

Labour Advisory Board discusses progressively increasing number of statutory holidays

Members of the Labour Advisory Board (LAB) discussed at the board's meeting today (October 14) the initiative announced by the Chief Executive to increase progressively the number of statutory holidays (SHs) so that it will be on a par with that of general holidays (GHs).

The proposal is one of the 10 new initiatives on improving people's livelihood announced by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, on January 14, 2020.

At present, the Employment Ordinance (EO) (Cap. 57) provides for 12 days of SHs each year, which are statutory benefits of employees. On the other hand, the General Holidays Ordinance (Cap. 149) specifies 17 days of GHs, in addition to Sundays.

The Government proposes that SH be increased by one day in every two years until the total number of SHs matches that of GHs; and the five additional days of SHs should fall on GHs that are currently not SHs. The other arrangements concerning SH provisions under the EO shall continue to operate as they currently do.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government thanks the LAB members for having a candid discussion on the proposal for increasing progressively the number of SHs. Members have gained a thorough understanding on the proposal through today's meeting and will consult the trades and organisations they represent later."

"We will convene another LAB meeting shortly to discuss the proposal further. We will then consult the Panel of Manpower of the Legislative Council (LegCo). Depending on the outcome of deliberations, we will work on the enabling legislation in a bid to introduce it into LegCo within 2021. Subject to smooth passage of the enabling legislation, the Government aims to designate the first additional SH in 2022 and achieve the alignment of the number of SHs and GHs by 2030," he added.

The LAB is a tripartite consultative body comprising representatives of employees and employers to advise the Commissioner for Labour on labour matters.