

## Appeal for information on missing woman in Lantau South (with photo)

Police today (April 29) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Lantau South.

Lam Mo-yee, aged 64, went missing after she was last seen at Sunset Peak yesterday (April 28) morning. Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

She is about 1.4 metres tall, 45 kilograms in weight and of thin build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and short grey hair. She was last seen wearing a grey and red cap, a blue and green jacket, black trousers, black shoes and carrying a grey and yellow rucksack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1176 or 6099 3830 or email to [rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.



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## Arrangements on postal services

Hongkong Post today (April 29) announced that, starting from May 4, all post offices (including mobile post offices) will resume their normal business hours. In parallel, mail collection from posting boxes will also return to a daily basis while mail delivery service will be maintained Monday through Saturday. As operation of passenger services at Hong Kong International Airport has not fully resumed, the business hours of the Airport Post Office will be maintained at 8am to 4pm from Monday to Saturday

and it will be closed on Sundays and public holidays.

Various measures on social distancing and infection control will be adopted at all post offices, such as body temperature checks for access to post offices, provision of hand sanitisers, use of sanitising floor mats, arrangements on crowd control and enhanced cleaning of public facilities.

In view of insufficient conveyance capacity arising from the substantial reduction in flight frequencies by airlines, outbound mail services are still affected. Members of the public may refer to the Hongkong Post website at [www.hongkongpost.hk/en/about\\_us/whats\\_new/service\\_delay\\_suspension/index.html](http://www.hongkongpost.hk/en/about_us/whats_new/service_delay_suspension/index.html) for the latest announcements.

For any enquiries, please call the Hongkong Post Enquiry Hotline at 2921 2222.

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## **Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees**

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and its Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from May 4 to 8 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

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## **LCQ10: Taking forward legislative process for bills**

Following is a question by the Hon Elizabeth Quat and a written reply by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, in the

Legislative Council today (April 29):

Question:

From October last year to mid-April this year, the House Committee (HC) of this Council convened 15 meetings but its chairman and deputy chairman for the new legislative session have yet to be elected, rendering HC being unable to deal with the Legislative Council (LegCo) business as normal. There are comments that with as many as 14 bills and more than 80 items of subsidiary legislation not being scrutinised and followed up, a substantial amount of legislative work involving the economy, people's livelihood and social development cannot proceed, and the normal operation of Hong Kong society has been seriously impeded as a result. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that in January this year, this Council passed a motion moved by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare of referring the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019 to the Panel on Manpower instead of HC, whether the Government has, by drawing reference from such practice, examined how the legislative process for bills can continue

(2) regarding those bills the scrutiny of which has been completed by the bills committees and the resumption of the Second Reading debate on which is pending, of the Government's specific measures to facilitate the completion of the legislative process for such bills within the current LegCo term; and

(3) whether it has assessed the impacts on the overall operation of society to be brought about by the eventuality of the aforesaid 14 bills lapsing because the legislative process for them cannot be completed at the end of the current LegCo term; if so, set out the contents of the bills, the affected groups/sectors and the relevant impacts by name of the bill?

Reply:

President,

The House Committee (HC) is an important part of the Legislative Council (LegCo) machinery, serving the purpose of preparing for meetings of the Council and considering matters relating to the business of the Council. One important function of HC is to scrutinise bills introduced into the Council and subsidiary legislation tabled at Council meetings or presented to the Council for approval. HC may also form Bills Committees to scrutinise bills, or appoint subcommittees to study some of the subsidiary legislation in greater detail. HC would then monitor the progress of the Bills Committees and subcommittees concerned. However, since October last year up to and including last Friday (April 24), while HC has already convened 16 meetings for over 30 hours, it has yet to elect its chairman and deputy chairman for the current session. This has brought HC to a complete standstill and rendered HC unable to function normally. In consultation with the Judiciary and the bureaux concerned, our consolidated reply to the three-part question

is as follows.

Under normal circumstances, according to the Rules of Procedure (RoP), when the public officer in charge of a bill has spoken on a motion that the bill be now read the second time, the debate shall be adjourned and the bill shall be referred to HC. HC may consider whether to form a Bills Committee to scrutinise the bill or cause it to be considered in such other manner as HC thinks fit.

After taking into consideration all relevant factors, the President of LegCo, on January 9, 2020, gave consent for the Secretary for Labour and Welfare to move a motion under RoP 54(4) that the Second Reading debate of the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019 be adjourned and the Bill be referred to the Panel on Manpower instead of HC. The motion was subsequently passed at the Council meeting on January 16. The arrangement of referring the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019 to the Panel on Manpower is not an established practice, but it allowed the legislative work to proceed in accordance with the said provisions of RoP. As mentioned in the reply of the President of LegCo on January 15, 2020 to a letter from 22 Members, after the Bill has been discussed by the Panel on Manpower, if the Secretary for Labour and Welfare seeks to resume the Second Reading debate of the Bill in the future, the President of LegCo would, as always, deal with the matter in accordance with the relevant provisions of RoP.

As at April 28, 2020, LegCo is processing 26 bills introduced by the Government, including 11 bills which have gone through the First Reading and for which Bills Committees have been formed in the past two sessions, and another 15 bills which were introduced in the current legislative session.

Among the 15 bills introduced into the Council by the Government in the current session, apart from the Appropriation Bill 2020 and the above-mentioned Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019, which has been referred to the Panel on Manpower for handling, the legislative process of the remaining 13 bills has come to a halt after the First Reading. The reason is that since these 13 bills have been referred to HC in accordance with RoP 54(4), we cannot follow the procedure in handling the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019 by referring them to the designated Panels. As HC is at a standstill, it cannot decide whether Bills Committees should be formed to scrutinise the bills. Most of these bills are closely related to the economy and people's livelihood. These include the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Concessions) Bill 2020 which aims at reducing salaries tax, tax under personal assessment and profits tax for year of assessment 2019/20; the Rating (Amendment) Bill 2019 which aims to introduce Special Rates on vacant first-hand private residential units with a view to encouraging developers to expedite the supply of completed first-hand private residential units in the market; the Pharmacy and Poisons (Amendment) Bill 2019 which aims to introduce a clear and dedicated regulatory framework on the research and therapeutic use of Advanced Therapy Products in order to safeguard public health and facilitate their development; and the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes (Amendment) Bill 2019 which aims to give explicit power to the Mandatory Provident Fund Authority to set up a wholly owned subsidiary to take forward the

eMPF Platform so as to create room for fee reduction in the long run which can benefit about 4.3 million scheme members.

As regards the remaining 11 bills which have gone through the First Reading and for which Bills Committees have been formed in the preceding two sessions, the Bills Committees have completed scrutiny of seven of them and the resumption of the Second Reading debate on those bills in the Council is pending. These seven bills include the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Fire Safety (Industrial Buildings) Bill, the National Anthem Bill, the Trade Marks (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019, the Occupational Retirement Schemes (Amendment) Bill 2019 and the Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2018.

All the bills which cannot complete the scrutiny process and be passed before the end of the current term of LegCo will lapse. If the impasse of HC continues, all efforts of the Government, LegCo and various stakeholders made in formulating these policies will be wasted, with serious implications on the economy, social development and people's livelihood. The failure of HC to deal with the above 13 bills and the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019 will impact on different sectors of society to varying degrees. The details are set out in Annex.

The Government strongly urges for the early election of HC's chairman and deputy chairman so that HC can resume its normal operation and decide whether Bills Committees will be formed to scrutinise the bills in accordance with the established procedures. The Government will continue to fully co-operate with LegCo in the consideration of the bills. We also hope that Members will make efficient use of the meeting time to complete the scrutiny of the huge backlog of bills to enable their early passage before the end of the current term of LegCo.

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## [Transcript of remarks by SFH, SCED and SED at media session](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau; and the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at the media session at Legislative Council Complex today (April 29):

Reporter: How many business people do you think will be eligible for the latest exemption and on what exact date will this come into play? Also, in terms of Hong Kong's economy, the FS (Financial Secretary) just said that he will expect the economy to shrink by about four to seven per cent. How big will that impact on Hong Kong people's lives?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I'll focus on the first question as it is related to the topic the three of us are talking about. First of all, I think what we have provided under the amended Cap. 599C (the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation) is a legal provision to allow travelling between Hong Kong and the Mainland, which is essential for Hong Kong's economic development, covering, for example, production lines, professional services and business activities. Such activities are essential for Hong Kong's ongoing development. But of course, we need to strike a balance between making sure that the epidemic won't come back through these travelling (activities), and facilitating legitimate reasons for crossing the boundary. That's why we need a scheme which will be open for application (so) that such persons would be able to come through the boundary with certain conditions (imposed). At this stage, it's rather hard to tell exactly how many (persons are eligible). Because while a lot of people might wish to seek this exemption from quarantine requirements, they also need to fulfil the conditions. For instance, the scheme that my bureau will roll out would cover Hong Kong businessmen having a production line in the Mainland. So I'm talking about Hong Kong companies which have such an operation, to start with. Secondly, for people who apply for this scheme, they would need to demonstrate that there is a genuine need for them to cross the boundary for their activities. Thirdly, they must also fulfil certain requirements, like the quota requirement of a one-plus-one basis, they must be owners or authorised persons of their companies. And they also need to satisfy (the requirement) that (upon) coming back, they would need to be subject to medical surveillance. So, all these conditions together might restrict the number (of applications) as well. We will go through this scrutiny when the scheme rolls out. Of course we will keep an eye on the improvement (of the epidemic) in the Mainland, and also the improvement of the situation in Hong Kong, together with the greater need of businessmen in this particular sector.

Reporter: What would you think of criticism saying that these exemptions open the doors for a new wave of infection into Hong Kong? A question for Mr Yeung, is it true that the arrangement for cross-boundary kids is that they can only start applying for exemption (from compulsory quarantine) after the class resumption announcements have been made? A second question, a tag-on question, is why restart classes when the summer vacation is actually coming soon?

Secretary for Food and Health: First of all, your question is about risk. The Department of Health has been very stringently conducting risk assessment of the epidemic or if we say pandemic globally including the worldwide situation, the situation in Hong Kong as well as the situation in the Mainland. As we are now seeing an improvement in the epidemic situation of China and the reasons that Secretary Yau just now has already illustrated regarding the resuming of economic activities, there is a need for some of these activities to be resumed. In balancing the current situation in China and also in capitalising the Cap. 599C amendment bill, we have included two other categories under the current system of exemption granted by the Chief Secretary. We believe that devising a scheme is not the entire opening of

door for everybody who has business. It is a very carefully devised scheme that I think Edward has just now told us. They will carefully look at these people and applications. They have to go through the application process. Finally, the successful applications will be sent to the Chief Secretary for final decision. These people who have successfully applied for exemptions, like the cross-boundary drivers, still have to undergo medical surveillance, take a body temperature every day, wear a mask and report to the Department of Health when they come back to Hong Kong.

Secretary for Education: The answer to your first question is a simple yes, because we will consider what will happen to the cross-boundary students when school resumes. So before we make any decisions on the resumption of classes, they will not be granted any particular exemption under Cap. 599C. On your second question, we have been discussing with the principals and also stakeholders in the education sector and it is a genuine consensus that, if possible, we should start school as soon as possible. Even though it only means maybe one or two months' schooling, it is generally felt that we should do that.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)