

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)578/09-10
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by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 19 October 2009, at 5:30pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Tanya CHAN (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Sing-chi
- Member attending** : Hon LEE Wing-tat
- Members absent** : Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun

Public Officers attending : Home Affairs Bureau

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, JP
Secretary for Home Affairs

Ms Florence HUI, JP
Under Secretary for Home Affairs

Mrs Carrie YAU, JP
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

Home Affairs Department

Mrs Pamela TAN, JP
Director of Home Affairs

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mrs Betty FUNG CHING Suk-ye, JP
Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Clerk in attendance : Ms Betty FONG
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Mrs Claren MOK
Senior Council Secretary (2)2

Ms Anna CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Briefing by the Secretary for Home Affairs on the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2009-2010

[LC Paper No. CB(2)42/09-10(01), the 2009-2010 Policy Address : "Breaking New Ground Together", and the 2009-2010 Policy Agenda booklet]

Briefing by the Administration

Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA) briefed members on the initiatives relating to the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) in the 2009-2010 Policy Agenda.

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Discussion

Culture and the arts

2. Mr LEE Wing-tat urged the Administration to take active measures to develop cultural software, particularly in the building of audience and nurturing of arts groups during the interim before the completion of Phase I of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) Project in 2014-2015. SHA acknowledged the important role of cultural software in the development of arts and culture. He advised that it was the intention of the Administration to enhance the provision of resources for the further development of cultural software, as evidenced in the introduction of the new Senior Secondary Curriculum in the current school year and the continued strengthening of community arts programmes at district level. He reassured members that the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) would endeavour to bid for additional resources for such a purpose.

3. Regarding the funding support for arts groups in the coming financial year, Mr LEE Wing-tat and the Deputy Chairman expressed concern about an alleged report that government subvention for the nine flagship arts groups would be reduced significantly. The Deputy Chairman also asked whether the Administration would increase the funding provision for the grooming of small and medium sized arts groups so as to build up a larger audience base to complement the expanded seating capacities for arts and cultural facilities following the completion of the WKCD project.

4. SHA remarked that it would be too early to give a definite answer to the issues raised by members as the relevant budget was still under preparation, but as a general principle, it was not the intention of the Administration and HAB to reduce the funding provision for arts groups, having regard to the fact that quality performance by these groups was conducive to audience building and the development of cultural software. In response to the Deputy Chairman's further enquiry about measures to be taken by the Administration to safeguard and promote Cantonese opera, pursuant to its successful inscription onto the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, SHA advised that in compliance with Article 13(d) of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Administration would consider implementing a legislative regime for the preservation of Cantonese opera as well as other Intangible Cultural Heritage items as appropriate.

5. On the development of the WKCD project, the Deputy Chairman expressed concern about the synchronization of construction works between the West Kowloon Terminus of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL), which occupied 4 hectares (i.e. about 10%) of the WKCD site, and the arts and cultural facilities in WKCD. SHA responded that the development of XRL, with its Hong Kong terminus located at WKCD, was

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planned to provide easy accessibility for Mainland visitors around the Pearl River Delta Region, and facilitate the building of a wider audience base for the project. The Administration would adopt all necessary measures to ensure the alignment of the relevant construction works.

6. Apart from the WKCD project, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming considered that the Administration should pay equal attention to the promotion of community arts, and enhance its support for the 18 District Arts Advancement Associations (DAAAs) (地區文藝協進會) which played a significant role in promoting social harmony by organising various cultural programmes and family activities at district level. Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (PSHA) acknowledged DAAAs' contribution in bringing arts to the community through its partnership with District Councils (DCs), District Offices and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), for instance, in the organisation of the Community Arts Festivals in the 18 districts in the past year. To facilitate the work of DAAAs, the Administration would continue its effort in improving community facilities such as community halls. It would also provide additional funding to support thematic district arts programmes co-organised with DAAAs, and review from time to time the recurrent subvention to these Associations.

7. Ms Cyd HO considered that the Administration should review the use of public open spaces managed by LCSD, such as the Waterfront Promenade at the Avenue of Stars in Tsimshatsui, with a view to promoting diversified and creative arts and cultural activities at these venues. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (DLCS) clarified that the open space in question was co-managed by the New World Group and LCSD. She further agreed to convey Ms HO's suggestion to the management committee of the venue for its consideration.

Sports development

8. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong criticized the Administration for failing to attach importance to promoting the development of local football, which was a popular sport among Hong Kong people. He also expressed grave disappointment about the poor performance of the Hong Kong National Football Team in the recent qualifying round of the Asian Cup. To facilitate the long term development of local football, he urged the Administration to formulate a 10-year plan for the grooming of young talented players.

9. SHA advised that in response to a motion moved in the Legislative Council on promoting the development of football in 2008, the Administration had commissioned a consultancy study to map out the long-term strategy for the development of local football, taking into account the successful experience in other Asian countries. Other issues, such as the role of the Hong Kong Football Association, the development of district football teams and funding support for these teams as they progressed to professional leagues, engagement

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of non-resident players and the establishment of the future Football Academy, would also be examined in the study.

10. Dr LAM Tai-fai considered that the Administration should devise a long-term plan for the development of sports into a significant asset of the community, and initiate specific measures to provide incentive for young people who aspired to a career in sports, including the provision of financial assistance, career and study opportunities, retirement plan, as well as tax concessions on competition prizes. DLCS advised that the Administration had established the "M" Mark System to support and sponsor National Sports Associations in organising major international sports events such as the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens, Hong Kong Cricket Sixes, and Hong Kong Golf Open Championship, with a view to instilling a sustainable sporting culture and bringing tangible economic benefits to the community. This apart, a total of 48 commercial organisations had joined the Core Sponsor Group, which provided a platform for these organisations to support major sports events held in Hong Kong. Some of the participating organisations also sponsored programmes catering for the career and training needs of retired athletes.

11. Prof Patrick LAU enquired about the timetable for the construction of a Multi-purpose Stadium Complex in Kai Tak and whether a design competition would be conducted for the facility. SHA advised that the Complex was scheduled for construction in 2014 and completion in 2018 to tie in with the progress of the Kai Tak Development project. A design competition for the Complex might be considered, subject to the outcome of the assessment on the environmental and traffic impacts of the project.

12. The Chairman, Prof Patrick LAU and Dr LAM Tai-fai enquired about the Administration's plan to host large scale sports events after the 2009 East Asian Games. SHA responded that Hong Kong was not yet ready for hosting sports events comparable to that of the 11th National Games in Shandong, having regard to its population size, as well as the scales of its venues and funding support.

Youth development

13. Mr CHAN Hak-kan enquired about the mechanism for allocation of fund to youth uniformed groups. He also expressed concern about the inadequate provision of office facilities for these groups and suggested that the Administration could convert vacant school premises for their use. SHA affirmed the contribution of youth uniformed groups in cultivating positive values among young people and steering them away from drugs through a variety of training programmes and activities. He assured members that the Administration would actively consider the allocation of more resources to these groups, including securing suitable venues for their operation as far as possible. Regarding the funding allocation to these groups, PSHA advised that there was a standing mechanism for such a purpose and in general, the amount

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of subvention for the respective groups would be based on their mode of operation and operation expenses as well as their scope of services and activities. Additional funding would also be made available to support partnership programmes between HAB and these groups relating to initiatives promoting youth development. At the request of Mr CHAN, PSHA agreed to provide further information in writing on details of the funding mechanism.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)319/09-10(01)) on 19 November 2009.)

14. Mr WONG Sing-chi opined that apart from instilling discipline among young people, it was of equal importance to develop their critical thinking by encouraging their participation in the Youth Council, which provided a forum for their expression of views on various issues. SHA responded that the Administration had organised a variety of cultural programmes alongside with activities provided by the uniformed groups for the development of young people's creative and critical thinking. In response to the Deputy Chairman's enquiry about the timetable for organising the next round of Youth Summit, SHA advised that the Summit would be organised as and when appropriate.

Promotion of national education

15. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the progress in the display of the national flag at government offices and buildings, which he had all along advocated for the promotion of national education since the reunification of Hong Kong with the Mainland in 1997. He considered such a practice particularly meaningful in celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China this year. SHA informed members that taking into account members' views, the raising of both the national flag and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) flag had been implemented on a daily basis since 1 October 2009 in LCSD venues equipped with at least two flag masts, if weather permitted. Such a practice would be extended to other government offices and buildings progressively, in accordance with the internal guideline issued by the Administration Wing recently.

District administration

16. Mr WONG Kwok-hing urged the Administration to enhance its support for Mutual Aid Committees (MACs) and review its policy on the promotion of their further development, in view of the important role of MACs in facilitating district administration. SHA took note of Mr WONG's view and advised that HAB would give due consideration to his suggestion.

17. For the building of a caring, harmonious and supportive community, Mr WONG Sing-chi considered that the Administration should take heed of the

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views and concerns of various district groups and ensure the effectiveness of the existing mechanism in reflecting local needs. He also expressed concern about the small population sizes of DC constituencies, which had resulted in some DC members discussing public policies and community issues from a narrow perspective and failing to balance the interests of different sectors. Mr WONG urged the Administration to review the election mechanism to DCs, such as the size of DC constituencies and the appointment system to DCs, with a view to improving the administration of the respective DC districts. The Chairman reminded the meeting that issues relating to DC elections were under the ambit of the Panel of Constitutional Affairs.

18. SHA responded that the pursuit of social harmony without compromising social justice was a common goal of the community. He agreed to relay Mr WONG's views regarding the election mechanism for DCs to the Constitutional Affairs Bureau.

19. Referring to the "YWCA" incident concerning the posting of a social worker and in which the notion of building a harmonious society was widely discussed, Ms Emily Lau was worried that the government might exert pressure on subvented social service organizations, such as in their expression of views on district issues, through its control on funding allocation to these organisations. SHA reiterated that the Administration had never had any intention to interfere in the operation of any social service organisations and the professional autonomy of social workers in their provision of community development services. He stressed that the organisations concerned were given full autonomy in their operation, including the handling of staff matters.

Family values

20. Prof Patrick LAU suggested that the Administration should promote family participation in sports with a view to building happy families and encouraging a healthy lifestyle among the wider community. SHA informed members that in recognition of the positive role of families in resolving social problems and conflicts, the Administration would launch in partnership with the Family Council a territory-wide "Happy Family Campaign" to further promote family core values, and publicize the building of HKSAR families, viz. **H**appy, **K**ind, **S**upportive, **A**ppreciative and **R**esponsible families.

II. Any other business

21. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:35 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
16 December 2009