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69 changes proposed for draft

THE Basic Law should state that the people and administration of Hongkong after 1997 could protest against any act of the central and provincial governments in China which violates the law, to the National People's Congress, through the Basic Law Committee.

The proposal is contained in a document compiled by the secretariat of the Basic Law Drafting Committee.

The 32-page document, which was sent to drafters, now in Guangzhou for subgroup meetings, also proposed amendments to 69 of the draft's 172 articles.

The document proposed the people and SAR government should be able to voice their grievances over such acts through the Basic Law Committee to the NPC Standing Committee.

The Basic Law Committee, composed of locals and mainlanders, was proposed by drafters to advise on future disputes over the implementation of the Basic Law.

On the selection of the chief executive, the document summarises two major suggestions — election through a grand electoral college or committee and a "one man, one vote" system.

The document also suggests putting policy guidelines in areas such as the economy, culture and education in an annex.

Other major suggestions are:

- The nationality requirement of some government posts should be relaxed. Permanent residents who are not Chinese nationals can also fill posts including secretaries and deputy secretaries of departments, directors of bureaus, commissioner against corruption, director of audit, deputy directors for security and for civil service, commissioner and deputy commissioners of external affairs, commissioner of immigration and inspector general of customs and excise. The commissioner of police should still be a Chinese national.

- The final Court of Appeal judges should be Chinese nationals.

- Members of the legislature should not become members of the Executive Council and, by the same token, government officials should not become legislators.

- The voting age should not be fixed in the Basic Law, but by the future SAR.