

Committee on the Promotion of Racial Harmony
Notes of the meeting on 30 June 2020

Present

Home Affairs Department (HAD)

Miss Vega Wong (Chairperson)	Deputy Director of Home Affairs
Mr Howard Yam	Assistant Director of Home Affairs
Ms Rebecca Chan	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Alfred Shum (Secretary)	Senior Executive Officer

Official Members

Ms Judy Chung	Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (5), Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
Ms Elaine Ng	Education Officer (Placement & Support) ² , Education Bureau
Ms Kelly Chan	Principal Information Officer (Local Promotions), Information Services Department
Mr John Chong	Labour Officer (Employment Services) ² , Labour Department

Non-official Members

Ms Ping Somporn Bevan
Ms Cheung Yee May, Mimi
Dr Theresa Cunanan
Mr Syed Ekram Elahi
Ms Rita Gurung
Mr Vijay Harilela
Mr Hung Chiu Wah, Derek
Mr Akil Khan
Ms Kong Man Wai, Vivian

For Agenda Item (5)

Ms Katherine Shum

Centre-in-charge, CHEER Centre

Absent with apologies

Mr Mohamed Ibramsa Sikkander Batcha

Mr Avinash Chandiram Hotchadani

Ms Lamia Sreya Rahman

Ms Rigam Rai

Mr Wong Man Ho, Matthew

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Chairperson welcomed Members to the meeting. She congratulated Mrs Poonam Vijayprakash Mehta and Ms Ping Somporn on receiving the Secretary for Home Affairs' Commendation for Community Service.

2. Confirmation of the notes of discussion on 19 September 2019

- 2.1 The notes of the last meeting held on 19 September 2019 were confirmed.

3. Matters arising from the meeting on 19 September 2019

- 3.1 There was no matter arising from the meeting on 19 September 2019.

4. Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund

- 4.1 At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mrs Judy Li and Ms Stella Lee briefed Members on the background and objectives of the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund). The latest progress and key features of the SIE Fund were summarised below

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- As at May 2020, the SIE Fund had generated over 1600 innovative ideas and funded 210 projects covering three priority areas of the

Fund viz. innovative programmes, capacity building and research, among which 18 were targeted at ethnic minorities as the ultimate beneficiaries.

- Individuals and registered legal entities were eligible to apply but matching fund is required for start-up and scale-up projects. Incubation support would be given to project proponents through all stages of innovation development.
- In early 2020, the second batch of four intermediaries had been appointed to run programmes with specific objectives –
 - BEHub launched by The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, HK – to empower disadvantaged population or public through participation in social innovation programmes as social innovators for alleviation of poverty and social exclusion of the disadvantaged population.
 - Innovator Farm launched by Fullness Social Enterprises Society – to provide young people with the necessary nutrition and environment to unleash their innate ability and inspire them to develop innovative ideas and creative solutions for tackling social problems and addressing the needs of underprivileged in Hong Kong.
 - Impact Incubator launched by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service – to provide a one-stop platform that support and incubate innovative projects in various stages and connects social entrepreneurs to different resources. It also helps social entrepreneurs implement innovative solutions to address poverty and social exclusion problems in Hong Kong and drive sustainable impact.
 - Good Seed launched by the PolyU Technology and Consultancy Co. Ltd. – to help students and alumni of higher education institutions unleash their innate ability for innovation and develop creative solutions to tackle social problems and address the needs of the underprivileged in Hong Kong

- 4.2 Mr Bosco Ng and Miss Nayab Feroz of WEDO GLOBAL shared their experience in running cultural tours under the Multicultural Programme and the WE MASK Action project. Ms Sandy Chan of Zubin Foundation introduced their Opportunity Bank which aimed at making opportunities and resources for education and career development more easily accessible by ethnic minorities.
- 4.3 The Chairperson thanked Mrs Li and Ms Lee of the Efficiency Office for their detailed introduction of the SIE Fund and expressed appreciation to representatives from WEDO GLOBAL and Zubin Foundation for their sharing.

5. Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality

- 5.1 At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Judy Chung of CMAB briefed Members on the revised Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality (the Guidelines) which had been adopted by all government bureaux/departments as well as related organisations (collectively referred to as public authorities) providing services to people of diverse race with effect from April 2020.
- 5.2 Issues raised by Members and the discussions were summarised below:
- 5.2.1 A Member enquired about the appointment arrangement of interpretation services. Ms Chung replied that since the interpretation needs of people of diverse race varied depending on what public services they were accessing to, public authorities would consider the actual situation and adopt appropriate arrangements to provide interpretation services to them. One of the service providers was the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER Centre) which offered free Telephone Interpretation and Enquiry Services (TELIS) between English and eight other languages¹ in non-specialised / non-professional areas. Both members of the public and staff of public authorities could call the CHEER Centre's hotline and get TELIS support for general interpretation services through a 3-way instant voice conference. Telephone interpretation services provided by the CHEER

¹ The 8 languages are Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Tagalog, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese and Punjabi.

Centre could be provided instantly in most cases. For on-site interpretation and other language services, public authorities and members of the public could make advance appointment with the CHEER Centre.

5.2.2 A Member asked whether the Guidelines were applicable to the Education Bureau and schools under its purview. Ms Chung replied that the Guidelines were applicable to all government bureaux/departments including the Education Bureau.

5.2.3 Members expressed appreciation over the use of neutral and inclusive terms in the revised Guidelines. A Member remarked that the term “ethnic minorities” might sound discriminatory to some people and suggested that government bureaux/departments should avoid using it. A Member pointed out that some bureaux/departments had adopted other terms such as “non-Chinese speaking students” by the Education Bureau and “non-ethnic Chinese” by Hong Kong Police Force. Ms Chung replied that careful consideration had been taken for the use of terminologies in the revised Guidelines. More neutral and inclusive terms like “multi-ethnic” and “people of diverse race” were being used. It was noted that the term “ethnic minorities” had been widely used to refer to specific groups of people in the society. It might take some time for society as a whole to make a change along with the increased awareness of the importance of building a racially inclusive and cohesive society. The Chairperson added that the term “ethnic minority” might be used in some context but it should not be taken to have any discriminatory connotation.

5.2.4 A Member asked, upon implementation of the revised Guidelines, whether CMAB would ensure compliance by all government bureaux/departments and whether it had any role in promoting similar practices outside the government. Ms Chung replied that CMAB was responsible for coordinating and maintaining an overview on the implementation of the Guidelines in the Government as a whole, including monitoring the implementation of the Guidelines, coordinating data collection, and publicising such information to the public. Public authorities would determine the practical actions required to implement the Guidelines within its policy / programme areas taking into account

their own operational circumstances. For better promotion of racial equality, CMAB would continue to invite public organisations to adopt the revised Guidelines and make reference to the Guidelines in their course of work.

5.3 The Chairperson thanked Ms Chung and her team for the presentation.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Enhanced interpretation and translation services of CHEER Centre

6.1.1 At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Katherine Shum of CHEER Centre gave a presentation on the enhanced services introduced last year including a strengthened interpretation team and new Vietnamese interpretation services. A new team leader would supervise and provide training to the interpretation team which had been expanded from 21 to 30 interpreters/translators.

6.1.2 On the provision of three-way telephone conference systems, a Member asked whether they were only available in the four departments named in the presentation. Ms Shum replied that CHEER Centre installed the systems in those departments for free and there were other departments which installed the systems with their own resources. She added that CHEER Centre had been proactively reaching to other departments through emails, briefing sessions and meetings etc. to introduce this new service.

6.1.3 A Member asked whether interpretation services were still required at schools as more schools were employing their own non-ethnic Chinese staff. Ms Shum replied that some schools continued to use their interpretation service to communicate with parents or to translate notices to parents. Education institutions which used CHEER Centre's services included universities, vocational training institutes, schools and kindergartens.

6.2 Lifesaving Training Incentive Programme for Non-ethnic Chinese Youths

6.2.1 Mr Howard Yam reported that two courses were organised between July and October 2019 to provide training for ethnic minority youths to acquire the lifeguard qualification. After some intensive training, a total of 18 ethnic minority youths passed all the examinations organised by the Hong Kong Life Saving Society and were awarded the Pool Lifeguard Award. He added that one of them has become a seasonal lifeguard of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

6.3 Innovative Programmes organised by Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minorities

6.3.1 Mr Yam reported that HAD allocated additional funding to selected operators of the Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minorities to organise extra innovative programmes. Three innovative programmes have been held last year. Videos of the following two programmes were shown to members –

- Dialogue with a Stranger (organised by LINK Centre) – A truck-converted moving workshop travelled to districts and welcomed members of the public on board to have a surprising dialogue session with ethnic minority youth ambassadors.
- Taste of Home (organised by CHEER Centre) – Local Chinese and ethnic minority ambassadors shared their traditional recipes to create fusion recipes and designed a route for a street food tour in Kowloon City.

6.4 District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony

6.4.1 Under the District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony 2019-20, 16 NGOs organised 54 activities in the districts to encourage exchange and interaction between ethnic minorities and local Chinese residents. The activities attracted more than 11 000 participants. A video showcasing the activities was shown to Members.

6.4.2 The Chairperson informed the meeting that the programmes for this year had been launched and thanked Members for circulating the invitation among their community. She said that application was closed last

Friday and assessment was in progress. Selected NGOs would implement the projects from August 2020 onwards.

6.5 The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

6.6 For the date of next meeting, Members would be duly informed nearer the time.

Home Affairs Department
July 2020