

China revises law to boost Red Cross credibility

China's top legislature Friday passed a revised law to boost the transparency and credibility of the country's Red Cross societies.

The legislation was adopted after a third reading at the bimonthly session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), which runs Wednesday to Friday.

Red Cross societies in China are now required to give feedback to donors on the use of their donations, and staff who fail to do so could face civil and criminal charges.

"The revision primarily focuses on strengthening supervision on Red Cross societies and standardizing their activities," Guo Linmao, an official with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, told a press conference Friday afternoon.

A previous clause giving Red Cross societies power to "rectify" illegal activities by their subordinate societies and staff was deleted from the new draft.

After several scandals, China's Red Cross has grappled with trust issues in recent years.

Revision work for the law began in 2016.

The first reading of the draft suggested that independent third-party agencies should audit donations and that an information disclosure system should be put into place.

The societies should also establish a system for financial management, internal control, public auditing as well as supervision of funds and assets.

The second draft expanded Red Cross societies' duties in stem cell and organ donation.

The Red Cross Society of China established an organ donation administration center in 2012, becoming involved in organ donations at every stage from donor registration to organ distribution.

The third reading specified that Red Cross societies could participate in and promote blood, body and organ donations, and could carry out work related to stem cell donations.

It stated that leading supervisors at all Red Cross societies must be chosen through a democratic process.

The revision will safeguard and regulate Red Cross societies in performing

their duties and boost its credibility, according to Zhang Mingqi, a vice chairman of the Law Committee of the NPC.

The law will come into force May 8, 2017.

Green light for China's first high security bio lab

China's first high level biosafety laboratory has been accredited and will be fully operational soon, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) said Friday.

The certificate was issued by the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment, according to the CAS.

The lab in Wuhan, capital city of central China's Hubei Province, will be used to study class four pathogens (P4) – the most virulent viruses that pose a high risk of aerosol transmission.

P4 is the highest biosafety level.

The lab in Wuhan will help China prevent and control outbreaks of infectious diseases and aid research and development of antiviral drugs and vaccines, said Zhang Yaping, vice president of the CAS.

All the air from the lab will go through two advanced filters before being discharged, while solid and liquid waste will also be properly processed, according to the CAS.

The Wuhan lab has undergone a trial operation since its construction was completed at the end of 2014. Some of the core research team have been trained in France and the United States.

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[Carwyn Connect heads to Penygraig](#)

The Carwyn Connect event will give local people the opportunity to meet the First Minister and ask him questions on any issues which affect them or their local community.

The session will take place between 6pm and 7.30pm at the Soar Centre on Cross Street, Penygraig, Rhondda Cynon Taff, CF40 1LD.

The First Minister has also announced that over the coming weeks he will be holding further Carwyn Connect events in Connah's Quay on Thursday 30 March and Barry on Monday 3 April.

People are encouraged to register their interest in attending the free events online. [Register your interest](#).

Questions can be asked in a number of ways – they can be submitted when people arrive at the venue when doors open at 5.30pm; in advance via email on cabinetcommunications@wales.gsi.gov.uk or via Twitter using @fmwales with the hashtag #carwynconnect.

First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones said:

“Over the past year, I have travelled across the country to hear the views of local communities and answer the burning questions of the people of Wales.

“I am pleased to announce the next event will take place in Penygraig. I want to see as many people as possible at the event, so if you have a question for me, want to raise issues affecting your community or have a great idea to make your home town a better place to live, come along to the event.

“A wide variety of topics have come up in previous events – from questions about really local issues, to discussions about broad Government policy.

“This is your chance to meet and speak with me in person. I’m really looking forward to meeting you all.”

Policy paper: River Thames Scheme: Berkshire and Surrey discussion groups (September and October 2015)

This document covers discussions that took place at the September and October 2015 workshops.