

LCQ14: Land for construction of religious facilities

Following is a question by the Hon Albert Chan Wai-yip and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (November 9):

Question:

In recent years, quite a number of religious organisations have reflected to me that they wish to identify sites in New Territories West for construction of religious facilities (e.g. mosques and churches, etc.) but have encountered huge difficulties during the process, and as a result, these organisations are so far unable to identify sites for the purpose. When I helped these religious organisations to ask the Government the sizes and locations of the sites available for construction of religious facilities in various districts, the authorities refused to provide any further information. According to my understanding, so far there is not even one single mosque in New Territories West. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the locations and sizes of the sites in various districts at present which have been earmarked for application by religious organisations for construction of religious facilities (list in table form); and

(b) whether the authorities have earmarked any land for ethnic minorities to construct religious facilities (e.g. mosques, etc.); if so, of the details; if not, whether the authorities will consider improving the existing policy to enable ethnic minorities to construct religious facilities in various districts (e.g. New Territories West)?

Reply:

President,

Religious organisations may identify sites to construct religious facilities in various districts according to their own needs. The Government will not reserve land in various districts for the construction of religious facilities, and hence does not have the information requested in the question.

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) would render assistance in the process of

application by religious organisations to construct religious facilities. For example, in case of a religious organisation acquiring land from the private market which requires a modification of land lease in order to construct religious facilities or a religious organisation applying directly to the Government for a land grant, HAB will consider giving policy support for the land lease modification or land grant application, in order to facilitate the religious organisation to construct the religious facilities.

Ends/Wednesday, November 9, 2011

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