
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 (LegCo) will hold a meeting this Wednesday (November 23) at 11 am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. 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, freedom of the press has recently sustained severe impact, and the findings of an opinion poll released by the University of Hong Kong on 20 September showed that the rate of people's satisfaction with freedom of the press dropped from 68% to 58%; the occurrence of such a worrying situation is due to the authorities' restrictions on media news coverage, including obstructing filming by photographers, expelling reporters, setting press positions a long way from scenes requiring coverage, rejecting media news coverage and instead distributing only official footage and press releases (commonly known as 'propaganda footage' and 'propaganda articles'), and replacing press conferences with informal briefings by informed sources; the recent misreporting of former State President JIANG Zemin's death by the News and Public Affairs Division ('News Division') of Asia Television Limited ('ATV') has revealed that the head of the News Division was not able to stop the broadcasting of incorrect information in news programmes, and someone had interfered with the editorial independence of the News Division; ATV staff have also complained that the broadcasting of 'paid news' by the station has severely damaged the credibility of news reporting; in this connection, this Council urges the authorities to:

- (a) arrange for the media to freely cover all official activities;
- (b) lift the news coverage restrictions imposed on the press;
- (c) stop distributing 'propaganda footage' and 'propaganda articles'; and
- (d) inquire into whether anyone has interfered with the editorial independence of the News Division of ATV and forced the News Division to broadcast false information and 'paid news' in news programmes, and study whether the continued holding of a domestic free television programme service licence by ATV is in the interest of the public. "

Hon Cyd HO will move a motion on improving further education and employment of sub-degree students. The motion states: "That, since the SAR Government announced in the Policy Address 2000 the policy objective of providing 60% of local young people with the opportunity of receiving tertiary education and rolled out a series of measures, the number of self-financing programmes at associate degree level or above offered by local institutions has been increasing; however, as the social recognition of sub-degree qualifications over the past 10 years is still lacking, sub-degree students have to face various problems in further education and employment and even have to bear high tuition fees and loan repayments, thus making them the new blood of the poverty population; in this connection, this Council urges the authorities to:

- (a) increase the number of subvented university places;
- (b) offer subsidies in the form of education vouchers to sub-degree graduates for studying in private universities;

- (c) expand the channels to study in universities for sub-degree graduates;
- (d) increase the number of civil service entry ranks for sub-degree graduates; and
- (e) review student financial assistance as well as loan and repayment arrangements, including abolishing the risk rate."

Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong and Hon WONG Kwok-hing will move amendments to Hon Cyd HO's motion respectively; while Hon CHAN Hak-kan, Hon Starry LEE, Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG and Hon Tanya CHAN will move amendments to Hon WONG Kwok-hing's amendment respectively.

Hon Audrey EU will move a proposed resolution under the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance. The motion states: "Resolved that in relation to the –

- (a) Building (Inspection and Repair) Regulation;
- (b) Building (Administration) (Amendment) Regulation 2011;
- (c) Building (Minor Works) (Amendment) Regulation 2011; and
- (d) Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2011 (Commencement) Notice 2011,

and laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 2 November 2011, the period for amending subsidiary legislation referred to in section 34(2) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1) be extended under section 34(4) of that Ordinance to the meeting of 21 December 2011."

Meanwhile, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury will move a proposed resolution under the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance to seek the Council's approval to the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 3) Notice 2011, made by the Chief Executive in Council on 14 June 2011.

On bills, the General Holidays and Employment Legislation (Substitution of Holidays) (Amendment) Bill 2011 will be introduced into the Council for First and Second Readings. Debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

Members will also ask the Administration 20 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>). Please note that the agenda is subject to change, and the latest information about the agenda could be found in the LegCo website.

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. They may reserve seats by calling 3919 3399 during office hours. Seats will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Members of the public can also watch or listen to the meeting via the web broadcast system on the LegCo website.

Ends/Monday, November 21, 2011

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