

政府總部
香港下亞厘畢道



GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
LOWER ALBERT ROAD
HONG KONG

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27 May 2009

Mr Raymond Lam
Clerk to Panel on Security
Legislative Council
3rd Floor, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Lam,

Panel on Security
Follow-up to meeting on 5 May 2009

I refer to your letter dated 14 May 2009, requesting the Administration to provide a response to the following motion passed by the Panel on Security at the meeting of 5 May 2009 –

“That this Panel requests the setting up of an independent commission of inquiry by the Government to inquire into the circumstances leading to the death of Mr Limbu during a gunshot incident, and to review the Police’s guidelines and measures for the handling of ethnic minorities.”

Under the Police Force Ordinance (Cap. 232), the Police have a duty to take lawful measures to assist coroners to discharge their duties and to exercise their powers under the Coroners Ordinance (Cap. 504). The Coroners Ordinance also provides for the Police to assist coroners to carry out investigation. The Police are investigating the case in accordance with the law and are adopting appropriate measures, as requested by the coroner, to ensure that the investigation into the case is conducted independently and impartially.

The Police have already submitted an interim report to the coroner. They will complete the investigation and submit a detailed report to the coroner as soon as possible. The coroner is an independent statutory authority entrusted with the function to investigate deaths such as this case. Following receipt of the Police's investigation report, the coroner will independently consider the report and decide whether and when to hold an inquest. In accordance with the law, unless the coroner directs otherwise, an inquest will be held in open court. The coroner will also decide whether to hold an inquest with a jury.

The coroner is handling the case in accordance with the requirements of the Coroners Ordinance. The statutory requirements and the established practice for handling cases of this nature provide assurance that the coroner is capable of exercising his powers and functions independently and impartially, and will continue to do so in this case. The Administration considers it appropriate for this case to be handled in accordance with the Coroners Ordinance and, if possible, with priority.


On the Police's handling of ethnic minorities, we have set out in the paper for the Panel meeting held on 5 May 2009 that all police officers are trained and required to be fair and impartial in carrying out their duties and in dealing with all members of the community, irrespective of their ethnic or social background. Foundation training for new recruits and on-the-job training also include training on human rights and racial equality.

In accordance with internal guidelines and as the need arises, the Force provides interpretation service to arrestees belonging to the ethnic minorities during the investigation process and the detention period. To facilitate necessary communication between police officers and individuals belonging to the ethnic minorities not conversant with the English / Chinese language, a variety of commonly used police forms and publications have been translated into different ethnic minority languages.

The Police attach importance to developing a constructive relationship with the ethnic minority communities in Hong Kong. In April 2006, the Force established a Working Group on Non-ethnic Chinese to review the current policing strategy relevant to the ethnic minority communities, and to explore means to further enhance the dialogue with the ethnic minority communities. Various suggestions put forward by the Working Group are now implemented in the Force.

The Force has adopted various measures to further enhance communication with the ethnic minorities. These include establishing and maintaining liaison with local ethnic minority groups through visits and personal contacts by Police Community Relations Officers at District level, offering language courses to police officers working in Districts with a high concentration of ethnic minorities population, establishing contact points with various ethnic minority media channels for timely dissemination of information, facilitating police volunteer work, and assisting ethnic minority youths to better understand their civic responsibilities and the work of the Force by engaging them in the Junior Police Call programme. Such efforts and endeavors will continue. The Force will continue to review existing practices and adopt additional measures where the need arises.

Yours sincerely,


(Apollonia Liu)
for Secretary for Security

c.c. ACP(Support) (Mr Austin Kerrigan)

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