
立法會秘書處

Legislative Council Secretariat

新聞稿 Press Release

LegCo to debate a motion on defending freedom of the press

The Legislative Council will hold a meeting this Wednesday (October 21) at 11 am in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building. During the meeting, Members will debate a motion on defending freedom of the press.

The motion, to be moved by Hon Emily LAU, states: "That some Hong Kong journalists, while covering news in Xinjiang, were assaulted, handcuffed and detained by law enforcement officers, and even accused slanderously by the local information office of inciting disturbance and violating the rules on news coverage; also, some Hong Kong journalists covering news in Sichuan were alleged by law enforcement officers of suspected possession of drugs and prohibited from going out; the above incidents have seriously undermined the freedom of news coverage and the public's right to know as well as damaged the core values of freedom of the press; this Council condemns such acts and urges the Government to adopt the following measures:

(a) to solemnly reflect to the Mainland authorities that the law enforcement officers on the Mainland be requested to respect civic rights and freedom of the press, refrain from illegally detaining, arresting or assaulting journalists, and request the Mainland authorities to impose severe punishment on the offenders and ensure that similar incidents will not happen again;

(b) in regard to the unjust investigation of the abovementioned incidents and the slanderous accusation against journalists by the Mainland authorities, to request the Mainland authorities to make clarifications and apologies, conduct a just investigation afresh and release the investigation results to the public; and

(c) to enquire with media organizations about the problems and difficulties encountered by journalists when covering news on the Mainland, so as to provide as much assistance as possible;

this Council also urges media organizations to adopt the following measures to safeguard the security of journalists when covering news on the Mainland:

(a) to provide training to journalists to enrich their knowledge about the laws of the Mainland and enhance their abilities to handle unexpected serious incidents;

(b) to send more experienced journalists to take up news coverage of a more sensitive or dangerous nature; and

(c) to review the remuneration, insurance coverage and working hours of journalists and safeguard their personal safety, so as to avoid journalists leaving the profession and attract talents to pursue a career in journalism."

Dr Hon Philip WONG, Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong, Hon Miriam LAU and Hon Ronny TONG will move separate amendments to Hon Emily LAU's motion.

Members will also debate a motion on facing up to the transport needs of people with disabilities. The motion, to be moved by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung, states: "That this Council passed motions on a number of occasions over the past few years calling for improvement to transport facilities for people with disabilities and offer of concessionary transport fares to them, but the Administration, some statutory transport corporations and other public transport operators still fail to fully face up to and give effect to the motions; this Council strongly demands the

Administration and various public transport operators to immediately and fully respond as well as give effect to the relevant motions previously passed by this Council and the recommendations in the Report of the Council's Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of and Provision of Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities in the last term, which include that the Government must implement the following measures:

(a) in order to effectively assist people with disabilities in integrating into society, to adopt legislative, administrative and financial measures to press various major public transport operators to offer concessionary fares to them;

(b) to put forth, in the near future, specific proposals and a timetable for introducing half-fare concession on public transport for all people with disabilities, so as to help them integrate into society and improve their life;

(c) to allocate additional resources to comprehensively improve the Rehabus service and, in particular, enhance such service for people with disabilities living in remote areas and new towns; and

(d) to step up consultation with people with disabilities to fully realize the concept of 'Transport for All', and strictly regulate public transport operators in providing barrier-free facilities, so as to enable more people with disabilities to use public transport and integrate into society."

Hon WONG Kwok-hing will move an amendment to Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung's motion.

Meanwhile, the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs will move a resolution under the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance to amend the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Legislative Council) (Amendment) Regulation 2009, the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (District Councils) (Amendment) Regulation 2009, the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral

Procedure) (Election Committee) (Amendment) Regulation 2009, the Electoral Procedure (Chief Executive Election) (Amendment) Regulation 2009, and the Electoral Procedure (Village Representative Election) (Amendment) Regulation 2009.

The Secretary for Food and Health will move a resolution under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance to seek the Council's approval to the Pharmacy and Poisons (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2009 and the Poisons List (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2009, made by the Pharmacy and Poisons Board on 30 September 2009.

The Secretary for the Environment will move a resolution under the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance to seek the Council's approval to the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 1) Order 2009, made by the Secretary for the Environment on 25 September 2009.

On bills, Members will resume Second Reading on the Village Representative Election Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2009. If the bill is supported by Members and receives its Second Reading, it will then go through the Committee Stage and be read the third time.

The Telecommunications (Amendment) Bill 2009 will be introduced into the Council for First and Second Readings. Second Reading debate on the bill will be adjourned.

During the meeting, Members will ask the Government 20 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies. The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the Legislative Council InfoFax Service (Tel: 2869 9568) or the Legislative Council web site (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>).

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the Legislative Council Chamber. They may reserve seats by calling 2869 9399 during office hours. Seats will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via the audio webcast system on the Legislative Council homepage.

Ends/Monday, October 19, 2009

NNNN