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11th-hour pact sees model accord

By Ma Miu-wah

THREE major political camps yesterday successfully concluded their month-long compromise exercise with a joint proposal they named the "4-4-2 new compromise model".

However, they failed to reach agreement on three major points in the post-1997 political blueprint.

With the differences recorded as footnotes, the "4-4-2" model was one of the last submissions sent to the Basic Law Consultative Committee (BLCC) yesterday, the last day of the consultation exercise.

Marking the end of almost seven months of consultation, the Group of 190 liberals, the Group of 89 businessmen and professionals, and the seven-member group of moderates yesterday called a press conference to release their joint statement.

They said they hoped the model could serve as a reference for the Basic Law drafters. But they saw only a dim chance for its eventual acceptance.

Nevertheless they will promote the model during a November exchange session between the BLCC members and the drafters.

Acknowledging that there were still differences, the convener of the Group of 89, Mr Vincent Lo Hong-shui, said: "It can't be said to be a comprehensive model. The fact is that there are differences and we do acknowledge these disagreements."

"But it reflects the outstanding performance of the major political camps in the past few years, a product of pragmatism and mutual compromise."

"It can serve as a good example for cross-sector

should eventually be entirely elected by universal suffrage.

The first two chief executives should be elected by a grand electoral college, half of which comes from functional constituencies and half from members of Councils and District Boards.

Candidates should have the support of at least a tenth of the grand electoral college for nomination.

The third chief executive should be nominated by the grand electoral college and elected by universal suffrage.

However, footnotes record that the liberals and the moderates disagree on the following matters:

Instead of a 60-40 split in the second legislature, the moderates say there should be a 50-50 balance between direct elected members and

those from functional constituencies.

The liberals want universal suffrage to be set for the third term of the legislature, or the year 2005.

The moderates say that if there is 60 percent direct elections for the second legislature, any constitutional amendment must need a three-quarters majority.

The liberals say District Board and Council members of the grand electoral college must not be appointed members.

Spokesmen for the moderates and the liberals, Mr Michael Luk Yan-lung and Mr Yeung Sum, said they could not surrender their principles just to reach a consensus.

The moderates and the liberals endorsed the "4-4-2" model in meetings two days ago.

The consultation period ends. **Page 6**

co-operation in the future," he added.

Among the 12 points the three groups jointly proposed are:

The first legislature should be made up of 40 percent directly elected members, 40 percent chosen by functional constituencies and 20 percent selected by a grand electoral college.

Directly elected members should increase to 60 percent in the second legislature, with the remaining 40 percent from functional constituency elections.

Members of the second legislature should decide whether the third legislature is to be elected by universal suffrage.

The legislature