

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)221

(Question Serial No. 3508)

Head: (60) Highways Department

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

Programme: (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (K K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

- (a) What is the respective progress of various works of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and the Island Eastern Corridor Link (CWB) project (including the construction works under the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) and Central Reclamation Phase III)? Is the progress in line with the anticipated construction schedule of the Highways Department (HyD) prior to the commencement of the works?
- (b) There are a significant number of trees in the Victoria Park affected by the Island Eastern Corridor Link works, which are required to be transplanted. What is the current progress and expenditure of the relevant works? Please provide the quantities of trees to be transplanted, at plant nurseries and having been transplanted, and the survival rates.

Asked by: Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Member Question No. 160)

Reply:

According to Rule 49 of the Finance Committee Procedures, special meetings of the Finance Committee are convened to examine the annual Estimates of Expenditure prepared by the Government in support of the Appropriation Bill. Expenditure charged to the Capital Works Reserve Fund does not form part of the Appropriation Bill. As such, questions relating to expenditure under the Fund are not relevant to the examination of the Estimates of Expenditure or the Appropriation Bill. Nonetheless, the information sought is provided below:

- (a) The CWB project is implemented by a package of 13 contracts. All these contracts have been awarded and six of them have already been completed, while the remaining seven contracts are in active progress. As at end-March 2016, the overall completion rate is about 71%.

The CWB project is a large-scale and complex road infrastructure project. It has encountered various difficulties and challenges since construction commenced in 2009, which affected the progress of works. The CWB tunnel structure for a part of the trunk road, which is a major part of the CWB, has been entrusted by the HyD to be carried out under the WDII project of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD). The large metal object that was previously found at the seabed of the WDII works site caused suspension of reclamation and associated works in the area. After the reclamation works resumed in early July 2015, the CEDD notified the HyD of the revised site handing over schedule after the recommencement of works. The CEDD estimated that the section concerned of the CWB tunnel could only be completed for handing over to the HyD's contractor for carrying out the subsequent works in mid-2017. As such, the HyD anticipated that the related subsequent works such as installing electrical and mechanical facilities (including a traffic control and surveillance system, a tunnel ventilation system, a lighting system and a fire services system), laying road pavement and carrying out system testing and commissioning could not be completed within the same year. In other words, the CWB could not be commissioned in 2017 as originally scheduled.

The HyD and the CEDD, together with their consulting engineers and resident site staff, will continue to closely monitor the works progress of the CWB project, and will duly assess the schedule of works with a view to commissioning the CWB as early as possible.

- (b) The progress of the tree transplanting works in the Victoria Park is satisfactory. As at end-February 2016, a total of 235 trees have been transplanted to a holding nursery before their transplanting back into the Victoria Park, while 56 trees have been transplanted to other suitable locations in the Victoria Park. The survival rate of the transplanted trees is about 95%. The estimated cost for the tree transplanting works in the Victoria Park is about \$21 million.

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