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\$26m dilemma — how to distribute donations to students

By CHRIS YEUNG and JOHN TANG

HONGKONG supporters of the democracy movement in China are facing a serious dilemma: How to spend or distribute the \$26 million which has flooded in to help mainland students.

They are also anxious to know whether funding the activities of mainland students will be considered as supporting "counter-revolutionary" activities by Beijing.

A prominent Hongkong

barrister late last week made a secret delivery of \$150,000 in cash to student leaders at Tiananmen Square.

The delivery is only a fraction of the donations which have taken organisers of various fund-raising campaigns by surprise, and which continue to arrive.

Mr Daniel Fung, an executive member of the Bar Association, agreed to act as a courier for the Hongkong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movement in China.

He disclosed last night

that he had handed the money to a student leader on Friday.

"It wasn't clandestine but we didn't want to publicise it beforehand. The fear was that there might be difficulty in getting the money through."

Mr Fung said that he had considered calling off the money drop at one point, after Chinese leaders accused "a very small number of people" of being "counter-revolutionary".

A number of other personal deliveries — compris-

ing cash and supplies such as tents, sleeping bags, food and dried goods worth about \$1 million — have been made by student representatives in recent days.

But yesterday, a delegation from the student body decided to hold back a cash delivery to the students in Beijing, following claims of corruption and misuse of funds among student leaders.

Last night, the Alliance met to discuss details of a trust fund to be formed this week to manage and use the

money which has been placed in a bank account.

The Alliance has collected more than \$12 million through sponsorship of the marathon concert at the Royal Hongkong Jockey Club on Saturday.

The rest of the \$26 million collected has mainly been raised by various groups including the Hongkong Federation of Students (HKFS), April 5 Action, the left-wing Federation of Education Workers, and the Federation of Trade Unions.

The HKFS has set up the China Democratic Fund, which has reached the \$10 million mark, and is considering merging it with the Alliance's fund.

Secretary-General of the HKFS, Mr Andrew To Kwan-hang, said the group was considering whether to set up an office in China, possibly in Shanghai, to coordinate delivery of necessities to the students.

The office, to be manned by mainland students, would also function as an information centre to promote

the democratic movement on the mainland and in Hongkong, he said.

Mr To said he was aware of the concern that their escalated activities in China would be seen as being involved in the power struggle in Zhongnanhai leadership.

"But we aim to boost democracy. There will be risk, but we shall go ahead anyway. We are prepared," he said.

Legislator Martin Lee Chu-ming, a core member of the Alliance, said the huge sum collected had to be held

until the political crisis in China had settled down.

Mr Lee, a prominent barrister and leading democrat, said: "It may pose a problem if the entire student movement is outlawed. There have been indications that the students have been accused of being counter-revolutionary."

"Anybody bringing in money to China could be accused of aiding and abetting the students and, in Hongkong terms, this could mean

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