

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB030**

**(Question Serial No. 0535)**

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (WONG Kwok-hing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

1. Among the respective numbers of persons in custody (PICs) as at the end of 2019, 2020 and 2021, how many of them were (i) Hong Kong permanent residents aged 18-30; (ii) Hong Kong permanent residents aged below 18; and (iii) Hong Kong permanent residents under statutory supervision for taking part in the riots against the 2019 extradition bill?
2. Please provide the respective numbers of PICs taking the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination and being awarded a bachelor's degree or a master's degree in each of the past 3 years. How many of them were minors in custody? What measures have been taken by the Correctional Services Department (CSD) to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on PICs' learning?
3. It is learnt that CSD has formulated a number of rehabilitation programmes for PICs in recent years, including the Youth Lab, educational activities under "Understanding History is the Beginning of Knowledge", the "Change Lab" and the "Walk with YOUth Programme" jointly organised with the Hong Kong Police Force, etc. Please provide an overview of the Department's work for assisting PICs in developing correct values, understanding the Constitution, the Basic Law and the Hong Kong National Security Law, and turning over a new leaf and re-integrating into society; the number of participants; and information on the effectiveness of such work.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

1. A breakdown of the respective numbers of persons in custody (PICs) as at the end of 2019, 2020 and 2021 is as follows:

	As at 31 December 2019	As at 31 December 2020	As at 31 December 2021
(i) Hong Kong permanent residents aged 18-30	1 422	1 479	1 787
(ii) Hong Kong permanent residents aged below 18	54	121	187
(iii) Hong Kong permanent residents under statutory supervision due to their involvement in cases relating to the black-clad violence in 2019	3	38	89

2. In the past 3 years, there were a total of 28 young PICs (i.e. those aged below 21) taking the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) and 20 adult PICs being awarded 19 bachelor's degrees and 1 master's degree. The numbers of the relevant PICs are tabulated below:

	HKDSE	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
2021	7	5	-
2020	9	9	-
2019	14	5	1
<b>Total counts</b>	<b>30</b> <sup>Note</sup>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>(involving a total of 28 young PICs )</b>	<b>(involving a total of 20 adult PICs )</b>	

Note: In the past 3 years, a total of 2 young PICs sat for the HKDSE more than once.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, educational classes for young PICs have been conducted as usual for most of the time. At times when the severe epidemic situation renders it impossible to conduct educational classes as usual, teachers would provide young PICs with learning materials including study notes, exercises, tests, etc. for self-study so as to keep up their learning progress, and would offer guidance according to individual needs. Since adult PICs have all along been allowed to pursue further studies in their spare time on a self-learning basis, the pandemic has less impact on their learning.

3. Since the outbreak of the black-clad violence in 2019, a large number of radical lawbreakers involved in serious offences have been remanded or convicted. In order to help them disengage from radical thoughts and behaviours, and re-establish correct values, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) has assigned dedicated case managers to assess these PICs against several "characteristics of radicalisation", so as to identify the special rehabilitation needs of each PIC in the course of "de-radicalisation". The Department would then match them with appropriate rehabilitation programmes based on 3 focused rehabilitation directions, namely understanding Chinese history and national education, psychological reconstruction and re-establishment of values, life planning and rebuilding of family relationships, with a view to setting targets by stage for them to achieve de-radicalisation progressively. In addition to regularly assessing each case and reviewing

the progress of rehabilitation, case managers would provide assistance to the PICs concerned and adjust their rehabilitation programmes as and when necessary. Besides, the Department works closely with different rehabilitation synergistic partners and community stakeholders to provide rehabilitation programmes according to the 3 focused rehabilitation directions mentioned above, in a bid to further enhance, both in terms of breadth and depth, the implementation of the rehabilitation programmes.

- On understanding Chinese history and national education, various educational activities under “Understanding history is the beginning of knowledge” have been launched by CSD, including Virtual Reality history learning activities, e-sports activities for history learning, and history and culture workshops, etc. These activities aim to assist young PICs to learn history in an interesting way through a diversified mode of learning, so as to enhance their sense of national identity, help them build positive values and reflect on the meaning of life, and guide them back on the right track. At the same time, in line with the curriculum reform, subjects such as Junior Secondary Chinese History are provided, and values education is strengthened, including moral and civic education, Basic Law education and National Security Law education, etc. to enhance young PICs’ law-abiding awareness.
- As regards psychological reconstruction and re-establishment of values, the Psychological Services Section of CSD has optimised the existing psychological counselling services and launched a new psychological counselling programme named “Youth Lab” to enable young PICs to undergo psychological rehabilitation and reconstruction, adjust their mode of thinking and enhance their law-abiding awareness. In addition, CSD plans to set up a psychological service centre, the “Change Lab”, in the community to provide community-based psychological counselling for young PICs after release, with a view to assisting young people under a statutory supervision order to build up confidence and psychological resilience, so that they can overcome difficulties and resist temptations.

As for adult PICs, CSD has introduced an integrated professional psychological assessment and treatment programme “Psychological Pathway to Change”, to provide adult PICs with personalised therapies comprising treatment components including handling mental health problems, extreme anti-social and violent mindset, psychological and emotional disturbances, difficulties in controlling impulsiveness, etc.

Besides, the Department has been assisting PICs to control their emotions through various media so as to help them de-radicalise. Examples of such media include the use of arts therapy as an intervention point. The “Zen Photography Workshop” hosted by a professional photographer has been organised to guide young PICs to express their feelings through photography, in order to alleviate their negative emotions, help them think over their problems from a different perspective and enhance their problem-solving ability.

CSD and the Hong Kong Police Force have jointly launched the “Walk with YOUth Programme”, under which a series of vibrant and sedentary rehabilitation activities have been organised for young PICs to help them establish correct values and promote law-abiding awareness, with a view to reducing the recidivism rate of young offenders.

Other than the above, CSD has arranged for various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to participate in the implementation of rehabilitation programmes. For example, in view of the rapid spread of information on the Internet nowadays, the “Information Literacy Group” has been set up jointly with a NGO to teach PICs to judge the authenticity of online information and strengthen their critical thinking, so as to avoid being misled by biased information online. Moreover, the Department has, in collaboration with a NGO, organised the “Project Landing”, which aims at assisting PICs to de-radicalise, cultivate multi-perspective thinking, develop empathy skills and rebuild family relationships through individual and group therapeutic sessions, thereby reducing the likelihood of their recidivism of violent crimes.

- As for life planning and rebuilding of family relationships, clinical psychologists of CSD provide PICs with family-based psychological treatment service to mend family rifts or address other serious family problems. PICs’ families are invited to correctional institutions to receive professional psychological treatment service with the PICs so as to rebuild their relationships, and enable PICs to form stronger determination to turn over a new leaf through family support.

Besides, professionals from different sectors have been invited to participate in life planning programmes held in correctional institutions to assist PICs to prepare themselves for future employment/studies, and give them guidance on setting their life goals by sharing their own successful experience with them. PICs are also encouraged to set the right goals, start a meaningful life and contribute to society. To assist PICs who will soon be released to re-integrate smoothly into society, CSD organises the “Pre-release Re-integration Orientation Course”, during which information about the current job market situation and training on interview skills will be provided. Furthermore, CSD has collaborated with “Caring Employers” from the business sector to provide job matching service to PICs so that they can be offered suitable jobs before discharge. As regards young PICs who want to continue their studies after release, CSD will liaise with the schools at which they had studied prior to their imprisonment (secondary schools or universities) to help arrange for them to continue their studies in these schools as far as possible. If school places are not available in their original schools, CSD will liaise with the Education Bureau or other stakeholders to help secure school places from other schools, so as to enable them to resume their school life after discharge.

The above de-radicalisation rehabilitation programmes have received positive and favourable response from participants. As at 28 February 2022, about 250 PICs actively participated in these programmes on a voluntary basis. By drawing on the past successful experience, CSD will continue to establish a rehabilitation platform through active collaboration with various sectors of the community, so as to assist PICs to turn over a new leaf for a more harmonious and inclusive society.

- End -