

Appointments system set to be scrapped

(Cont'd from Page 1)

uproar among members particularly on district boards which suffered most.

To pacify the angry board members, the Government this financial year gave an extra \$8.5 million to district budgets.

The amount stood at \$11.3 million in 1989-90 and went up to \$12.7 million and \$13.4 million in the following two years respectively with a main proportion of the cash coming from the Royal Hongkong Jockey Club's coffers.

As a further step to democratise the governing institutions, Mr Patten also wants the membership of the Election Committee to be as close to a one-man-one-vote system as possible.

Such an objective can be achieved by having the directly-elected district board members and municipal councillors as the main source of membership.

Mr Patten is understood to be cautious that any change or any new system he is going to introduce will not be seen as being in breach of the Basic Law.

While unilaterally increasing the number of directly-elected seats in 1995 will definitely be considered as going against the mini-constitution, details on how

the Election Committee should be formed is not laid down.

The Basic Law clearly spells out that the first Special Administrative Region (SAR) legislature should comprise 60 members with 20 directly elected, 30 from functional constituencies and 10 returned by an Election Committee.

It does, however, stipulate how the Election Committee for the second legislature should be formed to return six legislators in 1999.

It is argued, therefore, that the Election Committee for 1995 does not necessarily have to conform with that of the second SAR legislature, which is modelled on the make-up of the BLCC.

A quarter of the members must come from the business and industrial sector, a quarter from the labour, social services and religious sectors and the other half split equally between professionals and politicians.

These include legislators, district board members, municipal councillors, Hongkong deputies to the National People's Congress and representatives of Hongkong members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.