

## **“iAM Smart” temporary service suspensions during system upgrade**

â€‹The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer announced today (May 25) that due to system upgrades, "iAM Smart" services will be temporarily suspended on May 29 and June 5 (both are Sundays). The suspensions will start at 1am and services are expected to resume in the morning of the same day upon the completion of the upgrade on both occasions. Please visit the "iAM Smart" website ([www.iamsmart.gov.hk](http://www.iamsmart.gov.hk)) for the latest service arrangements.

During the service suspensions, users may use other methods to access government online services.

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## **LCQ1: Strengthening information security**

â€‹Following is a question by Dr the Hon Johnny Ng and a reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

It has been reported that due to geopolitical changes, certain foreign governments often impose sanctions on the Chinese Government, including cutting off the export of certain technological products to China and banning China's use of such products. There are even hackers in western countries waiting for opportunities to launch cyber attacks on China in attempts to affect the operation of the Chinese Government and related organisations, and Hong Kong may also be affected. On strengthening information security in Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has assessed the impacts of the aforesaid restrictions imposed on technological products and cyber attacks on the information security (including computer systems and applications) of various government departments, and what plans are in place to strengthen the information system security and incident response capability of various government departments, so as to ensure that their operation and services are not affected;

(2) how it detects and blocks foreign hackers' intrusions and attacks targeting the computer systems of various government departments, and whether it will formulate relevant management, technical and security mechanisms; and

(3) given that cyber attacks may undermine the operation of critical information infrastructure, causing chaos to the daily lives of members of the public and bringing about economic impacts, whether the Government will regulate the cyber security standards for such infrastructure, and require infrastructure operators to assume greater cyber security responsibilities?

Reply:

President,

I am grateful to the question raised by Dr the Hon Johnny Ng. The Government attaches great importance to information security, including cyber security. We have been tackling information security issues through a multi-pronged strategy to mitigate the risks brought by cyber threats. Bureaux and departments (B/Ds) actively implement multiple layers of security measures to monitor, detect and block potential malicious attacks on their information systems and networks, and take commensurate measures promptly to ensure the security of the Government's systems and data. We also closely collaborate with related organisations and departments to enhance the overall defence capability and resilience of Hong Kong against cyber attacks, and strive to build Hong Kong as a safe and secure smart city.

Having consulted the Security Bureau, my reply to the questions raised by Dr the Hon Johnny Ng is as follows:

(1) & (2) The Government has been closely monitoring the trends of cyber attacks and the associated security threats around the world to ensure the continuity of normal operation of the Government's systems and services.

In procuring information technology (IT) equipment products, Government departments place high importance to the relevant security standards and the support services offered by the suppliers in addition to functionality and compatibility. Moreover, we also remind departments to procure IT and communication products from diverse sources so as to manage the risks of potential restriction imposed on technology products.

In light of targeted and organised cyber attacks on a global scale, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has formulated a comprehensive set of Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines), which are reviewed and updated regularly with reference to the latest international standards and industry best practices. All B/Ds must abide strictly by the Policy and Guidelines to ensure the security of government data and information systems. The OGCIO also regularly conducts compliance audits for B/Ds to ensure the compliance of their information systems with relevant security requirements.

On technical aspect, the Government commits itself to the overall information security measures to respond to all types of cyber security threats. Leveraging on modern cloud technologies, the Government launched the Next Generation Government Private Cloud Infrastructure Platform in September

2020 to provide a more secure, reliable and scalable infrastructure for the digital government services of different departments. The platform has so far supported over 350 digital government services. At present, the government websites and systems have adopted multiple layers of security measures including data encryption, firewalls, content delivery networks, scrubbing function, intrusion detection and prevention systems against distributed denial of service (DDoS), anti-malware software, endpoint protection solutions and real-time monitoring tools, to detect, block and tackle different types of security threats. In addition, the Government also implements spam filtering systems to tackle malicious email attacks.

On the other hand, in order to respond to emergency incidents effectively, the OGCIIO has established the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong to assist and co-ordinate departments in handling the work of computer emergency response and incidents. The OGCIIO also organises the Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill annually to strengthen the capability of government departments in defending and responding to cyber security incidents.

Meanwhile, the Government attaches great importance to the co-operation and information sharing with the Mainland and other regions on cyber security in order to respond to the cyber security threats in a prompt and timely manner. The OGCIIO has also joined the Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams and the Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team, etc, and is working closely with the National Computer Network Emergency Response Technical Team/Coordination Centre of China on exchanges, co-operation and notifications of cyber security intelligence. We also actively participate in related activities organised by these organisations.

(3) A safe business environment is crucial for fostering economic development, prosperity and stability. Critical infrastructures are of great significance to the normal operation of the society. If the information systems, information networks or computer systems of the critical infrastructures are being disrupted or sabotaged, the normal operation of their main facilities may be affected, and will seriously jeopardise the economy, people's livelihood, public safety and even national security.

â€‹The increase in cyber attacks in recent years has brought substantial challenges to the cyber security of critical infrastructures around the world. Currently, Hong Kong does not have specific legal requirements on the cyber security of critical infrastructure. Therefore, in addition to industry best practices as well as guidelines and requirements on cyber security imposed by individual regulatory authorities, the Government is currently making preparatory work to clearly define the cyber security obligations of operators of critical infrastructure through legislation, with a view to strengthening the cyber security of critical infrastructure in Hong Kong. In formulating relevant cyber security standards, reference will also be made to standards adopted by other jurisdictions and around the world. The Government intends to launch a public consultation exercise by the end of this year.

Thank you again for the question of Dr the Hon Johnny Ng. I am eagerly

looking forward to more exchange and cooperation with LegCo Members in promoting and strengthening the information security of Hong Kong together. Thank you, President.

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## **Missing woman in Sau Mau Ping located**

A woman who went missing in Sau Mau Ping has been located.

Jiang Hui-mei, a Mainland woman aged 38, went missing after she left her residence in Lok Wah South Estate on May 8. Her family made a report to Police on May 11.

The woman returned to her residence yesterday (May 24). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## **LCQ19: Community isolation facilities**

Following is a question by the Hon Judy Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

With the epidemic in Hong Kong having been brought under control gradually, some community isolation facilities (CIFs) have been suspended or have ceased to operate. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the current total number of CIFs (including the facilities which have been suspended or have ceased to operate), and set out by name of such facilities their respective service targets and utilisation rates; whether it has plans to change the uses of those facilities which have ceased to operate; if so, of the details;

(2) of the current number and utilisation rate of those quarantine facilities dedicated for inbound foreign domestic helpers (FDHs), as well as the lowest and highest fees charged for the relevant facilities; whether it has assessed if the number of such facilities is sufficient to meet the demand; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the details; whether it will consider turning some of the CIFs with relatively low utilisation rates into quarantine facilities dedicated for FDHs, and allowing employers of FDHs to rent the relevant facilities at reasonable prices for use by FDHs whom

they have employed; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as the typhoon season will soon begin in Hong Kong, whether it has reviewed the pre-typhoon preparatory measures and drainage systems of various CIFs, as well as carried out repair and maintenance works for the facilities which have been suspended or have ceased to operate; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Security Bureau (SB), Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and Development Bureau (DEVB), the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Judy Chan is as follows:

(1) In the light of the fifth wave of COVID-19, the Government will, depending on the health risk, care needs and transmission risk in the household, make arrangements for infected persons according to the multi-tiered triage and treatment strategy for suitable treatment and isolation. Asymptomatic patients who require no medical support but have to be isolated somewhere other than their household due to their care needs or household environment will be arranged to be admitted to community isolation facilities (CIFs) to reduce the risk of transmission. Besides, persons who have entered Hong Kong from overseas and are tested positive at the airport or designated quarantine hotels (DQHs) generally will be admitted to CIF hotels to undergo isolation. Having regard to the development of the epidemic and cost-effectiveness, the Government is focusing on utilising the Penny's Bay CIF and one CIF Hotel. The remaining CIFs at Tsing Yi, San Tin, Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, Fanling, Hung Shui Kiu and Yuen Long have been put into standby mode. As the epidemic has not yet come to an end, the Government still needs to reserve these CIFs so as to ensure that Hong Kong can cope with a possible sixth wave of epidemic if it arrives.

(2) Since the outbreak of the epidemic, the Government has arranged for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) to come to Hong Kong in a gradual and orderly manner on the premise of guarding against importation of infected cases, so as to meet the need of local families for FDHs. Since March 1, 2022, FDHs coming to work in Hong Kong may be admitted to a DQH as with other inbound travellers from overseas, instead of having to be admitted to a designated quarantine facility for FDHs as before. The arrangement provides greater flexibility for FDH employers to make the most appropriate quarantine arrangement for FDHs. Meanwhile, to meet the demand, the Government has gradually increased the number of DQH rooms from around 6 000 at end-March to around 22 000 at present, with over half of the DQHs providing rooms with a standard rate of under \$800 per night. According to the room-booking statistics provided by the hotels, as at May 23, the overall booking rate for May and June is around 65 per cent and 70 per cent respectively. The Government will closely monitor the supply-and-demand of DQH rooms and make adjustments when needed.

(3) To ensure the safety of both users and staff of the CIFs managed by the Government, relevant bureaux and departments including the DEVB, SB, Architectural Services Department, Drainage Services Department, Hong Kong Observatory and related building contractors have formulated severe weather contingency plans and mechanisms for maintaining close communication, inspecting the facilities in CIFs and carrying out improvement/reinforcement works as well as implementing response measures.

Concerning the Penny's Bay CIF that is in operation, staff members have already put in place a contingency plan for adverse weather, including forming an emergency response team to strengthen their ability to cope with the situation concerned. Once there is a forecast of typhoon or adverse weather, corresponding actions will be immediately taken. They include removing or securing outdoor facilities that are not firmly affixed beforehand; arranging cleansing workers to inspect drainage and clear the blockage regularly to prevent flooding; suspending non-essential outdoor work and reminding all staff to put on appropriate protective gears when working outdoors; and monitoring the latest weather/typhoon information and direction so that the staff may consider suspending all admission to and discharge from the CIF in case of extremely adverse weather.

As for the CIFs in standby mode, apart from having members of SB's Anti-epidemic Task Force working on shift to manage the facilities on-site, the contractors of the Department of Health will continue to deploy security personnel and cleansing workers in accordance with the practical need to assist in inspection of the facilities and maintenance work such as cleansing.

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## [LCQ21: Traffic problems at Pak Lok Path, Tai Wai](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (May 25):

Question:

Pak Lok Path in Tai Wai is a private road belonging to a private housing estate, Pristine Villa, and it also serves as a main access road for daily use by residents near To Fung Shan. It is learnt that the vehicular flow at Pak Lok Path increases drastically every year around Ching Ming Festival and Chung Yeung Festival as many people go to Ching To Yuen (a columbarium that is still applying for a private columbarium licence) on To Fung Shan for ancestral worship. However, the owners of Pristine Villa have in recent years barred vehicles of non-Villa residents from entering Pak Lok Path during the

aforesaid days, seriously affecting nearby residents' ways to get about. Some members of the Sha Tin District Council opine that the Government should explore the possibility of resuming Pak Lok Path. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether there are any precedents of resuming private roads for conversion into public roads; if so, of the number of such roads, and set out, by the name of road, the reasons for resumption and the government departments responsible for the resumption; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it has studied if the owners of Pristine Villa have the right to close off Pak Lok Path and deny access of outsiders; if it has studied and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the legal basis concerned; if the outcome is in the negative, the reasons for that;

(3) whether it has plans to resume Pak Lok Path; if so, of the government department(s) responsible and the details of the relevant work (including the progress in the negotiations with the owners of Pristine Villa); if not, the reasons for that, and whether it will consider doing so; and

(4) as some members of the public are of the view that the operation of the columbarium by Ching To Yuen is the main cause for the aforesaid traffic problems, and this issue has been bothering the residents near To Fung Shan for years, whether the Government will take appropriate actions against this unlicensed private columbarium within a short time, so as to improve the situation?

Reply:

President,

Pak Lok Path in Tai Wai falls within the private lot of the Pristine Villa (Sha Tin Town Lot No. 331) (the Lot). According to the lease conditions governing the Lot, the grantee was required to construct an access road within the stipulated area of the Lot (i.e. the existing Pak Lok Path). Currently, the said road is jointly owned by the owners of Pristine Villa.

In consultation with the Transport and Housing Bureau and the Food and Health Bureau (FHB), the co-ordinated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Lee is as follows:

(1) The Government has mechanisms to invoke applicable legislations/provisions to resume private roads when necessary having regard to the circumstances of individual private roads for tackling problems of the private roads concerned, e.g. environmental hygiene, traffic and road maintenance, etc. Since the circumstances of private road resumptions in the past and the departments responsible for the resumptions varied from case to case, the Government does not have complete statistics on the resumption of private roads for conversion into public roads.

(2) and (3) As mentioned above, Pak Lok Path falls within the private lot of

Pristine Villa. There is no requirement under the lease of the lot that the grantees are obliged to open Pak Lok Path for public use.

The Government notes that since 2020, during the periods of Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals, the Incorporated Owners (IO) of Pristine Villa would close Pak Lok Path during the daytime, and only allow its residents and vehicles authorised by the IO to use the road. As the traffic problem arising from Pak Lok Path has brought inconvenience to the local community, relevant government departments have been exploring different solutions. The Transport Department (TD) and other departments concerned have implemented special traffic arrangements in the vicinity of the lower section of To Fung Shan Road during the Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals, under which the road was converted from one-lane one-way (uphill) traffic to one-lane two-way traffic in order to maintain smooth traffic. In addition, the TD is conducting a study on improving the section of To Fung Shan Road between Chung Ling Road and Pak Lok Path. If improvement works are feasible, uphill and downhill traffic can be routed through To Fung Shan Road without routing through Pak Lok Path after the improvement. Relevant departments will continue to monitor the traffic situation of Pak Lok Path and the effectiveness of the above measures before considering whether resumption of Pak Lok Path is necessary.

(4) According to the information from the FHB, the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630) (the Ordinance) establishes a licensing regime to regulate the operation of private columbaria. Under the Ordinance, there would be a grace period (of nine months beginning on the gazettal date of the Ordinance, i.e. from June 30, 2017 to March 29, 2018) for a private columbarium in operation immediately before the Ordinance came into effect. If such a private columbarium applied for a Temporary Suspension of Liability (TSOL) on or before March 29, 2018, the grace period remains valid during the processing of the application, until it is finally disposed of or withdrawn. During the grace period, the private columbarium concerned may continue to operate without a specified instrument (i.e. a licence, an exemption or a TSOL), but the operator must not sell or newly let out niches.

Ching To Yuen is a private columbarium already in operation immediately before the Ordinance came into effect. It submitted an application for the TSOL before the deadline in accordance with the requirement described above, and is therefore currently under the grace period under the Ordinance. The Private Columbaria Licensing Board is working in full swing to process applications for specified instruments from private columbaria (including Ching To Yuen). It aims to arrive at certain decisions (i.e. giving approval or approval-in-principle to or rejecting the licence/exemption/TSOL applications) by the middle of next year on all applications for specified instruments in respect of the pre-cut-off columbaria.

According to the lease governing the lot of Ching To Yuen, there are restrictions that no human remains should be deposited within the lot and no structures be erected within certain portion of the lot. As such, the columbarium is in breach of the relevant lease conditions. In the event that the licence application from Ching To Yuen is rejected by the Private

Columbaria Licensing Board, the Lands Department will collaborate with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to take land lease enforcement actions against the columbarium concerned.