

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1751)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

The estimate of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in 2023-24 has increased by 5.2% to provide, manage and develop library services to meet community needs for knowledge, life-long learning, information, research and recreation, to offer library extension activities to all ages, and to promote reading and literary arts. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- a) Given that a new Smart Library system is being developed, which will replace the existing major systems, please list in detail the allocation of expenditure for the new system;
- b) According to the document, the estimated number of books and multimedia materials in stock in 2023 is higher than that in 2022 by about 200 000. Please provide the respective numbers of the newly acquired books and multimedia materials;
- c) Further to the above, what are the respective numbers of relevant books and multimedia materials that are newly acquired for promoting national education and national security education?
- d) The number of books and multimedia materials in stock in 2022 dropped by 64 058 compared with that in 2021. Among them, were there any books and multimedia materials removed from library shelves on the grounds that their contents were in breach of the National Security Law? If yes, please provide the respective numbers of books and multimedia materials concerned. If no, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- a) A Smart Library System is being developed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. The estimated expenditure on the system functions is tabulated below:

System Development	Estimated Expenditure (\$ million)
Core library functions - Digital Resources Management - Integrated Library System	120 199
Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology - to provide RFID-enabled self-service equipment in libraries for the processing of functions such as borrowing and return of library materials and collection of reserved materials	192
Remaining system functions (such as Business Intelligence System)	80

- b) The estimated numbers of newly acquired books and multimedia materials of the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) in 2023 are about 190 000 and 10 000 respectively.
- c) There have been quite a number of books and materials on Chinese history and culture in the HKPL's collection. The HKPL has recently arranged the acquisition of about 10 000 library books on national education and national security education in early 2023, and will continue to actively acquire relevant books and multimedia materials for addition to its collections.
- d) Due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, the quantity of newly acquired library materials included in the library collection in 2022 was lower than that in the previous years. Some of the library materials have to be written off as they are worn out/damaged, contain outdated information, have lost their reference value or due to other reasons, leading to a drop of 64 058 items in the HKPL's collection. The HKPL is continuously reviewing its library materials and will arrange for the withdrawal of those which are suspected of breaching the Hong Kong National Security Law or related legal requirements.

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