



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Sino-US agreement

The Hong Kong Government warmly welcomes the agreement reached by the US and Chinese Governments on the protection of intellectual property rights.

A Government spokesman said tonight (Sunday): "We are pleased that the two sides have reached a mutually satisfactory solution, and retaliatory action between the two countries has been averted.

"The Sino-US agreement is good news for Hong Kong. The possibility of a trade war between the US and China, our two largest trading partners, has been averted. The agreement demonstrates that there is no substitute for patient negotiations as the most effective means of resolving bilateral trade disputes.

"Measures to enhance the protection of intellectual property rights in China are a fundamentally positive development. Strengthened measures to protect intellectual property rights in China will enhance interest in technology transfer to and investment in China and will have a positive impact on Hong Kong's own ability to combat copyright piracy in Hong Kong. The strengthening of trade and investment ties between the US and China will benefit Hong Kong," the spokesman continued.

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AD-G of Industry to visit Denmark and Germany

The Assistant Director-General of Industry, Ms Anissa Wong, will leave Hong Kong today (Sunday) for a four-day visit to Denmark and Germany as part of the Industry Department's effort to attract overseas industrialists to invest in Hong Kong.

Ms Wong will first go to Copenhagen where she will meet with Danish business and commercial leaders. She will attend an investment promotion seminar on Hong Kong on February 28 before a brief stop over in Hamburg.

She will leave Hamburg for Cologne on March 1 where she will meet German business leaders and attend a seminar organised by the Federation of German Industries on March 2.

Ms Anissa Wong's itinerary includes a number of visits to leading European manufacturers as well as meetings with government officials responsible for industry matters.

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52 new building plans approved in December

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The Buildings Department approved 52 building plans in December last year.

Of the plans, 20 are for Hong Kong Island, eight for Kowloon and 24 for the New Territories.

The approved plans include 18 for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, 11 for commercial development and seven for factory and industrial developments.

In the same month, consent was given for work to start on 30 building projects, which involve 18,660.1 square metres of usable domestic floor area and 58,052.3 square metres of usable non-domestic floor area.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in the month totalled about \$6,389 million.

Of the buildings certified for occupation in the month, usable floor areas for domestic and non-domestic uses are 328,900.2 square metres and 267,766.2 square metres respectively.

In the same month, the department issued 36 Occupation Permits - 15 for Hong Kong Island, nine for Kowloon and 12 for the New Territories.

In addition, 13 demolition consents involving 34 buildings were issued.

The Buildings Department's Control and Enforcement Division received 693 complaints of unauthorised building works, carried out 1,692 inspections and issued 416 Removal Orders on unauthorised works.

The department's Dangerous Buildings Section also inspected 811 buildings and obtained six Emergency Closure Orders from the court.

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Survey launched on School Direct Subsidy Scheme

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Supervisors and principals of about 400 non-government secondary schools are urged to express their views on the implementation of the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) by responding to a questionnaire survey by the Private Schools Review Committee.

The committee has sent questionnaires to solicit the views of these schools, which have not joined the DSS. They include aided secondary schools, per caput grant schools, bought place scheme schools, special schools, private independent schools and a number of international schools.

The committee which is reviewing the scheme is interested to find out any problems or worries on the part of prospective schools, and reasons why certain schools are not interested in joining the scheme.

The schools are requested to return the completed questionnaires to the committee on or before March 11 (Saturday).

A spokesman for the Education Department said that under the scheme, the Government could subsidise and encourage the growth of a strong private school sector to offer more choices for parents.

"At the same time, participating schools enjoy a high degree of freedom with regard to school curricula, fees and entrance requirements for students," the spokesman said.

The spokesman added that the DSS would not affect the Government's commitment to free and compulsory education, and that no child would be compelled to attend a DSS school.

In the questionnaire, schools are asked:

- * Whether they agree with the objectives of the scheme;
- * Why they did not join the DSS;
- * Whether aided secondary schools think that the Government should re-introduce the terms proposed in 1992, but which were not accepted then by the Finance Committee, including an interest-free loan for upgrading facilities and a one-month subsidy advance on joining the scheme; and
- * Views on how the DSS could be extended to cover primary schools as recommended in the Education Commission Report No. 3.

Places available at Govt primary schools

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Parents wishing to find Primary 2 to 6 places for their children in Government Schools in September 1995 will be able to do so next week.

An Education Department spokesman said children aged six years and eight months or over on September 1 this year could apply for admission.

Vacancies will be displayed at the main entrance of these schools and application forms will be available from March 2 (Thursday) to March 10 (Friday) during working hours.

The spokesman advised parents to return the completed forms of the school of their choice on March 10.

Selection of applicants will be made on March 16.

Meanwhile, a new government primary school, Tin Shui Wai Government Primary School in Area 19, New Territories, to be operated this September, is also available for application.

The spokesman said Tin Shui Wai Government Primary School was built according to government standard design with 30 classrooms, four special rooms, an assembly hall and modern facilities.

He said: "The new school will be operated on a whole-day basis and thus teachers will have more time to bring out the best of all students of their abilities and interests.

"In addition, upon completion of primary education, students will have a better chance to be allocated to its feeder government secondary schools in the district," the spokesman said.

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The DSS was recommended by the Education Commission in its report No. 3 published in 1988 and endorsed by the Governor-in-Council in 1989.

At present, a total of 12 secondary schools, including five international schools and seven other schools, are participating in the scheme which has been implemented since 1991.

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Survey on operation of urban taxis

The Transport Department is conducting a survey on operation characteristics and finance of urban taxis.

A spokesman for the department said today (Sunday) that the survey was an annual exercise and comprised a questionnaire survey and a meter-reading survey.

"Results of the survey will facilitate the formulation of future taxi policy and assessment on fare revision applications from the trade," he said.

About 5,000 taxi owners were chosen randomly from about 15,000 urban taxis to assist in the survey exercise.

They are requested to fill in and return a pre-set questionnaire mailed to them and present their taxis for meter-reading at any of the 10 meter-reading centres in the territories including Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan.

Letters, questionnaires and sketches showing the locations of meter-reading centres have been sent to the selected taxi owners.

Those interviewees who have not returned their questionnaires are urged to return them to Transport Department not later than March 8 (Wednesday).

For the meter-reading survey, the selected urban taxi owners should present their vehicles to the meter-reading centres on both occasions starting from tomorrow (Monday) to Friday (March 3) and from March 6 to 10 between 9.30 am and 12.30 pm or between 2 pm and 4.30 pm.

The spokesman urged the owners to participate in the survey to help the department assess the operating condition of urban taxi trade.

"The information collected will be used for statistical analysis only," he said.

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Performance pledge on film classification fully achieved

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The Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority (TELA) has successfully achieved the targets set out in the Performance Pledge on Film Classification, which was put into effect in July 1993.

The pledge covers the following areas:

- * Assignment of film viewing session for films submitted for classification within two weeks;
- * Notifications to applicants on decisions about film classification within 10 working days;
- * Issue of Certificate of Exemption to applicants within four working days;
- * Response to written enquiries within 10 days; and
- * Response to verbal enquiries within 10 minutes.

A spokesman for TELA said during the period from July 1993 to September 1994, the office was able to fully achieve these targets.

"We shall continue with these targets in the coming years," he added.

A leaflet showing the extent to which TELA have fulfilled the Performance Pledge during the 12-month period are obtainable at various District Offices of the Home Affairs Department; the Information Services Department at French Mission Building, Battery Path, Central; and at TELA, 39th floor, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai.

Meanwhile, TELA has introduced an additional performance pledge following the implementation of Section 15(B) of the Film Censorship (Amendment) Ordinance in January 1994 relating to packaging of videotapes or laserdiscs containing category III films.

"Our target is to notify an applicant of our decision on whether or not an opaque cover is required in respect of videotapes or laserdiscs containing category III films, within three working days from the date of receipt of a submission," the spokesman explained.

In addition, a simple questionnaire covering staff efficiency, service attitude and environment, has been attached to each film submission form and packaging submission form since February this year in order to further strengthen the communication between the customers and TELA and to collect their feedback on the services it provides.

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Fund-raising schedule for March

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Twelve organisations have been granted permission to raise funds next month, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department said today (Sunday).

They will either sell flags, tokens or similar items, or place donation boxes in designated public places.

Members of the public can call the department's hotline 2343 2255 or the Hong Kong Council of Social Service's 2866 8123 in case of doubt.

The spokesman appealed to organisers to take precautions against any possible fraud.

"Sellers should display the permit or carry copies of the permit for inspection upon request if the fund-raising is mobile," he said.

The spokesman also advised them to prepare guidelines for sellers, setting out the places and the times for selling and the collection points for bags.

"Organisers should inform the Police in case of loss of property, and seek their help when fraudulent acts, such as tampering of collection bags or making unauthorised selling, are found," he added.

Permits are given to the following organisations for raising funds next month:

Flag Day

<u>Event Date</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
March 4	Hong Kong PHAB Association
March 11	Hong Kong Association of the Blind
March 18	Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children
March 25	Hong Kong Kidney Foundation Ltd.

Public Subscription

<u>Event Day</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
March 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 & 26	Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education and Services
March 4, 5, 6, 7, 18 & 19	Oxfam Hong Kong
March 4 & 18	Land of Virtue Centre Ltd.
March 5, 12, 19 & 26	Jesus is Lord School of Ministry (HK) Ltd.
March 5	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
March 12 & 19	Hong Kong Church of Christ
March 12	The Methodist Centre
March 16	Caritas - Hong Kong
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Kwun Tong District Officer urges residents to vote on Sunday

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The Kwun Tong District Officer, Mr Wong Hon-ho, today (Sunday) appealed to local residents to vote in the coming Sunday's Urban Council elections.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Kwun Tong District Festival '95, Mr Wong said: "To show your support for the District Administration Scheme, you should cast your ballot on March 5."

He also reminded those living in the Lower Ngau Tau Kok constituency to vote in the District Board by-election on the same day.

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Government Supplies Department holds family day

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About 2,000 staff members of the Government Supplies Department and their families were treated to a party today (Sunday) in the compound of the department's Headquarters in Oil Street, North Point.

The party started with an opening ceremony officiated by the Director of Government Supplies, Mr Nigel Shipman.

The Life Guards of the Auxiliary Medical Services performed a lion dance. Other programmes included side-shows, game stalls, Royal Hong Kong Regiment's displays, karaoke competition and fortune telling.

The Junior Leader Squadron of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment presented a 'silent drill' and the Civil Aid Services gave a cycling demonstration.

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