

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2) 1755/99-00  
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the Administration)

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**LegCo Panel on Security**

**Minutes of Special Meeting**  
**held on Thursday, 10 February 2000 at 10:45 am**  
**in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon James TO Kun-sun (Chairman)  
Hon David CHU Yu-lin  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LAU Kong-wah
- Members attending** : Hon LEE Wing-tat  
Hon LEE Kai-ming, SBS, JP  
Hon Margaret NG  
Hon Christine LOH  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han  
Hon CHAN Wing-chan  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP  
Hon Howard YOUNG, JP  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
- Public Officers attending** : Mr Timothy TONG  
Deputy Secretary for Security 3
- Miss Cathy CHU  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security C

Mr P T CHOY, JP  
Deputy Director of Immigration

Mr K Y MAK  
Assistant Director of Immigration

**Clerk in attendance** : Mrs Justina LAM  
Assistant Secretary General 2

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Jimmy MA, JP  
Legal Adviser

Mr Raymond LAM  
Senior Assistant Secretary (2) 5

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- I. Recent incident where a teenage girl was wrongfully imprisoned for possession of a forged travel document which is in fact authentic, and the procedures for handling cases where possession of forged travel documents are suspected**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 1029/99-00(01) and (02))

The Chairman said that the special meeting was arranged as many Members had expressed concern about the case of Miss LIN Qiaoying. Although the Administration had informed him that the investigation was still going on and it was not in a position to provide any information on the case, he considered it necessary and appropriate at this juncture to examine the existing procedures for handling cases where possession of forged travel documents were suspected, and the problems that Miss LIN's case had revealed about the procedures.

2. Deputy Secretary for Security 3 (DS for S) said that the Administration was deeply concerned about the case. He pointed out that the allegations made by Miss LIN were very serious and the Police was currently conducting a thorough investigation into the case, including whether any person had misled or coerced Miss LIN, as she had alleged, into making a confession. DS for S estimated that the investigation would be completed within two weeks' time. He assured Members that the outcome of the investigation would be reported to the Legislative Council (LegCo), the public and Miss LIN. DS for S stressed that the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) had always vigorously defended the rule of law and upheld justice and fairness and would continue to do so. It would not condone any public officer engaging in any activity which obstructed the course of justice.

3. DS for S informed Members that the Director of Immigration (D of Imm) was

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reviewing the procedures adopted by the Immigration Department (ImmD) in investigating similar cases involving the possession or use of forged travel documents. He added that D of Imm would provide a report to LegCo and the public as soon as possible.

4. DS for S explained that a case involving "forged travel document" was a general term. It referred to the use of a travel document which was completely counterfeit, or one in which the personal particulars, the photograph or certain pages had been altered. It also referred to the use of a travel document which had been obtained illegally or where a person used a genuine travel document through impersonation.

5. DS for S assured Members that in handling cases where use or possession of forged travel documents was suspected, investigating officers of ImmD would not act in haste. Prosecution would only be instigated when ImmD had sufficient reasons to believe that the document in question was forged. DS for S explained that where a suspect had made a confession and ImmD did not have any doubt whatsoever that the travel document used by the suspect was counterfeit, ImmD would not request the Government Laboratory to verify the authenticity of the travel document. However, if ImmD had doubts about the authenticity of the document, the document would be sent to the Government Laboratory for examination.

6. DS for S also made the following points -

- (a) In accordance with established mechanism, a person under investigation by ImmD or any other law enforcement body of the HKSAR was accorded legal and human rights protection in the investigation procedures;
- (b) ImmD officers responsible for investigating cases of counterfeit documents had all undergone rigorous training. Their investigation techniques and ability to differentiate between authentic and counterfeit travel documents were of high professional standards; and
- (c) Checks and balances had been built into the present investigation and prosecution procedures in that all cases were subject to review by the supervisors of the investigating officers and by officers from the Prosecution and Deportation Section.

7. DS for S further informed Members that in 1999, of the 3 530 cases relating to possession of counterfeit travel documents, 1 514 resulted in prosecution and of these prosecutions, 1 492 resulted in conviction, representing a success rate of 98.5%.

8. Referring Members to the Administration's paper tabled at the meeting (also circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(2) 1053/99-00 dated 11 February 2000), the Deputy Director of Immigration (DD of Imm) said that given Hong Kong's geographical position and status as an international aviation centre, Hong Kong had sometimes been

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used as a transit point for people who tried to enter into other places or countries illegally. DD of Imm further said that ImmD had always strived to do its best to combat such illegal activities. With the opening of the new airport at Chek Lap Kok in July 1998, ImmD had established an airport investigation group (AIG). So far, the AIG had investigated 2 310 cases involving the use of counterfeit travel documents and successfully prosecuted 1 787 persons. DD of Imm added that AIG's performance was held in high regard by many countries including the United States (US), Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. Moreover, overseas countries such as Holland, South Korea and Singapore had sent representatives to visit ImmD to exchange work experience.

9. DD of Imm informed Members that cases involving the use of forged documents were mainly referred by counter staff of ImmD at the airport, staff of airline companies to the AIG. He explained that upon the detention of a person suspected of possessing or using a counterfeit travel document, a "Notice to persons in custody or under immigration enquiries" would be given to the suspect. The Notice informed the suspect of his rights, including the right to make telephone calls to friends or relatives, and also to contact his legal representative. An interpreter would be provided if necessary, and a record was kept on all requests made by the suspect during his detention including the time at which the request was made and details of the request.

10. DD of Imm further informed Members that in interviewing a suspect, investigating officers must abide by the "Rules and directions for the questioning of suspects and the taking of statements". DD of Imm added that at the ImmD headquarters, there were interview rooms which were fitted with video-taping facilities. He hoped that the interview rooms at other offices of ImmD would also be provided with such facilities as soon as possible. DD of Imm explained that upon the conclusion of the interview, the suspect would be asked to sign the record of the interview and a copy of the record would be given to him. The suspect would also be asked to sign a form indicating whether he had any complaint to make during the detention period.

11. DD of Imm said that the investigating officer, having completed the investigation, would recommend whether or not a prosecution should be instigated. The recommendation would be subject to review by a Senior Immigration Officer of the Prosecution and Deportation Section and the final decision to prosecute would be made by the Chief Immigration Officer of the Section. He added that the Department of Justice (D of J) would be approached if legal advice was required for the case.

12. Mr Albert HO said that the reality was not as perfect as what DS for S and DD of Imm had described and that not every officer of ImmD would abide by the laid down rules and procedures. He pointed out, for instance, that he had received many complaints about suspects not being allowed to make telephone calls. He considered that if a travel document was suspected to be counterfeit, it should be sent to the Government Laboratory for examination or to the issuing country of the document concerned for verification. Mr HO added that investigating officers should not rely

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solely on the admission statement of a suspect.

13. DS for S said that the Administration's policy and procedures on removal and deportation had been explained at the meeting of LegCo Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services (AJLS Panel) on 18 January 2000. At the meeting, the Chairman of AJLS Panel had said that a visit to ImmD would enable Members to better understand how the procedures actually worked in practice. He would be pleased to arrange such a visit.

14. DD of Imm pointed out that the "Notice to persons in custody or under immigration enquiries" clearly stated that a suspect had the right to make telephone calls. He had also personally reminded his subordinates that a suspect should be allowed to make telephone calls, unless it was suspected that the calls were made for the purpose of tipping off other persons or destroying evidence. DD of Imm said that he had seen many investigation files and the relevant records indicated that in most cases, suspects were allowed to make telephone calls. He added that ImmD would follow up each and every complaint. ImmD had received a number of awards from the Office of the Ombudsman commending the department on the conscientious manner it handled complaints and took follow-up actions.

15. DD of Imm explained that forensic examination of a travel document would not be carried out if the suspect made a confession and there was strong circumstantial evidence to indicate that the travel document he used was counterfeit. For instance, the suspect was in possession of the passport of a certain country and claimed to be that country's national but knew very little about the country, or the suspect possessed two travel documents in which the names and dates of birth were different. DD of Imm added that forensic examination of a travel document would take time and might cause damage to the document in the course of examination. DD of Imm further informed Members that verification with the issuing country could take four to six weeks and the outcome might not always be useful. For instance, the government of a country where there had been a political coup might refuse to recognize the travel documents issued by the former government.

16. Mr Albert HO asked why ImmD had not contacted the US Government and the relevant authorities in Mainland China to verify the authenticity of Miss LIN's travel document. He also asked about the average time required for verifying the authenticity of a travel document with the issuing country and whether there was any international agreement on verification arrangements for travel documents. DD of Imm responded that there was no such international agreement. There was however international cooperation to combat immigration offences. He pointed out that any country where counterfeit travel document was intercepted or identified had an obligation to deal with the matter. The time required for verification varied from a few weeks to a few months, depending on the place from which verification was sought. From ImmD's experience, countries where passports could be issued without residency requirements were usually the least cooperative and it could take one to two years for the country to respond. He added that there had never been a precedent where the

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issuing country of a travel document sent a representative to give evidence before a Court in Hong Kong. The verification received had thus been presented to the Court for reference only, and not as evidence.

17. Mr Albert HO expressed serious concern that the investigating officers of ImmD were inclined to rely solely on the admission statement of the accused rather than on the result of forensic examination as the main evidence for prosecution. He considered that forensic examination should be carried out given that a person convicted of possession or use of a counterfeit travel document was liable to imprisonment. He opined that there were weaknesses in the existing procedures adopted by ImmD in investigating cases involving possession or use of forged documents.

18. Assistant Director of Immigration (AD of Imm) said that if a travel document was suspected to be counterfeit, officers of ImmD would use equipment such as ultra violet lights and Questioned Document Examiner to examine the travel document. He added that a person would be interviewed in accordance with established procedures if there were sufficient reasons to suspect that the person possessed or used a counterfeit travel document. Where the suspect had made a confession and there was strong circumstantial evidence to indicate that the travel document in question was counterfeit, prosecution would be instigated and forensic examination of the travel document would not be carried out.

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19. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide the number of prosecutions where admission statement made by the accused constituted the main evidence. AD of Imm undertook to provide the information after the meeting. He reiterated that in addition to the admission statement made by the accused, the professional judgement of officers of ImmD and circumstantial evidence of the case would all be taken into consideration before a prosecution was instigated. He added that out of the 1 514 prosecutions referred to by DS for S, there were about 90 cases where the accused pleaded not guilty and about 22 cases where the accused was acquitted. In most of the other cases, the accused pleaded guilty.

Adm

20. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the number of cases where authentic travel documents were mistaken as counterfeit ones by the officers of ImmD. AD of Imm responded that in cases where prosecution had not been instigated because of insufficient evidence, no further action was taken to verify the authenticity of the travel documents in question. As regards prosecutions which did not result in a conviction, he was not aware of any case where an authentic travel document was mistaken as a counterfeit one, apart from Miss LIN's case. Mr LAU requested the Administration to give a response in writing.

21. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked about the reasons for ImmD deciding not to prosecute in more than 1 000 cases of suspected possession or use of counterfeit travel documents in 1999. AD of Imm said that prosecution would only be proceeded with if there was sufficient evidence to indicate beyond reasonable doubt that the suspect

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possessed or used a counterfeit travel document. He explained that the AIG, for instance, used special equipment to examine travel documents suspected to be forged. If such examination could not confirm that the travel document was counterfeit and the suspect denied that the document was counterfeit, the suspect would not be prosecuted. Mr LAU said that this reflected that frontline officers of ImmD sometimes made mistakes in distinguishing whether a travel document was authentic. He considered that investigating officers of ImmD should not rely solely on the admission statement of the suspect. Forensic examination should be carried out on all travel documents suspected to be forged.

22. AD of Imm responded that the fact that a substantial percentage of cases handled did not result in prosecutions reflected that decisions to prosecute were made with great caution. Arranging forensic examination of all travel documents suspected to be forged might result in the accused having to face a longer detention as the examination would take time. AD of Imm further said that ImmD was carrying out a comprehensive review of the procedures on investigating suspected cases involving the possession or use of counterfeit travel documents. ImmD would discuss with the Government Laboratory the possibility of conducting express, preliminary examination on a document suspected to be forged.

23. DS for S said that besides frontline officers, officers at more senior levels were also involved in an investigation. He assured Members that ImmD would not prosecute a suspect merely on the basis of his own confession. DS for S further said that ImmD had a duty to enforce the provisions of the Immigration Ordinance and maintain immigration control. An annual average of about 3 000 suspected cases of counterfeit travel documents out of millions of people who travelled through Hong Kong each year reflected the high level of caution ImmD exercised in combating crimes related to the use of counterfeit travel documents. He added that a prosecution rate of about 50% was acceptable. Mr LAU Kong-wah requested the Administration to provide a breakdown of the reasons for ImmD not deciding to prosecute in about 1 200 cases of suspected possession or use of counterfeit travel document handled in 1999.

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24. The Chairman expressed concern that some suspects might think that pleading guilty could put a quick end to the matter. He said that the investigation procedures must ensure justice and facilitate determination of the truth. DS for S expressed agreement with the Chairman. He said that the decision to prosecute should be based on whether there was sufficient evidence. He added that the Administration was concerned about the protection of human rights. However, it was also necessary to maintain operational efficiency in handling the large number of visitors who travelled through Hong Kong.

25. DD of Imm said that he was not aware of any case in which the suspect pleaded guilty in order to put a quick end to the matter. As a person who committed an offence for possession or use of counterfeit travel document was liable to a maximum imprisonment of 14 years, the investigating officers of ImmD would in no way lead or

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cause a suspect to think that he would be released if he pleaded guilty. He pointed out that the atmosphere of a detention room was similar to that of a prison. He doubted very much whether a suspect would make an admission of guilt in haste. He added that the duty lawyer service was also available to a suspect. Referring to a case where a Hong Kong celebrity admitted to shoplifting in the US in order to be able to leave the country, the Chairman said that it was possible for a suspect to think that he would be released if he pleaded guilty, even if the investigating officers of ImmD did not lead or cause him to think so.

26. Miss Margaret NG agreed with Mr Albert HO's view that the reality was not as perfect as DS for S and DD of Imm had described. She pointed out that there had been cases where the admission statement of a suspect was rejected by the Court. She was also aware of many complaints about a suspect not being allowed to make telephone calls or coerced into making a confession. As people had a tendency to resort to easier ways of solving problems, officers of ImmD might be overly inclined to get the suspect to make a confession. Miss NG further said that the threshold of "sufficient evidence to believe that a suspect possessed or used a counterfeit travel document" was too low and subjective. She asked about the number of cases where no admission statement was made by the suspect. She said that the atmosphere of a detention room was similar to that of a prison. Suspects were usually under tremendous pressure and therefore they might have a tendency to make a confession. Given that the accused was liable on conviction to a maximum of 14 years' imprisonment, Miss NG opined that objective evidence should be used in prosecutions and the Administration should consider carrying out forensic examination on all travel documents suspected to be forged.

27. Miss Margaret NG asked about the number of staff in the Government Laboratory deployed for undertaking such forensic examination work and the average time required for examining a counterfeit travel document. AD of Imm responded that as far as he knew, four to five staff members in the Government Laboratory were responsible for examining counterfeit travel documents as well as other documents. He agreed to look into the adequacy of resources for forensic examination of travel documents in ImmD's current review of procedures for investigating cases involving the use of forged travel documents.

Adm

28. Miss Margaret NG expressed concern that only four to five staff members in the Government Laboratory were responsible for the forensic examination of counterfeit travel documents, although there were more than 3 000 suspected cases and 1 500 prosecutions in a year. She said that forensic examination of counterfeit travel documents should not be hindered by a lack of sufficient resources, given that the result affected the freedom of an individual.

29. Miss Margaret NG asked whether the suspect of a case involving the use of counterfeit travel document was allowed to be released on bail. AD of Imm said that it was for the Court to decide. To his knowledge, suspects of such cases were seldom released on bail unless strong justification was provided.

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30. DS for S said that the fact that prosecution had only been made in about half of the suspected cases reflected that the pressure experienced by suspects was not that great. He added that if a person did not use or possess a counterfeit travel document, he strongly doubted whether the person would plead guilty in order to put a quick end to the matter.

31. Miss Margaret NG said that this argument was the reason why investigating officers of ImmD had been relying on admission statements as the main evidence. She said that the present procedures had exerted pressure on frontline officers to obtain admission statements from suspects in order to avoid the trouble of arranging forensic examination of the travel documents in question. She considered that the procedure on handling cases involving forged travel documents, including the resources for forensic examination, should be critically examined.

32. Miss Emily LAU said that there were weaknesses in ImmD's procedures on investigating cases involving forged travel documents. She pointed out that Miss LIN's incident had tarnished Hong Kong's international reputation. She considered that the review on ImmD's procedures should be conducted by persons independent of ImmD, such as a retired judge or a Senior Counsel, so as to increase public confidence in the review. Miss LAU suggested that before an independent review was conducted, the Administration should, in the meantime, consider carrying out surprise checks on interviews of suspects. She asked whether the procedures for interviewing minors were the same as those for adults and whether there existed discrimination against nationals of certain countries and places. Miss LAU expressed support for providing additional resources for forensic examination of forged travel documents.

33. DS for S said that it would be more appropriate for the review to be conducted by ImmD, which had a better understanding of its operations and procedures. ImmD also had the best knowledge as to the merits and drawbacks of any proposed changes. He pointed out that the review would be monitored by the Secretary for Security (S for S), Secretary for Justice, LegCo and the public. ImmD would report the outcome of the review to S for S, who would then report to the Chief Secretary for Administration. He considered that the transparency of the review and method adopted in conducting the review were much more important than who was in charge of conducting the review.

34. As regards interviews with minors, DD of Imm said that they were made in accordance with "Rules and directions for the questioning of suspects and the taking of statements" issued by ImmD. A person aged below 16 must be accompanied by his parents or a guardian when being interviewed.

35. DS for S assured Members that the Administration would not discriminate against persons of a particular origin or race. DD of Imm stressed that all persons were treated equally. However, particular attention was paid to flights to those places which were popular destinations of illegal migrants.

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36. Miss Emily LAU considered that priority should be given to installing video-taping facilities in interview rooms of ImmD at the airport and other immigration control points where forged travel document users were frequently detected. DD of Imm said that ImmD had redeployed its resources to enable the installation of video-taping facilities in the interview rooms at the airport. As ImmD's interview rooms at the airport would be relocated shortly, installation of the facilities would commence once the relocation was completed.

37. Miss Emily LAU expressed doubts that legal and human rights protection was accorded to suspects as DS for S had claimed, apart from allowing them to make telephone calls. She considered that a visit to ImmD would not facilitate Members' understanding of how the procedures worked in actual practice, unless the visit was a surprise one. DS for S responded that the legal and human rights of suspects were safeguarded in the existing procedures and practice on detention, interviewing and prosecution, as explained at the AJLS Panel meeting on 18 January 2000. There were ample opportunities to further discuss the matter if Members considered the protection inadequate.

38. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that ImmD was mainly relying on admission statements as the main evidence in prosecutions. That was why the prosecution rate of suspected cases involving the possession or use of counterfeit travel documents was so low. She considered that ImmD should not rely solely on interviews with suspects to determine whether they were guilty. More resources should be provided to the Government Laboratory for forensic examination of suspected counterfeit travel documents. She asked how ImmD could ensure that interviews with suspects were conducted in accordance with laid down rules and directions. She said that random checks on interviews should be carried out by, say, officers not from the same team or unit as the investigating officers conducting the interview. The Chairman added that consideration should be given to following the Police practice of conducting surprise checks at district offices by senior ranking headquarters staff.

39. DD of Imm said that ImmD had put in place standard procedures on receiving and handling complaints from suspects. Any person detained by ImmD and pending arraignment in Court could at any time lodge his complaint to the interviewing officer, the guarding officer or the review officer. He pointed out that the Division Head of the Airport Division, who was a very senior ranking officer, was responsible for monitoring the work of his subordinates, including his subordinates' treatment of suspects in the detention rooms. AD of Imm added that senior officers from ImmD's headquarters carried out random checks on the work of the investigating officers at the airport. For instance, he personally visited ImmD's airport office three times in the previous year.

40. Miss CHAN Yuen-han asked about the usual number of investigating officers involved in interviewing a suspect. DD of Imm responded that an interview with a suspect was conducted by one investigating officer. An interpreter would be present,

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if necessary. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that if this was the case, surprise checks were necessary. She expressed concern that frontline officers of ImmD might not strictly follow the established procedures. DD of Imm responded that interview rooms had glass doors through which senior officers could monitor the situation inside the rooms.

Adm

41. In response to the Chairman's question on whether Justices of the Peace (JPs) made regular visits to the detention rooms of ImmD, DD of Imm said that regular visits were made by JPs to the detention centre at Ma Tau Kok. Visits by JPs to the airport detention rooms could be arranged, if necessary. However, visits by JPs to interview rooms might raise questions of privacy. The Chairman suggested that the Administration should consider allowing JPs to conduct surprise visits to the detention rooms at the airport.

42. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that it appeared from the Administration's paper that the prosecution of suspects would be made by officers of ImmD without the involvement of D of J. He asked why prosecution was not made by D of J as the accused could be sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment upon conviction. He also asked about the number of Government Counsel in D of J who were responsible for examining whether prosecution procedures of ImmD were in order. AD of Imm said that more than 20 000 prosecutions, among which about 1 000 involved counterfeit travel documents, were made by ImmD each year. Officers of ImmD had been authorized by the Director of Public Prosecutions to prosecute immigration-related offences since a long time ago. The prosecution staff of ImmD, though not legal practitioners, had undergone training similar to that for Court Prosecutors.

43. Miss Margaret NG considered that prosecution of suspects should be made by legal practitioners, as the quality of evidence was very important. She requested that this aspect should be examined in the current review of procedures. She pointed out that prosecutions formerly made by Police Inspectors were now made by Court Prosecutors. The Chairman suggested that the issue of prosecution practice in respect of immigration-related offences should be further discussed.

*(Post-meeting note : The issue of prosecutions conducted by staff of law enforcement departments was discussed by the AJLS Panel on 21 March 2000.)*

44. Mr LEE Wing-tat enquired about the circumstances under which ImmD would seek legal advice from D of J. AD of Imm said that legal advice would be sought from D of J -

- (a) Where there were doubts about points of law in the Immigration Ordinance;
- (b) Where immunity was recommended in respect of a suspect who would serve as a witness in the prosecution of another suspect; and

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(c) In serious cases which would be brought before the District Court.

45. Mr LEE Wing-tat asked how the human rights of suspects were protected by duty lawyers. AD of Imm said that the work of duty lawyers were monitored by the Law Society of Hong Kong. Miss Margaret NG said that consideration could be given to holding a joint meeting with the AJLS Panel if there was a need to discuss legal issues arising from ImmD's report on its review on procedures.

46. Mr Albert HO questioned whether it was appropriate for ImmD to handle cases involving use of counterfeit documents issued by any place, as there might be countries where minor inaccuracies in personal information in a travel document would not render the document invalid. Mr HO asked why ImmD did not refer such cases to the suspect's destination country for follow-up, if the suspect was returning to the issuing country of his travel document.

47. DD of Imm responded that based on international cooperation, any place or country where counterfeit travel document was intercepted or identified had an obligation to deal with the matter.

48. In this connection, Legal Adviser said that the provision on counterfeit or forged travel documents under the Immigration Ordinance did not confine to travel documents issued by Hong Kong. If Members considered that ImmD should not deal with cases involving forged travel documents of other places or countries, there might be a need to amend the Ordinance. Mr Albert HO expressed doubts whether ImmD was in a position to handle such cases even though it had the right to do so. Miss Margaret NG considered that problems would arise if ImmD was to be selective in taking enforcement actions against the use of counterfeit travel documents. DS for S said that Hong Kong enjoyed a good reputation in its enforcement against the use of counterfeit travel documents; hence people who possess travel documents issued by Hong Kong would find it more convenient in travelling to other places.

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49. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide information on the crime pattern in possession or use of counterfeit travel documents, and its cooperation with other places in combating immigration-related offences.

Clerk

50. The Chairman said that the following information should be sought from the Government Chemist -

- (a) Average number of forensic examinations on suspected forged travel documents carried out by the Government Laboratory per month in the past 24 months;
- (b) Average time required for examining a suspected forged travel document;
- (c) Average waiting time required before an examination of a suspected forged travel document was carried out; and

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- (d) Number of staff deployed for forensic examination of suspected forged travel documents.

*(Post-meeting note : The information provided by the Government Chemist was circulated vide LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 1167/99-00 and CB(2) 1245/99-00 on 23 February and 1 March 2000.)*

51. DS for S said that the investigation by the Police into the case of Miss LIN Qiaoying was expected to be submitted to S for S in about two weeks' time. Whether the full investigation report could be disclosed would depend on whether further legal actions would be taken. The Chairman advised that a meeting of the Panel would be convened when the outcome of the investigation was available.

52. The meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat

20 April 2000