

Press Releases

LCQ7: Surveys and studies on local residents of different races undertaken by Government

Following is a question by the Hon Lau Chin-shek and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Stephen Lam, in the Legislative Council today (February 20):

Question:

Will the Government inform this Council:

(a) in the past five years, whether the Government had collected relevant data according to the races of stakeholders when it implemented policies and measures on education, employment, health care, housing, social welfare or security, as well as provided the related public services, so as to facilitate more comprehensive consideration by the policy bureaux concerned when formulating policies; if it had, please list such policies, measures and public services; if it had not, what measures (other than legislating against racial discrimination) the Government has in place to ensure that its policies, measures and public services can cater for the needs of local residents of different races, and promote racial harmony and sustainable development of a pluralistic society;

(b) whether the Government has any measure or plan to require all government departments to collect relevant data according to the races of stakeholders, so as to review if the relevant policies, measures and public services will effectively promote racial equality and racial harmony; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(c) in the past three years, whether various policy bureaux and government departments, either on their own or through commissioning community organisations, had conducted surveys or researches with local residents of different races as their targets; if they had, of the following about the survey or research projects: when they were conducted, the responsible government departments or organisations, the expenditure involved, whether they have been completed and (if completed) the results thereof, broken down by project name; if no such surveys or researches had been conducted, the reasons for that?

Reply:

Madam President,

The reply to the three-part question is as follows:

(a) Government firmly upholds the principle of equality among people of different races and endeavours to promote racial harmony. Statistics and data on the ethnic origins of stakeholders are collected when necessary to facilitate the formulation and implementation of its policies. Also, where appropriate, we take into account census statistics and results of surveys conducted by community organisations and academic institutions.

In the past five years, the relevant statistics and data collected include:

(i) the Education Bureau has, since the 2006/07 school year, started collecting information on students' ethnicity and spoken language at home through the annual Student Enrolment Survey. The information helps the Bureau map out and provide appropriate

education support services for non-Chinese speaking students, notably ethnic minority students, with a view to helping the students to attain all-round development;

(ii) to facilitate planning and design of dedicated placement-tied training courses launched for ethnic minorities on a pilot basis since mid-2007, the Employees Retraining Board has been collecting data on the number of applicants, as well as the enrolment and placement situations of students, to these courses since their introduction;

(iii) to help cater for the service needs of ethnic minority job-seekers, the Labour Department collects information on the ethnic origin of job-seekers at its Job Centres and on the Interactive Employment Service website since 2007; and

(iv) the Security Bureau maintains the Central Registry of Drug Abuse which collects data regarding the age, sex, ethnicity, type of drugs abused, reason for abusing drugs, etc. of drug abusers who have come into contact with and been reported by reporting agencies. This is a voluntary reporting system which is aimed at facilitating the analysis of the drug abuse trend over time, so as to complement the formulation anti-drug policy and measures. It is not targeted specifically at particular racial groups.

(b) At the moment, Government collects statistics on the races of stakeholders when necessary, having regard to the needs of the bureaux and departments concerned and the specific issues involved. This arrangement is appropriate and will continue.

(c) According to the information we have gathered, a list of surveys and studies on local residents of different races undertaken by various bureaux and departments in the past three years is set out at the Annex.

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