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# 130 groups join political reform lobby

By MATTHEW LEUNG

AN alliance of more than 130 political and community groups is orchestrating a major offensive to press for the early introduction of direct elections to the legislature.

The three-month-old Joint Committee on the Promotion of Democratic Government is planning to stimulate debate immediately after the political review Green Paper is published in three months' time.

The committee, which has strong links with organisations throughout the territory, will conduct forums to "cultivate more response" from residents in the hope of getting their support for the cause.

Organisers said internal discussions among group members and professional and academic organisations would also be conducted.

The coalition is anxious to recruit more groups to join its campaigns.

Various pressure group activists are also planning to put out a joint statement on the Green Paper.

It is understood the committee has yet to agree on what percentage of the Legislative Council should be directly elected in 1988, but it is likely to be either 20 or 25 per cent.

The committee is seriously considering holding a mass rally at Ko Shan Theatre to express its views on the future political model.

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In November it organised a rally at the theatre on post-1997 government which attracted more than 1,000 people.

Apart from early direct elections, the committee also supports the principle of "one country, two systems" and advocates "Hongkong people administering Hongkong".

On Sunday, it will organise a spring festival walk to raise funds.

It also wants to publish a book of political caricatures as part of its civic education campaign and produce pam-

phlets on its long-term political model for Hongkong.

In October, the joint committee gathered 190 supporters for a proposal originally put forward by 19 Basic Law Consultative Committee members.

Since refined, the proposal asks for half the Legislative Councillors to be directly elected and the chief executive to be elected by universal suffrage after 1997.

The alliance expects to generate debate before the Basic Law Drafting Committee holds its fifth plenary session in Beijing in August at which it will, for the first time, study the post-1997 political structure in depth.

The joint committee includes the Hongkong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood, Meeting Point, the Social Workers' General Union, the Hongkong Professional Teachers' Association, the Hongkong Federation of Student Unions, the Christian Industrial Committee, the Society for Community Organisations and the People's Council on Public Housing Policy.