**Extract from the minutes of meeting of
Panel on Constitutional Affairs on 21 July 2003**

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II.   Publicity programme for 2003 District Councils election
       (LC Paper No. CB(2)2864/02-03(01))

2.   <u>Deputy Secretary for Constitutional Affairs</u> (DS(CA)) briefed members on the paper prepared by the Administration which set out the main features of the proposed publicity programme to promote the second District Councils (DCs) election to be held on 23 November 2003.   The publicity programme would run from mid August 2003 to polling day.

<u>Issues raised by members</u>

Voter registration

3.   In response to Ms Emily LAU, <u>DS(CA)</u> advised members that the voter registration campaign for the 2003 DCs election was completed on 16 July 2003. More than 300 000 voter registration forms had been received.   Of the 100 000 forms so far processed by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO), about 50% were applications for registration as electors and the remainder were notifications of change of address by registered electors.   He further advised that prior to the voter registration campaign which started on 1 June 2003, about 9 000 applications for registration as electors, and 62 000 notifications for change of address of electors, had been received.

4.   <u>DS(CA)</u> further informed members that REO received about 260 000 voter registration forms during the registration campaign for the 1999 DCs election, about 90 000 of which were applications for registration as electors and 170 000 were notifications of change of addresses.

5.   <u>Ms Emily LAU and Mr HUI Cheung-ching</u> suggested that the Administration should analyse the new registrants by age.   <u>DS(CA)</u> replied that as in previous years, REO would provide the database of registered electors to the Registration of Persons Section of the Immigration Department, which would compile a breakdown of the electors by age groups.   The findings would be available after publication of the final voter register.

Quiz and promotional segments on radio

6. In response to Mr IP Kwok-him, <u>DS(CA)</u> advised that quiz competitions to promote the DCs election would be educational in nature. They would focus on, e.g. raising awareness of the public on the role and functions of DCs so as to encourage electors to vote in the election.

Election forums in selected constituencies

7. <u>Ms Emily LAU</u> said that she supported in principle the organizing of election forums for participation by contesting candidates. More forums should be held as far as practicable to enable electors to know about the election platforms of the candidates, in particular the new candidates. As the Administration proposed that election forums would be arranged in selected constituencies, <u>the Chairman and Ms Emily LAU</u> opined that the criteria for selecting the constituencies should be fair in order to avoid criticisms of favouritism.

8. <u>DS(CA)</u> responded that detailed arrangements for holding election forums were being finalized with the Radio Television Hong Kong. It was intended that election forums would be held in constituencies where keen competition among candidates was expected. He undertook to update members on the criteria for selecting constituencies for holding election forums.

Admin

Promotion of clean elections

9. <u>Mr IP Kwok-him</u> noted that a spot series would be screened on TV and other networks to educate the public on some of the major provisions in the Election (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (ECICO). <u>DS(CA)</u> advised members that the script writing for the spot series was being prepared by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and the shooting of the series would commence soon. At the request of Mr IP, <u>DS(CA)</u> agreed to inform members on the provisions of the ECICO which would be featured in the TV series.

Admin

Financial implications

10. In response to Mr IP Kwok-him on the cost of the publicity programme which was estimated to be about $12 million, <u>DS(CA)</u> agreed to provide a breakdown of the expenditure for members' information, once the details of the programme were finalized.

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