

Cooperation between the government and new Legco is essential

Not long after his election as one of the nine legislators for New Territories West, Eddie Chu Hoi-dick alleged government-business-rural-triad collusion regarding the proposed plan to build 17,000 public housing flats in Wang Chau, Yuen Long.

It was claimed the government had given in to pressure from certain quarters to start off only with a first phase to build 4,000 flats instead of following the original plan to build all 17,000 flats under one project.

On September 21, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying held a press conference attended by Financial Secretary John Tsang Chun-wah and Secretary for Transport and Housing Anthony Cheung Bing-leung. Mr Leung said he took full responsibility for the decision to change the project into three phases.

He denied any collusion and explained that at one of the weekly meetings in January 2014, attended by the chief secretary, financial secretary and justice secretary, he decided to accept the Housing Department's recommendation to go ahead with the first phase of 4,000 units and defer the second and third phases.

He said this would allow time for the government to tackle the thorny problem of the brownfield site (ruined farmland) that was being used by rural businessmen for car parks and open storage. When the brownfield site problem has been resolved, the government can then build the remaining 13,000 public housing flats for the Wang Chau project.

The chief executive has promised to set up a consultation platform to engage all stakeholders, including legislator-elect Eddie Chu to work together to resolve the issues regarding completion of the project.

With the new Legislative Council opening on Wednesday, as a former legislator, I believe it is crucial for Hong Kong's economic, social and political future, that the government and Legco be seen as working together in an effective way so that Hong Kong's competitive image is not further damaged by the past filibustering and often obstructive and ill-mannered tactics of some lawmakers.

The new president will not only be firm, fair and steadfast in exercising his responsibilities, but will always keep the door open to all lawmakers whatever their political views.

In a ruling in 2014, the Court of Final Appeal found the president's power to set limits to and terminate a debate was inherent in the Basic Law provision that the president had the power to "preside over meetings".

府會合作 事在必須

英文原文刊於 2016 年 10 月 10 日《南華早報》

新界西選區九位立法會議員之一的朱凱迪在當選不久即就元朗橫州一萬七千公屋單位的房屋計劃質疑有“官商鄉黑”勾結。

據所指稱，政府屈服於某方壓力，把原來興建一萬七千公屋單位的計劃改為首期只建四千個單位。

行政長官於 9 月 21 日舉行記者招待會，出席者有財政司司長曾俊華和運輸及房屋局局長張炳良。行政長官表示，把計劃改為分三期進行的決定，他會負全責。

他否認有勾結，並解釋，於 2014 年 1 月政務司司長、財政司司長與律政司司長均有出席的其中一次每週會議上，他決定接納房屋署的建議，進行第一期興建四千個單位，第二和第三期則延後。

他表示，政府因此得以有更多時間處理棘手的棕地問題，這類荒廢的農地現時由新界商人用作經營停車場和露天貨倉。棕地問題一旦解決，政府即可興建橫州計劃餘下的一千三百個單位。

行政長官承諾會成立一個諮詢平台，使包括朱凱迪議員在內的各持份者合作，商討有關完成橫州計劃的議題。

新一屆立法會本星期三即開始，作為前立法局議員，本人相信，香港的經濟、社會和政治前途繫於政府和立法會能否做得到有效合作，令香港的競爭力形象不致因些議員的拉布和惡劣行為而再受損害。

新主席在履行職權時不但要公正嚴明和堅定，也應有兼容之量，議員不論政見如何均不可摒之門外。

終審法院在 2014 年一項判決中指出，立法會主席有權為某項發言設時限或終止該發言，因《基本法》條文已賦予主席“主持會議”的權力。