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# 400,000 copies of final version to be published

By DAPHNE CHENG

THE Basic Law Consultative Committee (BLCC) plans to print 400,000 copies of the final version of the Basic Law for public distribution.

BLCC secretary-general, Mr Leung Chun-ying, said yesterday they would start printing as soon as the Basic Law was promulgated by the National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing today.

He said copies were expected to be available from next Tuesday at major banks in Hongkong.

As in the past two consultation exercises, more copies would be printed if needed, he said.

A total of 925,500 copies of the first Basic Law draft were distributed after it was released in April 1988, and 574,300 copies of the revised draft were released in March 1989.

"It's difficult to tell whether the response will be better or worse," Mr Leung said.

He said the high distribution figures in the previous two consultations may have been because various groups had obtained copies of the drafts for discussion by their members, meaning many people received more than one copy.

"On the other hand, as it is the final version, more people may like to get a copy and this could boost the distribution," Mr Leung said.

The BLCC will hold a press conference today after the mini-constitution has been approved by the NPC.

Mr Leung said the BLCC executive committee will meet next Wednesday to discuss the disbandment of the consultative body.

According to the terms of reference, the BLCC has to be dissolved within a month of the promulgation of the Basic Law.

Mr Leung said the executive committee will recommend a date for the disbandment, which will be subject to approval at a general meeting on April 19.

Meanwhile, the four Basic Law drafters who also sit in the Legislative Council will again refrain from taking part in the assembly's Basic Law debate today, the second within five weeks.

A proposed motion, sponsored by expelled drafter Mr Martin Lee Chu-ming, urges China and Britain to change the Basic Law to match the Omelco political blueprint.

The four councillors are Ms Maria Tam Wai-chu, Mr David Li Kwok-po, Mr Lau Wong-fat and Mr Tam Yiu-chung.

They did not speak at the two-day debate in February on the political structure of the future Hongkong Special Administrative Region (SAR).

So far, only 11 out of the 45 non-civil service councillors have indicated that they will speak on the motion today.

The others are Mr Szeto Wah, who was also expelled from the drafting committee. Mrs Selina Chow Liang Shuk-ye, Mr Ho Sai-chu, Mr Hui Yin-fat, Mr Ngai Shiu-kit, Mr Ronald Chow Mei-tak, Mrs Nellie Fong Wong Kut-man, Dr Leong Che-hung, Mr James Tien Pei-chun and Mr Andrew Wong Wang-fat.

Mr Lee originally planned to move a motion demanding an explanation from Britain on its secret deal with China over some Basic Law provisions.

But after refinement, his motion will now ask China and Britain to amend the relevant clauses of the Basic Law according to the Omelco recommendation and in the interest of Hongkong people.