

A.K. Standalone

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# 12-point plan discussed

CHINA'S 12-point plan for Hong Kong's future is believed to have been discussed in the latest round of the Sino-British talks in Beijing.

The present round — the sixth of the second phase of the negotiations — ends later this morning. A joint statement describing the atmosphere and listing the date for the next round is expected in the afternoon.

The Chinese plan, which allows Hong Kong to maintain its present economic, social and legal systems after 1997, was presented to the British side in the last round of the talks, which were described as "useful and constructive".

A Chinese source here said although the contents of the plan had been largely disclosed through various channels they had never been formally presented to the British side in the negotiations.

"This shows the talks have entered a more detailed phase," the source said.

It was confirmed that the Chinese side had received a personal message from the British Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, during the last round of the talks held on October 19 and 20.

The message, in the form of a written brief, said Britain would conduct the talks with serious regard to Sino-British relations and long-term interest.

The message had contributed to improving the atmosphere in the negotiations, the source added.

The agenda was then set again on the arrangement before and after 1997 and the future British status in Hong Kong.

(This was the same agenda set for the first round of the second phase of the talks which was held on July 12 and 13 and described as

## HK talks entering a more detailed phase

"useful and constructive". The second phase started after Mrs Thatcher sent a letter to Chinese Premier, Mr Zhao Ziyang, in March which virtually acknowledged China's sovereignty over the entire Hong Kong area.)

The ensuing informal consultations after the last round between various levels of the two sides dealt mainly with the 12-point plan, the source said.

China maintains that foreign countries will not be allowed to interfere in its domestic affairs. The source said, however the interest of Britain would be taken care of.

It said Chinese leader Mr Deng Xiaoping wanted a Sino-British joint announcement on the settlement of the Hong Kong issue.

However, China would

announce a unilateral solution by next September if the talks failed to produce an agreement before then.

The source said China was not aware of Britain's "bottom-line" but it suggested there could be maintenance of freedom, rule by law, British link and self-rule by Hong Kong people.

However, at the beginning, the British wanted to gain as much as possible on the issues of sovereignty and administration, the source said.

Meanwhile, the latest edition of The Wide Angle, which is due to be published tomorrow, quotes an informed source as saying China will tolerate in future any British official in Hong Kong as long as he is not representing the Queen and is employed by the future special administrative zone government of Hong Kong.

According to the pro-Beijing magazine, the source who is a local delegate to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference also discloses that China is considering three ways to appoint the future administrator of Hong Kong:

- If cooperation with the British is not satisfactory and the democratic consciousness of the citizens is not fully developed, there will be a merger of the Executive and Legislative Councils and part of the members will be elected by the people. How the chief administrator is to be elected would depend on the situation at that time.

• If Britain allows Hong Kong people to administer the colony in a democratic way and there is a good democratic atmosphere, there will be a full democratic election.

• If Britain does not educate Hong Kong people to develop democratic consciousness and does not want to carry out election, there will be a consultative process to elect the chief administrator.

The CPPCC delegate was quoted as saying that serious thought should be given to the feasibility of the full democratic election in Hong Kong.

He also said leftwing elements should also be considered as part of Hong Kong citizens. "They should have a say and the right to be elected."

The Wide Angle also quoted him as saying there would be detailed regulations for the Hong Kong special administrative zone.

After the completion of the negotiations with Britain, China would set up organisations to draft laws and regulations for the post-1997 Hong Kong, the CPPCC member said.

The Hong Kong and Macau Office has been busy preparing itself to engage in these substantive work soon after the talks are completed by the middle of next year.

In an editorial yesterday, Ta Kung Po said China had already indicated its flexibility by agreeing to recover Hong Kong's sovereignty and administration after 1997 and adopt a series of measures different from China's.

However, nobody should cherish any illusion on China's stand, the newspaper said.