

1986 may be 'civic year' for Hongkong

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Next year may be designated the Year of Civic Education, said the Eastern District Officer, Mr Bowen Leung, in a forum yesterday.

That was one of the proposals made by the newly-formed Co-ordinating Committee on Civic Education in a recent meeting, Mr Leung said. He was speaking at the forum "How to Carry Out Civic Education Effectively Among Youths," organised by the Students Union of Hongkong Polytechnic.

Other proposals included organising a territory-wide Civic Education Day, setting up a foundation fund, and providing more information to the public about the functioning of government, he said.

Schools, voluntary agencies and community organisations can apply to the foundation for money to be used in civic education projects and other educational activities.

Mr Leung said the Government will devote more effort in promoting and educating the importance of civic-mindedness.

He said the Government's role is to stimulate more participation by citizens, and it will give information rather than instructions as to how things could and should be done.

Another speaker at the forum, Mrs Rosanna Tam, a Legco member, said to become effective, civic education in schools must encourage students to participate.

She said civic education in schools should be along four main themes: civic rights, democracy, nationalism and morality.

In addition, the teaching process should be a two-way communication instead of a single-way information input, and it should suit students' interests, she said.

Mr Anthony Ha, chairman of the Education Action Group, suggested that a civic education teachers' association should be set up to give teachers chances to exchange experiences in different schools.

He also stressed the importance of educating adults as well as youths.

Adults may help or hinder civic education among youths because they set the examples to young people, he said.

Mr So Fai-cho, the Education Department's chief inspector of schools, said the department will stick to the whole school approach to civic education as stipulated in the Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools.