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Replies to Supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2020-21

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Session No. : 4

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FSTB(FS)01

(Question Serial No. S013)

Head: (148) Government Secretariat: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Financial Services Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Financial Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services) (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

Regarding Reply Serial No. FSTB(FS)020, please further split the data of “Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)” at Annexes B, C and D into those of “Hong Kong” and “other regions”.

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Reply:

According to the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX), the respective percentage shares of enterprises of various regions (including Mainland, Hong Kong and other regions) out of the total of all listed companies in terms of the number of companies, market capitalisation, and turnover between 2010 and 2019 are at Annex A, Annex B and Annex C respectively.

**Percentage Shares of Enterprises of Various Regions (Including Mainland, Hong Kong and Other Regions)
in the Total Number of Listed Companies by Year (2010 to 2019)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of listed companies	1 413	1 496	1 547	1 643	1 752	1 866	1 973	2 118	2 315	2 449
<i>Percentage Share of the number of Mainland Enterprises</i>										
Mainland private enterprises	23%	24%	28%	30%	31%	31%	31%	30%	31%	32%
Mainland H shares enterprises	12%	11%	11%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Mainland Red Chip enterprises	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	7%	7%
<i>Percentage Share of the number of Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)</i>										
Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)	58%	57%	53%	51%	50%	49%	49%	50%	50%	49%
- Hong Kong enterprises	49%	47%	47%	45%	44%	43%	43%	43%	43%	41%
- Non-Hong Kong enterprises of other regions	9%	10%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	8%

Source: HKEX

Note 1: The figures on the percentage shares of the respective enterprises do not add up to the total due to rounding.

Note 2: Mainland Enterprises refer to the following –

- Mainland private enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland individuals;
- H-share enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated in the Mainland which are either controlled by Mainland Government entities or individuals; and
- Red chip enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland Government entities.

**Percentage Shares of Enterprises of Various Regions (Including Mainland, Hong Kong and Other Regions)
in the Total Market Capitalisation of Listed Companies by Year (2010 to 2019)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total market capitalisation of listed companies (in HK \$ billion)	21,077.0	17,537.3	21,950.1	24,042.8	25,071.8	24,683.7	24,761.3	33,998.8	29,909.4	38,165.0
<i>Percentage Share of the market capitalisation of Mainland Enterprises</i>										
Mainland private enterprises	11%	9%	13%	16%	16%	20%	22%	29%	30%	42%
Mainland H Share enterprises	25%	23%	22%	20%	23%	21%	21%	20%	20%	17%
Mainland Red Chip enterprises	21%	23%	22%	20%	21%	21%	20%	17%	18%	14%
<i>Percentage Share of the market capitalisation of Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)</i>										
Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)	43%	45%	43%	43%	40%	38%	37%	34%	32%	27%
- Hong Kong enterprises	26%	26%	33%	31%	31%	31%	29%	26%	25%	19%
- Non-Hong Kong enterprises of other regions	17%	19%	10%	12%	9%	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%

Source: HKEX

Note 1: The figures on the percentage shares of the respective enterprises do not add up to the total due to rounding.

Note 2: Mainland Enterprises refer to the following –

- Mainland private enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland individuals;
- H-share enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated in the Mainland which are either controlled by Mainland Government entities or individuals; and
- Red chip enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland Government entities.

Percentage Shares of Enterprises of Various Regions (Including Mainland, Hong Kong and Other Regions)
in the Total Turnover of Listed Companies by Year (2010 to 2019)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total turnover of listed companies (in HK \$ billion)	12,411.3	12,069.0	9,529.1	11,221.9	12,636.8	17,482.2	11,173.1	16,202.5	19,461.0	15,597.9
<i>Percentage Share of the total turnover of Mainland Enterprises</i>										
Mainland private enterprises	14%	13%	16%	19%	21%	19%	21%	30%	34%	36%
Mainland H Share enterprises	38%	39%	39%	38%	35%	39%	36%	34%	34%	32%
Mainland Red Chip enterprises	16%	14%	15%	15%	15%	14%	14%	12%	11%	11%
<i>Percentage Share of the total turnover of Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)</i>										
Enterprises of other regions (including Hong Kong)	32%	34%	30%	28%	29%	27%	29%	24%	20%	21%
- Hong Kong enterprises	23%	22%	21%	20%	21%	22%	22%	17%	14%	14%
- Non-Hong Kong enterprises of other regions	9%	12%	9%	8%	8%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%

Source: HKEX

Note 1: The figures on the percentage shares of the respective enterprises do not add up to the total due to rounding.

Note 2: Mainland Enterprises refer to the following –

- Mainland private enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland individuals;
- H-share enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated in the Mainland which are either controlled by Mainland Government entities or individuals; and
- Red chip enterprises are enterprises that are incorporated outside of the Mainland and are controlled by Mainland Government entities.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-FSTB(FS)02****(Question Serial No. S022)**

Head: (148) Government Secretariat: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Financial Services Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services) (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

Further to the Replies of Serial Nos. FSTB(FS)024 and FSTB(FS)037,

1. please provide the details of the 22 approved applications under the Green Bond Grant Scheme (GBGS) with the table below.

Applying Institution/ Issuer	Public Organisation/ Private Enterprise/ Multilateral Development Bank	Amount of Grant Applied for	Amount of Grant Approved	Issuance Size	Tenor	Coupon Rate
Total						

2. Does the Government have any plan to review the issuance standards or guidelines for approving applications under the GBGS, such as requiring issuers to make corresponding commitments on carbon reduction for the green bonds to be issued? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Reply:

Since June 2018, the GBGS has been implemented and is valid for a period of 3 years to support eligible green bond issuers in obtaining certification under the Green Finance Certification Scheme (GFCS) administered by the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency. By end-February 2020, a total of 22 applications have been received, of which 1 is being processed and the remaining applications have been approved. Details on the approved applications are at the Annex.

The Government will continue to keep in view the application progress and timely review the relevant details of the GBGS. The eligibility criteria of the Scheme include, amongst others, obtaining certification under the GFCS. The GFCS makes reference to a number of international and national standards on green finance and provides two types of certificate,

namely Green Finance Pre-issuance Stage Certificate and Green Finance Post-issuance Stage Certificate. The former requires validation of the adequacy of the Environmental Method Statement as proposed by the green finance issuer to ascertain that the green projects to be financed will produce positive environmental effects, while the latter requires annual verification of the continuous and effective implementation of the Environmental Method Statement by the issuer.

Applications approved under the Green Bond Grant Scheme by end-February 2020

Issuer	Applied Grant Amount (HK\$)	Approved Grant Amount (HK\$)	Issuance Size (US\$ million)	Tenor (Year)	Coupon Rate
Capital Environment Holdings Limited	87,000	87,000	250	3	5.625%
China Everbright Bank Company Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	87,000	87,000	300	3	LIBOR+85 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	107,347	107,347	200	5	LIBOR+85 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	22,000	22,000	333*	2	3.000%
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	22,000	22,000	200	3	LIBOR+75 bps
Industrial Bank Co., Ltd (Hong Kong Branch)	113,000	113,000	600	3	LIBOR+85 bps
New World China Land Limited	87,000	87,000	310	5	4.750%
Link 2019 CB Limited	100,000	100,000	513*	5	1.600%
China Construction Bank Corporation (Hong Kong Branch)	572,125	572,125	1,000	3	LIBOR+75 bps
China Construction Bank Corporation (Luxembourg Branch)	767,125	767,125	568 [#]	3	EURIBOR+60 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	119,500	119,500	333*	2	3.000%
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	119,500	119,500	200	3	LIBOR+75 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited	119,500	119,500	200	5	LIBOR+85 bps
Rongshi International Holding Company Limited	87,000	87,000	500	5	3.250%
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	113,000	113,000	1,000	3	LIBOR+67 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	48,000	48,000	1,000	5	LIBOR+78 bps
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	48,000	48,000	513*	2	2.200%
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	48,000	48,000	144 [^]	1	3.100%
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (Hong Kong Branch)	48,000	48,000	500	3	2.250%
ICBCIL Finance Co. Limited	87,000	87,000	600	5	LIBOR+105 bps

Issuer	Applied Grant Amount (HK\$)	Approved Grant Amount (HK\$)	Issuance Size (US\$ million)	Tenor (Year)	Coupon Rate
Agricultural Development Bank of China	115,459	115,459	360^	3	3.180%

Notes

- *: Converted at an exchange rate of HK\$7.8/US\$1
- #: Converted at an exchange rate of EUR0.88/US\$1
- ^: Converted at an exchange rate of RMB6.95/US\$1
- LIBOR: London Interbank Offered Rate
- EURIBOR: Euro Interbank Offered Rate

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FSTB(FS)03

(Question Serial No. S012)

Head: (148) Government Secretariat: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Financial Services Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services) (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

Further to Reply Serial No. FSTB(Tsy)048 regarding the Government's reply to Hon CHAN Tanya's question on the Hong Kong Growth Portfolio (HKGP), please provide this Committee with the appointment details of the Governance Committee and the Investment Committee mentioned in the reply, including the following:

1. selection criteria;
2. selection process;
3. substitution criteria; and
4. remuneration.

Please also inform this Committee of the mechanisms to avoid conflict of interests by appointees and whether would-be appointees are required to declare interests.

In addition, the Group of Experienced Leaders (the Group) has recommended that the return of the HKGP be disclosed 5 years after its establishment. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

5. the criteria adopted by the Government and invited leaders in determining that a period of 5 years would be required before disclosing the long-term investment portfolio, as well as the names of the funds or relevant projects used by the Group for comparison purpose; and
6. whether the Government and invited leaders have consulted the Independent Commission Against Corruption? If yes, please advise its reply concerning the HKGP, including whether the regulations related to the HKGP are bound by the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance.

In addition, it is stated in the report of the Group that projects with a "Hong Kong nexus" are projects undertaken by a Hong Kong-based company, or projects that would take place in Hong Kong. In this regard, please inform this Committee of:

7. the purpose of making investments in projects with a "Hong Kong nexus";
8. whether legislation will be introduced to provide for the percentage of operation in Hong Kong of an investment;

9. whether legislation will be introduced to provide for the percentage of Hong Kong permanent residents or companies registered in Hong Kong among the shareholders of an investment;
10. whether legislation will be introduced to provide for the percentage of Hong Kong permanent residents among the employees of an investment.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

- 1-4 and 6. The Government will establish a two-tier committee framework for the HKGP, including a Governance Committee for setting the basic parameters of the HKGP and providing strategic steer, as well as an Investment Committee for deciding on the appointment of general partners (GPs), who will be responsible for sourcing projects and making investments for the HKGP. The Government will make appropriate appointments to the Governance Committee and Investment Committee, having due regard to the functions and nature of the two committees as well as the expertise and experience of the individuals. Re-appointment and new appointment of members will be considered at suitable intervals. All members will serve on a voluntary basis and receive no remuneration.

Under the recommended institutional setup, members of the two committees (including Government officials) would not be directly involved in the day-to-day vetting of investment projects and individual investment decisions of the HKGP. Similar to other advisory bodies, the Government will put in place an effective mechanism to avoid any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest of members and all Government officials involved, having regard to the prevailing guidelines of the Independent Commission Against Corruption. All members and Government officials involved should uphold probity and are subject to the provisions in the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201).

5. In line with the recommendations of the Group of Experienced Leaders (the Group), the Government will disclose general information such as governance arrangements (e.g. committee setup, measures to avoid conflict of interest, etc.), investment objectives and initial allocation at the outset. Since the investment mandates of the HKGP will be structured to cover investments in private equity and venture capital which are long-term investments that would take longer time to realise their return, the Group considered it more appropriate to appraise the outcome of the HKGP in the proper and longer-term context. The Government accepted the Group's recommendations that the return of the HKGP should be disclosed after five years of establishment, while encouraging the public to focus on its long-term return instead of the return in the initial years. Indeed, the return of the Long-Term Growth Portfolio of the Exchange Fund was also disclosed only when it had developed into a more diversified and stable portfolio a few years after its establishment.

7-10. The Government plans to establish the HKGP to make strategic investments in projects with a Hong Kong nexus. The purpose is to enhance returns, while also consolidating Hong Kong's status as a financial, commercial and innovation centre, and raising Hong Kong's productivity and competitiveness in the long run.

A project could be regarded as having a Hong Kong nexus if it would be undertaken by a Hong Kong-based company, or would take place in Hong Kong, or both, but merits and relevance of individual projects will also be considered. The basic parameters of the HKGP, including investment objectives, investment guidelines and scope, etc. will be further decided by the Governance Committee to be set up. In order to allow more flexibility for the investment guidelines, the Government has no plan to stipulate conditions on the projects to be invested by the HKGP through legislation.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FSTB(FS)04

(Question Serial No. S017)

Head: (148) Government Secretariat: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Financial Services Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Financial Services, (2) Subvention: Financial Services Development Council

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services) (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

Regarding part 2 of Reply Serial No. FSTB(FS)017, please set out the details of the seminars organised in the past 3 financial years in the following table.

Year	Date	Theme of seminar	No. of participants	Target audience	Expenditure

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis

Reply:

The details of seminars on human capital development organised/participated by the Financial Services Development Council (FSDC) from 2017-18 to 2019-20 are as follows:

	Seminar	Date	Target Audience	Number of Participants	Expenditure Note 1
2017-18					
1.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Career Outlooks in Compliance in the Financial Services Industry	12 Apr 2017	Students from Hong Kong Shue Yan University	About 170	-

	Seminar	Date	Target Audience	Number of Participants	Expenditure Note 1
2.	Practitioner Speakers Series: The Future of FinTech in Hong Kong	28 Sep 2017	Students from HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education (HKUSPACE), financial services industry practitioners and individuals with aspiration in pursuing a career in the financial services industry	About 80	-
3.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Career Opportunities in Asset Management and Wealth Management	12 Oct 2017	Students from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	About 50	-
4.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Starting a Career in Financial Services Industry – Skillsets beyond Finance and Explore Opportunities Working in Greater China	17 Oct 2017	Students from Hong Kong Baptist University	About 140	\$5,500
5.	The 4 th FSDC Career Day	21 Oct 2017	Tertiary students and recent graduates in Hong Kong	About 300	\$86,390
6.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Monetary and Financial Issues of Hong Kong	14 Nov 2017	Students from The Chinese University of Hong Kong	About 130	\$6,750
7.	Practitioner Speakers Series: How Much Do You Know About the Competitiveness of the Hong Kong Tax System and Stock Market Regulations?	1 Dec 2017	Students from The Open University of Hong Kong	About 300	\$2,710
8.	Practitioner Speakers Series: How Big Data and FinTech Changed the World of Finance?	9 Mar 2018	Students from The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	About 70	\$3,370 Note 2
9.	Practitioner Speakers	21 Mar	Students from The	About 70	\$5,080

	Seminar	Date	Target Audience	Number of Participants	Expenditure Note 1
	Series: Compliance in the Financial Market	2018	University of Hong Kong		Note 2
10.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Artificial Intelligence in FinTech	23 Mar 2018	Students from City University of Hong Kong	About 70	\$3,520 Note 2
2018-19					
1.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Latest Trend and Career Opportunities in Asset and Wealth Management	9 Apr 2018	Students from Hang Seng Management College (currently known as The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong)	About 200	\$4,750
2.	The 5 th FSDC Career Day	20 Oct 2018	Tertiary students and recent graduates in Hong Kong	About 350	\$59,170
3.	Practitioner Speakers Series: How Big Data and FinTech Changed the World of Finance	31 Oct 2018	Students from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	About 50	\$8,460
4.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Digital ID and KYC Utilities for Embracing the FinTech Era	1 Nov 2018	Students from HKUSPACE, financial services industry practitioners and individuals with aspiration in pursuing a career in the financial services industry	About 90	-
5.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Development of Greater Bay Area and the Career Opportunities for Hong Kong Graduates	13 Nov 2018	Students from The Chinese University of Hong Kong	About 100	\$11,360
6.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Changes in Hong Kong's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Regime and their Impact on Businesses	23 Nov 2018	Students from The Open University of Hong Kong	About 160	\$8,900

	Seminar	Date	Target Audience	Number of Participants	Expenditure Note 1
7.	QF Seminar on Building a Successful Career in Banking and Insurance Industries	3 Dec 2018	Students from secondary schools, tertiary institutions and universities in Hong Kong	About 100	-
8.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy for Hong Kong	25 Feb 2019	Students from HKUSPACE, financial services industry practitioners and individuals with aspiration in pursuing a career in the financial services industry	About 130	-
9.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Career Opportunities in FinTech	26 Feb 2019	Students from Hong Kong Baptist University	About 80	\$5,960
10.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Career Opportunities in the Rise of RegTech	6 Mar 2019	Students from The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong	About 220	\$6,150
11.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Navigating Your Career in Financial Services – in the Right Place at the Right Time	21 Mar 2019	Students from The University of Hong Kong	About 100	\$8,350
2019-20					
1.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Trends and Career Prospect in relation to FinTech and Blockchain	21 Oct 2019	Students from Hong Kong Shue Yan University	About 165	\$2,000
2.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Trends and Career Prospect in InsurTech	24 Oct 2019	Students from The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	About 115	\$5,700
3.	The 6 th FSDC Career Day	26 Oct 2019	Tertiary students and recent graduates in Hong Kong	About 400	\$168,300
4.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Career Prospects in Asset Management and Investment Sector	5 Nov 2019	Students from Hong Kong Baptist University	About 140	\$9,000

	Seminar	Date	Target Audience	Number of Participants	Expenditure Note 1
5.	Asian Financial Forum 2020 Special Programme for Tertiary Students – “Think Finance Think Hong Kong: Unlock Your Career in Finance”	14 Jan 2020	Tertiary students in Hong Kong	About 155	-
6.	Asian Financial Forum 2020 Special Programme for Tertiary Students – “Entrepreneurship and Venture Capital in Hong Kong”	14 Jan 2020	Tertiary students in Hong Kong	About 155	-
7.	Practitioner Speakers Series: ESG Career – What, Why and How	23 Mar 2020	Students from City University of Hong Kong	About 70	-
8.	Practitioner Speakers Series: Arising Regional Opportunities in ESG and Its Applications in Financial Industry	26 Mar 2020	Students from The Open University of Hong Kong	About 350	-

Notes:

- 1 Expenditures on seminars varied with different venues and formats.
- 2 The respective amounts were paid in 2018-19 and were counted as expenditures in 2018-19.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FSTB(FS)05

(Question Serial No. S003)

Head: (148) Government Secretariat: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Financial Services Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Financial Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services) (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

Further to Reply Serial No. FSTB(FS)034,

As I said during the meeting, the various rounds of measures launched by the Government previously fail to help the self-employed persons to overcome the economic difficulties. As such, the Government should consider relaxing temporarily the requirements on the withdrawal or use of accrued benefits held in the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF), so as to allow people not covered by the Government's anti-epidemic measures to use their MPF accrued benefits to overcome the difficulties. In response, the Secretary said that the Government is reviewing the needs of various groups of people and will try its best to provide assistance.

1. As the Secretary said that a review on the needs of various groups of people is underway, has the Government assessed the number of the self-employed persons in Hong Kong and the number of self-employed persons who have benefitted or have yet to benefit from the previous rounds of government measures to boost the economy and fight the disease? If self-employed persons have benefitted from the measures, what are the details?
2. Does the Government have any preliminary review plans, such as working with the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority, the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited or the banking sector to allow people to withdraw their accrued benefits or use the accrued benefits as loan guarantee in specified circumstances?
3. In view of the current statutory requirements on MPF contributions, will the Government consider paying the contributions for employers and employees or suspending the statutory requirements on MPF contributions?
4. As the previous rounds of government measures, including the first round measures of the Anti-epidemic Fund, fail to help the self-employed persons, will there be any support for these people in the new round of measures under the Anti-epidemic Fund? If yes, what is the preliminary direction?

Asked by: Hon TO Kun-sun, James

Reply:

With the funding approval of \$137.5 billion for the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on 18 April 2020, the Government will implement a comprehensive package of relief measures to support eligible individuals and business amid the unprecedented challenges arising from the COVID-19 virus. This package includes an \$81 billion Employment Support Scheme under which wage subsidies will be provided to eligible employers. A one-off subsidy of \$7,500 will also be granted to self-employed persons who made Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) contributions. Under the MPF Schemes Ordinance (Cap. 485), all self-employed persons aged 18 to 64 are required to join an MPF scheme, unless he/she is an exempt person. As at 31 December 2019, around 216 000 members of the MPF Scheme were self-employed persons.

As for the other proposals relating to MPF contributions and accrued benefits as mentioned in the question, legislative amendments are required and the legislative exercise will take time. Hence, they are not able to provide the most direct and timely assistance to address the current situation. Furthermore, these proposals will not be conducive to achieving the objective of the MPF Scheme of helping the working population save for their retirement.

- End -