

10 fail to gain poll approval of party

By CONNIE LAW

THE Liberal Party has refused to endorse about 10 members to run for the district board elections, according to core member Chan Yim-kwong.

Mr Chan, vice-chairman of the party's executive committee, said that if the 10 insisted on running for the September polls they would have to resign from the party and run as independents.

So far at least two had decided to do so, he said.

Party chairman Allen Lee Peng-fei said about 80 party members would contest the coming polls.

Mr Chan's remarks came after two Kwun Tong members accused the central leadership of practising double standards and ignoring district needs.

Lau Ting-kwong was unhappy that the party refused to support him in the coming polls and threw its weight behind Lui Chi-wah, who asked for party endorsement after the February deadline.

He also accused it of being dictatorial and paying scant attention to districts where it would not field candidates for the 1995 Legco elections.

Refusing to divulge the reasons for turning down the 10 applications, Mr Chan said the decisions were made after careful consideration by the party's election committee.

He admitted that some of the 80 candidates had only joined the party in the past couple of months.

He was not worried that these members would use the party simply to secure a seat and then leave afterwards. He noted the election committee had been careful in its selection.

Mr Chan revealed that about 60 people had resigned from the Liberal Party since its inception last July.

But he stressed the number of newcomers exceeded those who left.

Mr Lee said strengthening the party's unity and tightening its discipline were his top priorities in the coming year.

Inevitably, some of the 1,400 members had their own agendas when they joined the party, he said.

Some members had suggested not running under the banner of the party in the district board elections. He had told them to resign or drop the idea.

The party would become the laughing stock of Hong Kong if it allowed its members to dump its label in the elections, he said.