preparation of reports. The rebar test reports will be submitted to the BD by early June. If any rebars are found not in compliance with the approved plans and the requirements of the BO and the relevant regulations, the BD will require the RSE to submit an incident report and the necessary remedial measures to the satisfaction of the BD.

Since the concreting works for the superstructure of the project (including 29/F to 39/F) had already been completed at the end of last year,

and given the RSE's confirmation after inspection that the concreting works was sound and the building was structurally safe, it was not necessary for the BD to require suspension of works on site with regard to the above incident.

(2) Regarding the safety incident that occurred during the installation of the curtain wall works at the captioned site on March 12 this year, BD officers, upon arrival at the site, found that the RC had already taken the initiative to suspend the works concerned. The BD also served an order in writing on the RC on the next day in accordance with the BO requiring the cessation of the curtain wall installation works until the order has been withdrawn. Furthermore, the BD required the project AP, RSE and RC to enhance site safety by carrying out risk assessment on the works concerned, reviewing the current safety measures, stepping up site supervision, etc, and to submit an incident report as well as the necessary remedial measures to the BD. The above-mentioned cease works order will not be withdrawn until the necessary measures for enhancing site safety have been implemented to the satisfaction of the BD.

In addition to requiring the project AP, RSE and RC to take remedies after the above incident, having regard to the multiple incidents at the afore-mentioned site, the BD met with the project AP, RSE and RC in mid-March this year to reiterate its concerns over past incidents involving site safety and quality of construction materials, and required them to duly implement the corresponding improvement measures. These measures included reviewing the remaining building works to be carried out on site, conducting risk assessment of such works, and strengthening site supervision in respect of safety and quality of works. The BD has stepped up inspections to the site to ensure that the RBP and RC have implemented the relevant improvement measures to safeguard public safety and the quality of building works in accordance with the approved plans and the requirements of the BO.

From the fire safety perspective, according to Fire Services Department (FSD), as in other construction sites, FSD officers will conduct inspections at construction sites and provide appropriate advice based on section 7(c) of the Fire Services Ordinance (Cap. 95) having regard to the potential fire risks at construction sites, so as to ensure that the responsible persons of the construction sites comply with the requirements specified in the FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2024 on Fire Protection Measures in High-rise Buildings under Construction (CL), and that the facilities are in efficient working order at all times. If it is found that the requirements of the CL are not duly complied with, a Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN) will be issued by the FSD to the responsible person in accordance with section 3 of the Fire Services (Fire Hazard Abatement) Regulation (Cap. 95F), requiring rectification of the fire hazard(s) within a specified period. Non-compliance with the FHAN is liable to prosecution. Building contractors or responsible persons of the construction sites should provide sufficient fire protection for the construction sites in strict compliance with the requirements of the CL.

(3) Generally speaking, when there is an alleged incident involving building

works at a private construction site, BD officers will be deployed to inspect the site as soon as possible to inquire into the incident, consider the site situation and carry out an assessment, so as to implement appropriate measures to ensure the safety of the building and building works under construction. The BD will also follow up the case with the project RBP and RC requiring them to submit an incident report and a proposal on necessary remedial measures, and conduct investigation into the incident. If any person or the RC is found to have contravened the BO, the BD will instigate prosecution action against the relevant person or the RC in accordance with the BO. If any RBP or RC have been negligent or have misconducted themselves in their professions or in any building works, the case will be referred to relevant disciplinary board for disciplinary proceedings. The BD will also refer the case to other law enforcement authorities for follow-up investigation and appropriate actions where necessary.

The BD is investigating the incident involving the quality of rebar at the afore-mentioned site, as well as the safety incident that occurred during the curtain wall installation works. Appropriate follow-up actions will be taken having regard to the investigation findings.

System-wise, it was proposed in last year's Policy Address that the Government would conduct a comprehensive review of the BO, including considering strengthening the registration and disciplinary systems for contractors, increasing the disciplinary penalties, streamlining the procedures for prosecution and making referrals to the disciplinary board, with a view to enhancing professionalism in the building industry and ensuring the quality and safety of works. The Government will put forward the relevant amendment proposals this year.