

LCQ9: Enhancing public's knowledge of history of patriotic labour movement

Following is a question by the Hon Kingsley Wong and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (May 22):

Question:

Many members of the public consider that the "Canton-Hong Kong Strike", which broke out in 1925, is a world's astonishing patriotic movement against imperialism. During the 16 months of the movement, over 200 000 people in Hong Kong joined the strike, representing about a quarter of the population at that time. As the movement not only aroused the sense of national identity and patriotic love of Chinese people, but also forced the British Hong Kong Government to adjust its governing policy with reduced discrimination and oppression against Chinese people in Hong Kong, it is an important teaching resource for promoting the spirit of patriotism. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that next year marks the 100th anniversary of the Canton-Hong Kong Strike, whether the Working Group on Patriotic Education under the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee will launch patriotic education activities for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Canton-Hong Kong Strike in order to stimulate patriotic love and cohesiveness in society; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has established the Chinese Culture Promotion Office (CCPO) to coordinate, plan and implement programmes to promote Chinese culture and history, whether the CCPO will organize an exhibition or a special exhibition for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Canton-Hong Kong Strike; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as it is learnt that many members of the public consider that the Government has not attached importance to major historical events in Hong Kong's patriotic labour movement, such as the "Seamen's Strike" and "Uprising of the Two Airlines", whether the Government will strengthen the promotion of the spirit of patriotism as enshrined in the relevant events and step up its publicity and education efforts in the future; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB), the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Kingsley Wong is as follows:

The Chief Executive announced in the Policy Address last year that patriotic education would be rolled out and be integrated into our education system, and a Working Group on Patriotic Education (Working Group) would be established under the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee led by the Chief Secretary for Administration.

The Working Group was established on April 8 this year. Its membership comprised the relevant Director of Bureaux and Heads of Departments, as well as representatives from relevant sectors of society. Four sub-groups were set up under the Working Group, namely School Education Sub-group, Local Community Sub-group, History, Politics, Economy and Culture Sub-group, and Media Publicity Sub-group to research on, recommend and coordinate for the introduction of different policy measures relating to patriotic education.

The Working Group held its first meeting on April 29, setting down a clear objective: to make patriotism with affection to our country and Hong Kong a mainstream core value in Hong Kong, with a view to enabling the spirit of patriotism to take root in society and people's heart, such that members of the public would proactively and consciously safeguard national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. The Working Group has also set a clear direction, that is on one hand to dovetail with the Patriotic Education Law of the People's Republic of China, while at the same time adjust suitably having regard to the actual circumstances in Hong Kong. The Working Group will tender advice on policy measures for effectively promoting patriotic education.

Patriotic education is rich in content, covering various aspects including history, culture, traditions, and symbols and signs of our country. In examining the overall strategy and specific initiatives for rolling out patriotic education, the Working Group will holistically consider all relevant factors including the historical and cultural connotations and values of each of the projects as well as their symbolic meaning, rally efforts of the HKSAR Government and the community, and adopt suitable approaches and channels for taking forward related work, so as to deepen the understanding of the public on the history, culture, development and remarkable achievements of our country, thereby strengthening their awareness and sense of patriotism.

The Working Group is inviting all sectors of the community to offer their valuable suggestions on how to promote patriotic education. We also note the suggestion of promoting the history of patriotic labour movement in Hong Kong. The Working Group will, in due course, consolidate the views and suggestions collected, to give comprehensive consideration and make specific recommendations.

Regarding the suggestion to organise an exhibition for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Canton-Hong Kong Strike, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is exploring the feasibility of the suggestion, which includes collaborating with cultural institutions and museums on the Mainland to enrich the related exhibits and historical information. Besides, the LCSD is also planning to organise public and education programmes, such as talks, next year to enhance public understanding of the history of the

Canton-Hong Kong Strike.