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Respected Members of the LEGCO,

As Anatolia Cultural and Dialog Center, -a registered charity- we are trying to form bridges between Chinese and Turkish community, and try to introduce the cultures of the two community to the other one. Although Turkish community is not that populated in Hong Kong, we have many common things with major Muslim Ethnic Minority (EM) groups in Hong Kong because of coming from same Islamic background.

Since our establishment, 2007, we have organized many academic and non-academic talks, seminars, interfaith activities, iftar dinners for non-Muslims, courses, art programs, festivals and food cuisine classes and so on. Our long time experience and observation is that both communities (Chinese and “the other”(in this case it is Turkish but it does not matter what culture or ethnic group is)) do not know much about the other’s culture and religion or the information they have is very basic or have some misinformation.

In Muslim societies, (also same for the other societies) culture and daily living is dominantly shaped with Islam naturally as well as local customs. So, to inform individuals of local society with basic knowledge of religion and culture of the other is necessary for healthy relations of the society and It will help local people to accept EM to their society in real stance. There might be laws and government and nongovernment bodies effort and work on this issue and there is still room for further development.

In our opinion, more programs like talks and seminars and interactive programs are needed to be organized by EM groups and government organizations.

On one hand, institutions focusing on EM integration are in need of venue and premise for their programs like us (we have closed our office due to financial problems and continue our programs on online and with random places). There might be some places government is offering but demand and supply somehow cannot meet or it is not enough for the need of EM.

On the other hand, to lessen the understanding of the EM cultures and beliefs for local Chinese people, more programs and cooperation need to be performed through those EM centers. To attract public’s attention and understanding, more talks and programs on community level could be designed on EM culture, art and cuisine. Program’s target is to attract people from both communities and let them mix and learn, otherwise programs for EM or Chinese are not effective enough. To increase Leisure and Cultural Services Department’s existing cooperation with EM to a higher level is necessary.

In conclusion;

EM groups need;

more support on venues and premises;

more cooperation with Leisure and Cultural Services Department;

more cooperation with Education Bureau.

thank you

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