

**For discussion
on 15 June 2020**

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Promotion of the Basic Law

PURPOSE

This paper sets out the work of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) Government on the promotion of the Basic Law.

PROMOTION OF THE BASIC LAW

The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China and the Basic Law

2. In accordance with the provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (“the Constitution”), the HKSAR was established and the National People’s Congress (“NPC”) enacted the Basic Law of the HKSAR, prescribing the systems to be practised in the HKSAR and stating clearly that the basic policies of “one country, two systems”, “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy will be implemented in Hong Kong. The Basic Law is a national law and has a constitutional status in the HKSAR.

3. The Constitution and the Basic Law form the constitutional basis of the HKSAR and provide the strongest safeguard for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government has the responsibility to let the general public have a comprehensive understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

4. On promotion of the Basic Law, the Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (“BLPSC”), led by the Chief Secretary of Administration (“CS”), was established in 1998. It provides steer on the overall programme and strategy for promoting the Basic Law and

coordinates the promotional and educational efforts of various parties concerned both in the Government and in the community. Five working groups are set up under the BLPSC, namely, Working Group (“WG”) on Local Community; WG on Teachers and Students; WG on Civil Servants; WG on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and WG on Community Outside Hong Kong. The Home Affairs Bureau (“HAB”), the Education Bureau (“EDB”), the Civil Service Bureau (“CSB”), the Trade and Industry Department (“TID”) and the Information Services Department (“ISD”) provide secretariat services to the five working groups respectively and assist the working groups in organising activities to promote the Basic Law to the respective sectors. Under CS’ leadership, members of the BLPSC give very valuable advice to the Government on the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

5. Moreover, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (“CMAB”) has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enable the public to have a comprehensive and thorough understanding of “one country, two systems” and the Basic Law through organising large-scale thematic seminars, promoting the Basic Law through the electronic media (such as Internet and smart-phone applications), setting up the Basic Law Court Case Database, organising regular roving exhibitions at the district level, arranging the Basic Law mobile resource centres to visit different districts and schools, and providing sponsorship to community organisations through the Basic Law Promotion Sponsorship Scheme for staging various Basic Law promotional activities. Besides, to make the Basic Law education more interesting, the CMAB has produced Basic Law pop-up books and board games and developed a new online game on the Constitution and the Basic Law, with a view to enhancing public understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law through wide-reaching social media and in a lively manner.

6. December 4 is the Constitution Day of the People’s Republic of China. At the large-scale Constitution Day Seminar held in December 2019, Professor HAN Dayuan of the Law School of Renmin University of China, who is also a member of the HKSAR Basic Law Committee under the Standing Committee of the NPC, delivered a keynote speech

entitled “The Constitution and National Development” to enable different sectors of the community to have a deeper understanding of the Constitution as well as the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law.

7. The year 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law. The CMAB has increased the allocation for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law to about \$23 million for organising a wide range of promotional activities. An online exhibition on the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law has been launched in May. The exhibition leads the audience to review, in the form of a time tunnel, the historical background of the Basic Law, as well as its drafting, promulgation and successful implementation in Hong Kong. We will also roll out a video series and a TV Announcement in the Public Interest on the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law and organise seminars to allow citizens to understand the importance of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

8. Among the various sectors, the Government attaches particular importance to the education and promotion work on the Basic Law for students, young people and public officers, which has been actively implemented by relevant bureaux/departments. Students and young people are the future of our community and the core pillars of Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability. They need to fully and accurately understand the Basic Law. Besides, public officers, as a member of the Government, have the duty to fully implement the Basic Law in Hong Kong and the responsibility to have an in-depth understanding of the Basic Law for the successful implementation of “one country, two systems” in the HKSAR. The focus and content of the Basic Law education and promotion work carried out by the HKSAR Government for students, young people and public officers are detailed in the ensuing paragraphs.

Basic Law Education for Teachers and Students

9. The EDB's existing policies of implementing Basic Law education ("BLE") aim at setting out clear BLE goals to strengthen the implementation through a systematic, "multi-pronged" and co-ordinated approach. A wide array of measures, which include providing guidelines to schools, developing learning and teaching ("L&T") resources, organising life-wide learning activities for students, providing teacher training for school sponsoring bodies, school leaders and teachers, etc., have been adopted. Such support measures enable teachers and students to acquire a deeper understanding of the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law as well as the concepts embodied in the Basic Law, and to understand that the Basic Law is the cornerstone of Hong Kong's development and is closely related to our daily lives, which in turn facilitate schools to enhance L&T efficacy by planning for and implementing BLE more effectively.

Curriculum and L&T resources

10. Promotion of the Basic Law is an ongoing task of the EDB and schools. BLE elements have long been covered by the school curriculum under the subjects of General Studies for primary schools, Chinese History, History, Life and Society, Geography, Liberal Studies, etc. In these subjects, the Basic Law-related contents and/or topics help strengthen students' understanding of the Basic Law. At the primary level, the General Studies for Primary Schools Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Primary 6) (2017) provides examples of curriculum planning and L&T for teachers' reference in order to enable students to understand the origin of the Basic Law and its constitutional background as well as the relationship between the Basic Law and their daily lives, and to foster their affection and appreciation for the history and culture of our country.

11. At the secondary level, the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017) ("Guide") highlights the major renewed emphases of the secondary education curriculum, which include strengthening values

education (including moral and civic education and BLE). In an appendix of the Guide, a planning and self-evaluation tool for BLE is provided as reference to help schools holistically review their current implementation of BLE and identify areas for improvement as well as a means to facilitate better planning of BLE by schools. The junior secondary subject, Life and Society, even covers specific contents of the Basic Law, such as the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR, rights and responsibilities, and political structure. In addition, learning elements related to the Basic Law are included in the content of subjects such as Chinese History, History and Geography. Different topics, like the history of Hong Kong's development and the Opium War, help students understand the origin of the Basic Law as well as the status of Hong Kong as an inseparable part of China. For schools not offering Life and Society at the junior secondary level, a 15-hour independent module on "Constitution and the Basic Law" has been developed by the EDB for their flexible adoption to align with their existing curriculum, teaching resources and learning activities so that all students are given the opportunities to learn the essentials.

12. The development of L&T resources also keeps up with the times. The EDB provided secondary schools in the 2016-17 to 2019-20 financial years with various sets of L&T resources, including "Development of Learning and Teaching Strategies and Resources to Facilitate Students' Deep Learning of the Basic Law through Community Study", online L&T resources for the "Constitution and the Basic Law" module, "Basic Law Knowledge Enrichment Online Course for Secondary School Teachers", "Basic Law Online Course for Secondary School Students' Self-directed Learning" and two assessment banks, namely "Basic Law On-line Assessment (Junior Secondary)" (for students) and "Web on Assessment for BLE (Junior Secondary)" (for teachers). In the 2020-21 financial year, the EDB will continue to develop the advanced version of the "Basic Law Knowledge Enrichment Online Course for Secondary School Teachers". At the primary level, the EDB provided in the 2016-17 to 2020-21 financial years three sets of L&T resource DVD ROMs for primary General Studies on "History and Culture Series" and the "Basic Law Audio-visual L&T Package (Senior Primary)" to enhance

teachers' and students' understanding of the Basic Law. The L&T resources of various related subjects will also be refined continuously to enable teachers and students to understand our country and develop a correct understanding of the constitutional order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law. For example, in the teaching materials of senior secondary Liberal Studies, Liberal Studies Curriculum Resources Booklet Series: Hong Kong Today, topics on "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law are included, together with L&T exemplars to support the L&T of the subject.

13. Various BLE-related L&T resources are provided for primary and secondary schools in the territory. Many teachers and students have taken the online courses related to the Basic Law. For example, a total of 1 755 junior secondary school students registered for the "Basic Law Online Course for Secondary School Students' Self-directed Learning" through their schools in the 2018/19 school year. Besides, from the 2016/17 to 2019/20 school years, 24 sessions of teacher programme were organised, with 1 548 teachers completing the programme. Their feedback about the programme was highly positive. The EDB will continue to develop L&T resources for BLE, collect views and review the effectiveness of our work through various channels, so as to enrich and enhance the BLE-related L&T resources.

Teacher training

14. The EDB has all along been including elements related to the Constitution and the Basic Law in the professional training programmes for principals, middle managers and teachers to shed light on the constitutional status of the Basic Law and the concept of "one country, two systems", and to share the L&T strategies for promoting BLE inside and outside the classroom.

Students' learning activities

15. The EDB continuously organises diversified learning programmes to enhance students' understanding of the historical

background of the Basic Law and its implementation, as well as Hong Kong's legal system through real-life and interesting activities. Since 2015, the EDB has been organising the "Territory-wide Inter-school Basic Law Competition" on an annual basis for primary and secondary students. Five rounds of competition have been held since then with over 70 000 student participants.

16. To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the EDB especially organised study tours for Hong Kong students and teachers in August 2019. About 730 primary and secondary teachers and students were arranged to join four tours of visits and learning activities in six to seven days. One of the four tours focused on visiting Beijing while the other three routes covered Zhengzhou, Wuhan and Changsha, and the four tours converged in Beijing. To enable teachers and students to develop a thorough understanding of our country, the programme of the study tours included experiential activities on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics ("STEM") in the Peking University and the Tsinghua University. The students and teachers also attended talks on the Constitution and the Basic Law, arranged by the HKSAR Basic Law Committee under the Standing Committee of the NPC.

Mainland exchange programmes for students

17. The EDB organises various Mainland exchange programmes for students, for example, "The Historical Figures and Events of Dongguan and Zhongshan" and "An Exploration into the History and Culture of Nanjing". Learning elements and site visits related to the Constitution and BLE have been aptly incorporated into the exchange programmes to enhance students' understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law through engaging them in life-wide learning activities. The EDB will continue to organise Mainland exchange programmes for students in the 2020/21 school year, and enhance the learning content to deepen students' understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

Providing schools with the latest information

18. To help schools have a good grasp of the community resources provided by various organisations (e.g. non-profit-making organisations, government departments, community organisations, tertiary institutions), the EDB disseminates the latest information to schools through multiple channels, including the establishment of “Life-wide Learning Activity Databank” (“Databank”). Nine activities regarding the promotion and implementation of the Basic Law were uploaded to the Databank over the past five school years (from the 2014/15 to 2018/19 school years). In respect of higher education, the EDB gave a brief introduction of the Basic Law to the awardees of the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme to prepare them to be the “student ambassadors” for promoting Hong Kong overseas.

Funding scheme

19. To promote BLE among tertiary institutions, the EDB implements “The Basic Law Promotion Funding Scheme for Tertiary Institutions” (“Scheme”) annually to finance related projects proposed by tertiary institutions, their students and staff or other organisations. In the past five school years (from the 2014/15 to 2018/19 school years), 18 projects related to the promotion of the Basic Law were funded under the Scheme with an approved fund amounting to around \$1.8 million.

20. To tie in with the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law, the EDB will continue to update the L&T resources on an ongoing basis and organise teacher training and student activities, including the online competition of the 6th Territory-wide Inter-school Basic Law Competition (Heat) held in May 2020. A total of 222 schools enrolled for the competition this year, exceeding the number of participating schools last year. Moreover, the EDB will roll out the “Teaching Resources on the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China” and organise the “Constitution and Basic Law Online Seminar Series” and the advanced version of the “Basic Law Knowledge Enrichment Online Course for Secondary School Teachers” to enrich teachers’ and students’

understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law, as well as to enhance their awareness of the rule of law in Hong Kong.

Basic Law Promotion and Education for Young People

21. The WG on Local Community under the BLPSC, the HAB and the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (“CPCE”) work closely together to promote the Basic Law among the public at the community level. Activities with young people as target participants include the Basic Law Quiz Competition, the Basic Law seminars, publications for young people, thematic exhibitions on and interactive games about the Basic Law in the Civic Education Resource Centre, etc.

22. In addition, the HAB and the CPCE have worked in collaboration with groups/non-government organisations (“NGOs”) to promote civic education, including sponsoring the latter to organise civic education activities in the community. They include Basic Law promotional activities with young people as target participants, e.g. the Hong Kong Basic Law Ambassador Training Scheme. In the past two years, a total of about 50 sponsored projects were related to the promotion of the Basic Law, involving a sponsorship amount of about \$9 million. In future, we will continue to support, through the CPCE, civic education activities organised by groups and NGOs on topics including the Basic Law.

Basic Law Training for Civil Servants

23. For the purpose of enhancing the understanding of the Basic Law for those who are interested in joining the civil service and promoting a culture of learning the Basic Law in the community, the Government has incorporated assessment of Basic Law knowledge into the civil service recruitment process since 2008. The test result will be one of the considerations for assessing candidates’ suitability for appointment. For civil service jobs requiring degree or professional qualifications, the total number of enrolments in the test since 2008 has reached nearly 400 000. Under the principle of “one country, two systems”, serving civil servants

of the HKSAR should have an accurate understanding of the constitutional order established under the Constitution and the Basic Law. The Civil Service Training and Development Institute (“CSTDI”) under the CSB has significantly enhanced Basic Law training for civil servants in recent years and has adopted a multi-pronged approach by running regular training courses and thematic seminars, as well as providing more online learning resources. Bureaux/departments have also incorporated Basic Law training courses into their respective staff training and development plans and made arrangements for their staff to participate in such courses.

Basic Law courses

24. Starting from 2016, the CSTDI has arranged all new recruits to attend the Basic Law foundation course within three years after their joining the service. Basic Law training for middle and senior-level officers has also been strengthened, including the launch of a new local training course on the Basic Law for middle-ranking civil servants in 2019 to enable participating officers to better understand the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law, the principle of “one country, two systems”, etc. The CSTDI also runs thematic seminars on the Basic Law from time to time where experts with profound knowledge on the Basic Law are invited to speak on the subject. The number of civil servants receiving Basic Law training each year has increased substantially from 7 500 in 2016 to the target number of 13 000 now.

Multi-media learning resources

25. The CSTDI also encourages civil servants to learn the Basic Law through the use of online resources. A “Basic Law Portal” has been set up on the e-platform of Cyber Learning Centre Plus, and offers various types of multi-media learning resources (including web courses, video clips, Basic Law Bulletin, podcasts, seminars’ recording and online quizzes) to encourage civil servants’ continuous learning on the Basic Law. In 2020, the CSTDI will organise training and promotional activities on the 30th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law,

including thematic seminars and a dedicated webpage.

Publications

26. The Department of Justice, the CMAB and the CSB jointly publish the annual Basic Law Bulletin, which features analysis on important court cases and work-related topics on the implementation of the Basic Law to deepen civil servants' understanding of the Basic Law. There is also a "Basic Law Column" in the Civil Service Newsletter published by the CSB which features the highlights of training and e-learning resources on the Basic Law and promotional activities related to the Basic Law etc.

27. The CSB will review from time to time and make continuous efforts to enhance Basic Law training for civil servants so as to strengthen their knowledge of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

ADVICE SOUGHT

28. The HKSAR Government will continue to press ahead with and step up the education and publicity of the Constitution and the Basic Law. Members are welcome to give their views on the relevant work.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

Civil Service Bureau

Education Bureau

Home Affairs Bureau

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