

**Extract from minutes of meeting on Constitutional Affairs Panel
held on 24 April 2003**

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**IV. 2004 Legislative Council election : Printing of names and emblems
of political parties or organisations or candidates' photographs on
ballot papers**

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1831/02-03(01) to (03))

24. CEO briefed members on the paper prepared by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) (LC Paper No. CB(2)1831/02-03(01)), which set out the revised preliminary proposal of EAC to print the following items on the ballot papers for use in the LegCo elections -

- (a) the names and emblems of political parties or organisations or non-political organisations to which candidates belonged, or the personal emblems of independent candidates; and
- (b) the photographs of candidates.

Issues raised by members

Registration of names and emblems

25. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that Members belonging to the Democratic Party were in support of the proposal. Referring to the vetting criteria for applications for registration of names and emblems, Mr CHEUNG said that an application could be rejected on the ground that the name or emblem was offensive. He opined that appropriate and clearly defined criteria should be put in place to guard against political censorship encroaching upon the freedom of expression. In response, SCA said that in making a decision on whether to grant or refuse an application made by an organisation or individual, EAC would act in accordance with the law and the provisions in the Basic Law which guaranteed rights and freedoms.

26. Mr SZETO Wah asked whether a political party or organisation would be allowed to register different emblems for different lists of candidates to facilitate identification. SCA replied that the point raised by Mr SZETO would be reflected to EAC for its consideration.

Adm

27. Mr HUI Cheung-ching said that Members belonging to the Hong Kong Progressive Alliance were in support of the proposal. Referring to Annexes A and B of REO's paper, Mr HUI questioned about the time required for

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processing straightforward applications for registration of names and emblems under the fast-track approach. CEO replied that under this approach, the maximum time required for registration during the first registration cycle and any subsequent cycle would be 10 weeks and eight weeks respectively. As most of the political parties or organisations fielding candidates to run in elections were well-known, long-established parties or organisations, it would in practice take a shorter time for the registration process to be completed.

Logos of companies in support of candidates

Adm 28. Mr NG Leung-sing pointed out that in past elections, some candidates were supported by business sectors and commercial organisations. He expressed concern that under the proposed arrangements, a commercial organisation which sponsored a candidate in an election could promote its business by having its name or logo registered and printed on the ballot papers. The Chairman opined that the ballot papers should not be used for publicity other than for the purposes of the elections. He asked the Administration and EAC to review the proposed arrangements with a view to plugging any loopholes which might give rise to abuse. SCA agreed to consider the issues raised by members.

Ballot paper for geographical constituency (GC) elections

Adm 29. A sample of the possible design of the ballot paper which would be used for the 2004 LegCo GC elections was tabled at the meeting for members' reference. Members noted how different lists of candidates in a GC, with the names and emblems of the political parties or organisations or independent candidates, and the photographs of the candidates would appear on the ballot paper. SCA also demonstrated how the ballot paper, when folded in A4 size, could easily be slotted into the newly designed ballot box.

Adm 30. In relation to the design of the ballot paper, members raised the following points for the consideration of the Administration -

- (a) the names of the candidates, particularly the Chinese names, should be larger in size and in bold print for easy identification;
- (b) the emblem should be printed beside or before the name of the political party or organisation to allow more space for the photographs of the candidates;
- (c) whether hand-drawn portraits could be used instead of personal photographs;
- (d) the design of the ballot paper should also cater for GCs which might end up with more than 12 lists of candidates; and

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- (e) the Administration might propose a number of options on the design of the ballot paper for the consideration of members, having regard to the views expressed.

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