

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB144**

**(Question Serial No. 1308)**

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Re-integration

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

How many different types of degrees will be offered to persons in custody (PICs) by the Ethics College over the next 3 years, and what is the breakdown of the expenditure involved? As at 1 March 2026, have any individuals released after serving sentences for involvement in the 2019 black-clad violence and contravention of the Hong Kong National Security Law been arrested by law enforcement agencies or sentenced for committing criminal offences again? If yes, what is the number of such individuals, and what offences did they commit? Over the past 3 years, the Department has launched a series of programmes, including the Project PATH, to assist PICs and discharged prisoners involved in the black-clad violence and contravening the Hong Kong National Security Law in rectifying their incorrect thoughts. What were the details and effectiveness of such programmes? What were the expenditures involved? What are the implementation details of such programmes in the next 3 years?

Asked by: Hon IP Ngo-tung, Chris (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

In 2023, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) received a donation of \$43 million from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust to set up the Jockey Club Education Fund for Rehabilitation to provide education support for persons in custody (PICs). This includes establishing the Ethics College to offer different types of study programmes, and providing education subsidies for PICs enrolling in distance learning programmes in other institutions.

CSD set up the Ethics College at Pak Sha Wan Correctional Institution and Lo Wu Correctional Institution in October 2023 to provide a one-year full-time Diploma of Applied Education programme with a total of 75 places for voluntary enrolment by 60 adult male PICs and 15 adult female PICs. To further assist PICs who have completed the Diploma of Applied Education programme in acquiring higher qualifications, a two-year full-time Associate of General Studies distance learning programme was organised in the Ethics College in 2024 to provide PICs with an option for further studies. Meanwhile, CSD has also extended the Ethics College to Pik Uk Prison to provide a half-day Associate of General Studies programme and half-day vocational training for graduates of the Ethics College who are unable to complete the associate degree programme during the remainder of their

sentences. This arrangement allows them to receive short-term educational and vocational training, so that they can continuously equip themselves in preparation for academic and career pursuits upon their imminent release.

Besides, CSD plans to organise a Bachelor in General Studies programme in the Ethics College in the third quarter of this year, to provide a study pathway for those who have completed the associate degree programme to attain a bachelor's degree during incarceration.

Regarding individuals released after serving sentences for involvement in offences related to the 2019 “black-clad violence” and contravention of the Hong Kong National Security Law, CSD does not maintain information about their being arrested by law enforcement agencies or sentenced for committing criminal offences again.

Since the outbreak of the “black-clad violence” in 2019, a large number of radical people involved in serious offences have been admitted to correctional institutions. In order to help them re-establish correct values, CSD has launched the “Project PATH”, which is pursued along 3 major rehabilitation directions, namely “understanding Chinese history and strengthening national education”, “psychological reconstruction and re-establishment of values” and “life planning and rebuilding of family relationship”. It aims to help these PICs disengage from past radical thoughts, re-establish correct values and cultivate a sense of law-abiding awareness.

From late 2021 to 28 February 2026, a total of 1 768 PICs joined the Project PATH, including 1 325 convicted persons involved in the “black-clad violence”, and 443 convicted persons not involved in the “black-clad violence”. The participation rate of convicted persons involved in the “black-clad violence” rose from 63% when the programme was launched in 2021 to 99% now. Since participation in the programme is entirely voluntary, the significant increase in the participation rate shows that it is well recognised by relevant PICs. According to the observation and assessment made by correctional officers, the “Project PATH” has yielded satisfactory results with the majority of participants giving positive response by actively participating in activities under the programme. 470 rehabilitated persons involved in “black-clad violence” have completed the programme and been discharged for 2 years or more after serving their sentences. Their recidivism rate after discharge is 0.4%, which is far lower than the 22.4% of other discharged offenders. This reflects the effectiveness of the programme.

Some PICs involved in the “black-clad violence” or contravened the Hong Kong National Security Law are subject to statutory supervision after release. Apart from providing them with appropriate rehabilitation support and counselling service, CSD also provides community-based psychological counselling and organises different kinds of treatment programmes at its Multi-purpose Family and Rehabilitation Service Centres. For example, the Change Lab was set up to assist young supervisees build up confidence and psychological resilience so that they can overcome difficulties and resist temptations. Family therapy centres were set up to help rehabilitated persons with violent tendencies or radical thoughts resolve family problems, so that they can rebuild family relationships.

Besides, in February this year, young supervisees involved in the “black-clad violence” were for the first time arranged to participate an exchange tour to the Mainland. Through on-site visits and personal experiences, they could obtain a deeper understanding of the profound

Chinese history and culture, and witness the nation's prosperous development, thereby deepening their knowledge of national affairs and development and fostering their sense of belonging to our country and enhancing their sense of national identity.

As for PICs who are not subject to statutory supervision after release, CSD may, according to the needs and wishes of each individual, refer their cases to relevant organisations or non-governmental organisations for follow-up.

CSD will continue to enhance the "Project PATH" in the future by organising more interesting and interactive activities and sharing more successful rehabilitation stories, so as to attract more PICs and rehabilitated persons to join the programme. CSD will also continue to establish close collaboration with community stakeholders to design diversified rehabilitation programmes, with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

CSD utilises existing resources to implement the above programme and does not maintain specific statistics on the expenditure involved.

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