

## SCMA visits Basic Law Library (with photos)

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, visited the Basic Law Library (the Library) this afternoon (August 24) to see for himself the facilities and collections there and to keep abreast of its operation.

Joined by two summer interns and accompanied by colleagues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and library staff, Mr Nip paid a visit to the Library located at the City Hall Public Library in Central. The Library opened in 2004 as a joint project of the LCSD and the Basic Law Institute.

Mr Nip was informed that the Library collections included the Basic Law Collection originally housed in the Hong Kong Central Library, as well as about 17,600 items such as books, journals and multimedia information; reference materials on the Basic Law collated by the Government professional bodies, academic institutions and community organisations; and documents and newspaper clippings relating to the drafting and implementation of the Basic Law. Online database workstations are also available in the Library for use by the public.

He then toured the Extension Activities Room of the City Hall Public Library and listened to a briefing by staff members on the various kinds of activities organised in the past to promote the use of the Library.

Mr Nip said, "The Constitution and the Basic Law form the constitutional basis of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The Basic Law sets out clearly the country's basic policies regarding Hong Kong. It enshrines the important concepts of 'one country, two systems', 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy. It also prescribes the various systems to be practised in the HKSAR and sets out the blueprint for the HKSAR's future development.

"Since the establishment of the HKSAR, the Government has been promoting the Basic Law through civic education, school education and training for civil servants. To step up the promotional efforts, the Government established in 1998 a Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee to provide steer on the overall programme and strategy in promoting the Basic Law and to co-ordinate promotional efforts of the Government and the community.

"The Basic Law is closely related to our daily lives. It is therefore very important to have an accurate understanding of the constitutional document. With its resourceful collections, the Library offers a wide variety of channels for the public to understand the Basic Law. I hope that members of the public can make the best use of the Library to deepen their understanding of the Basic Law."

