



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of Governor's media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after the summit meeting on open employment of people with disability this (Friday) afternoon:

Governor: Hello, as I think you know we've been attempting at a series of summits over the last two or three years to improve and enhance the opportunities available for people with a disability in Hong Kong. We started off with a summit on the transport needs of those with disabilities. We've had three of those summits and the fourth one will be held in November this year. And we've just had our third summit on the employment needs of people with disabilities. We've brought together Government departments, representatives of disability groups and rehabilitation organisations and representatives of employers' organisations, with some individual employers to discuss the progress that we've made over the last year and to discuss the way ahead. I think we can chart some significant achievements in the last year.

We've passed into law the Disability Discrimination Ordinance and we were able to hear about the plans of the Chairperson of the EOC as that organisation prepares for take-off. The Labour Department has produced a number of videos, films, television programmes and guidebooks promoting the employment of those with a disability. Our Selective Placement Division has made 300 visits to employers with the result that it's secured 1,420 placements for job seekers. We had a civil service target of employing 4,000 people with a disability and we've over-shot that target; we are now employing 4,231. And we've set with employers of voluntary target for new job opportunities for those with a disability, a target of 500 which was exceeded as we provided opportunities for 555 people with a disability. But there is still a great deal more to do. So we've set ourselves some new goals for the coming year. We've set a new civil service target of 4,400. We'll be holding a large scale seminar later in the year to point out to people the great contribution that people with a disability can make in the workplace. We had a particularly telling contribution this afternoon by the Human Resources Director of the MTR, Mr Patrick Maule who set out for us clearly the very considerable contribution which people with a disability have made to the MTR. We'll be increasing the number of supported employment places from 360 to 950 which is an increase of well over 150 percent. We'll be making 30 visits with a special team to government departments to promote the recruitment of people with a disability by the civil service. And we'll be setting a new goal for employers as a whole of 700 new job opportunities for those with a disability by the end of 1997. So it's another useful occasion, a very constructive and energetic spirit of partnership. And I very much hope that it will ensure that over the coming year we'll enable many more people with a disability to make the full contribution which they can make to this society and to its well-being. Okay?

Question: How much is the Government going to spend on the promotion for disabled ...?

Governor: It's difficult to put a global figure. There's a figure for the amount of public education that we're carrying forward. There's a figure for training programmes and rehabilitation services. And I suppose you could ... there would be slightly unfair put a figure on the employment costs except that we regard these as benefits, not as costs. But we can certainly let you have those figures later on if you like.

Question: Governor, the Rehabilitation Alliance has a comment that the 4,000 disabled people being employed by the Government departments cover about 1,000 of them who are colour blind people, and they are generally not categorised as disabled people. So the target has not actually been achieved. do you agree?

Governor: No, I don't. And we had an interesting discussion about that upstairs. There are I think about 70 grades in the civil service which require people to have perfect sight and not to be colour blind. If you reduce that the people in those grades numbering about 50,000, they include for example people like the Fire Service, and if you also reduce the number of those with a disability in the civil service by those who are colour blind, you find that the percentage of the overall civil service with a disability that we employ slightly increases. But because of the concerns that have been expressed on this issue, the Secretary for the Civil Service is going to look at a way of presenting the figures excluding on both sides of the account those who are colour blind so as to set ourselves a new and different target, though I'm sure people will still want to look at the aggregate target as well.

Question: Will the Government be going to establish an independent department to organise all those in order to enforce the policies?

Governor: I don't think we need an independent department. We've got a number of departments involved, principally of course the three that were sharing the platform with me this afternoon -- Education and Manpower, Civil Service and Health and Welfare -- and I think there's pretty good co-ordination between the secretaries involved and between all the various branches including those that provide in the Labour Department training and those that provide other support. I don't think we need just one department because it's an issue which goes right across the board.

Question: Governor, two questions. Would you please comment on President Wong. He said yesterday that he's kicking the ball to you. Would you please comment on that? And secondly, will you put forward the reform package if you have read the seven confidential letters between the British Government and the Chinese Government?

Governor: Can I first of all ask whether there are any other questions on disability?

Question: Mr Patten, will there be any special arrangements during the handover ceremony next year for disabled people ...?

Governor: I'm sure that we should make sure that the handover ceremony makes proper allowance for people with disability so that they too can take part in the ceremony. It will involve considering issues like access for wheel chairs and related matters. But it's obviously important that they should be able to share in that particular aspect of Hong Kong's life just as they share in every other aspect of Hong Kong's life. Okay. Now your questions were first of all ... Andrew Wong.

I still haven't received a communication from Andrew Wong, but it may have come to the Government Secretariat. The situation as I've said on several other occasions, not least here, is absolutely straight forward. I as Governor, though no longer is President of the Legislative Council, decide when the session of the Legislative Council should start with my Policy Address and we've given a date again for this October. It's then for the President of the Legislative Council and for the Legislative Council themselves to decide on the dates of their sittings and they tell me what the dates of their sittings are and I take note of it. But that's a decision which they have to arrive at and I'm sure that they wouldn't want to pass over their proper responsibilities to the executive and to the Governor.

On the first point, we had long discussions about this back in 1992, 1993 and 1994. I can remember in particular answering questions about this large and very ancient red herring in January 1994 when I gave evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Those who worked on the proposals which we put in my first speech to the Legislative Council in the autumn of 1992 included several people who had discussed, taken part in the drafting of those letters and exchanges. Those letters and exchanges were read in detail by me before I had any meetings with Director Lu Ping. And the fact of the matter is that the issue is pretty irrelevant anyway because in the first place the only agreement that was reached in 1990 was one over the number of directly elected seats in the Legislative Council where the figure went up from 18 to 20. There was no other agreement reached. It's sometimes suggested that there was an agreement over the election committee, but since Chinese officials were still talking about different arrangements for the election committee in 1995, it's very difficult to see how that can be the case. so I hope that this ancient red herring which's once again swum round Victoria Island will now be netted and thrown in the dustbin.

Now you may want to ask questions to those who'd taken part in this afternoon's summit. But thank you very much indeed for coming this afternoon.

End

### Continued efforts to promote job opportunities for disabled

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government will be setting itself a new target for the employment of people with a disability with a pledge made by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, that 4,400 such people will be employed in the civil service by the end of 1997.

The pledge was one of the series of specific actions to promote job opportunities for people with disability outlined by the Governor at today's (Friday) summit meeting on open employment of people with disability.

On other important initiatives, the Governor noted that the Government would be increasing the number of supported employment places in the coming year from 360 to 950 (a massive increase of 164 per cent) to give people with a disability more financial independence and self-respect.

Mr Patten disclosed that another move which would be directly relevant to the issue was the proposed issue of Codes of Practice on employment by the Equal Opportunities Commission to provide guidelines for employers on fair and lawful employment practices.

On the part of the Labour Department, the Governor said the department would continue with its programme of educational and promotional activities designed to improve public understanding of people with a disability.

The department's Selective Placement Division would be searching out new job opportunities, helping to make disabled job seekers more employable and organising a large-scale seminar to highlight the contribution that people with a disability could make in the workplace, he said.

Within the Government, the Governor said the specific actions would include:

- \* The compilation of a database by the Civil Service Branch to identify types of posts which can be taken up by the mentally handicapped and the mentally or ex-mentally ill;
- \* The organisation of seminar for government departments to promote the employment of people with a disability in the civil service;
- \* The increase from 25 to 30 the number of visits to departments by Civil Service Branch and the Labour Department to promote the government's policy on the recruitment of people with a disability.

The Governor also said in September, the Government would be sending a delegation headed by the Secretary for Health and Welfare to represent Hong Kong at the 18th Rehabilitation International World Congress in Auckland, New Zealand.

"This is an important international event in the rehabilitation field which will provide a good opportunity for an exchange of views and experience, not least one the promotion of opportunities for the less advantaged members of society," he said.

Today's summit meeting, the third of its kind, provided the opportunity for frank discussion between employers, disability groups, rehabilitation organisations and officials on how best to promote the employment of people with a disability.

Also present at the summit were the Secretary for Education and manpower, Mr Joseph W P Wong; the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr W K Lam; and the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok.

In the last meeting held some 15 months ago, 13 pledges were made and had all subsequently been achieved.

The more important achievements included the enactment of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance last July and the fulfilment of a pledge to seek employers' support in the setting of voluntary targets for the employment of 500 more people with a disability in 1995.

End

#### Government to study Coroner's recommendations on hill fire

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government will carefully study the Coroner's recommendations on the Pat Sin Leng hill fire before deciding on what further action will be necessary.

Responding to press enquiries, a government spokesman said today (Friday) that some of the Coroner's recommendations had already been initiated as a result of the recommendations of an inter-departmental joint investigation into the fire.

"A co-ordinated action plan to prevent the recurrence of similar tragedies was instituted as soon as the Joint Investigation Report was produced," he said.

"The Government remains committed to preventing the recurrence of a similar tragedy."

End

### Inquest findings on hill fire case being studied

\* \* \* \* \*

In response to media enquiries on the decision by the Coroner's Court on the Pat Sin Leng hill fire, the Director of Education, Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu, said today (Friday):

"We are studying the findings of the Coroner's inquest to follow up positively any improvement measures practicable.

"Meanwhile, work is well underway in reviewing the guidelines on school outdoor activities to enhance input by experts from the relevant fields and to strengthen liaison among departments concerned. We will issue the revised guidelines to schools in the 1996-97 school year.

"In addition, we will organise seminars and in-service teacher education programmes to enhance the understanding and awareness of the necessary safety precautions among teachers and heads of schools.

"We are also studying the feasibility of providing mobile phones to schools for use in outdoor activities. However, our findings so far have indicated a number of technical problems, including signal reception in certain locations on land or at sea, and the question of effectiveness.

"Another area of review is the block insurance scheme, which covers outdoor activities organised by public sector schools. We will shortly finalise plans for raising the levels of indemnity."

End

### Search and rescue exercise to enhance co-ordination conducted

\* \* \* \* \*

A major joint exercise aimed at enhancing the communication, co-ordination, command and control capabilities of emergencies services in massive mountain rescue operation was held at Shing Mun Country Park this (Friday) morning.

The exercise, organised by the Fire Services Department, simulated an incident involving a number of hikers being washed downstream by mountain torrents.

Other agencies participating in the event included the Royal Hong Kong Police Force, Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Civil Aid Services, Government Flying Service, Auxiliary Medical Services and the Hospital Authority.

More than 200 members from these agencies took part in the exercise.

A spokesman for the Fire Services Department said despite the large deployment of emergency services to the Shing Mun Country Park during the exercise, inconvenience to the public had been kept to the minimum.

This large scale exercise was one of the steps taken by the Government in implementing the recommendations put forward by the inter-departmental team investigating into the Pat Sin Leng hill fire incident. Similar mountain search and rescue exercise would be held annually.

End

#### Law to improve employees' benefits proposed

\* \* \* \* \*

Two bills seeking to improve employees' benefits in respect of sickness allowance and compensation for temporary incapacity arising from work-related injuries respectively are published in the gazette today (Friday).

The Employment (Amendment) (No 3) Bill 1996 proposes to revise the rate of sickness allowance from two-thirds to four-fifths of an employee's wages, while maintaining the existing minimum qualifying requirement of four consecutive sickness days.

The Employees' Compensation (Amendment) (No 2) Bill 1996 seeks to:

- \* repeal the three-day qualifying period for entitlement to periodical payments; and
- \* increase the rate of periodical payments from two-thirds to four-fifths of the difference in the earnings of the injured employee before and after the accident;
- \* introduce a simplified notification procedure whereby employers are required to notify the Commissioner for Labour of any accident which results in temporary incapacity of an employee for a period not exceeding three days; and

- \* provides an additional adjudication channel for payments for employees' compensation claims involving incapacity of an employee for not more than three days by allowing such payments to be recovered as a civil debt in the Small Claims Tribunal, rather than exclusively in the District Court.

Introducing the bills, a government spokesman said the proposals sought to give effect to the results of the reviews the Administration had recently conducted on sickness allowance and compensation for work-related injuries.

"This is in line with the Government's commitment to improve employees' benefits in a way commensurate with the pace of Hong Kong's social and economic development."

The spokesman said the proposals under both Bills had been endorsed by the Labour Advisory Board.

Explaining the proposals regarding sickness allowance, the spokesman said the Administration recently conducted a review, having regard to the International Labour Convention No 130 - Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention 1969, the sickness benefit provisions of neighbouring countries, and the findings of surveys on the incidence of sick leave taken by employees.

Under the existing Employment Ordinance, an employee working under a continuous contract for a period of one month or more immediately preceding a sickness day is entitled to the payment of sickness allowance by the employer.

The daily rate of sickness allowance is equal to two-thirds of the wages which the employee would have earned had he been working on the sickness day and no sickness allowance is payable if the sick leave lasts for less than four consecutive days.

"It was concluded that the daily rate of sickness allowance should be increased from two-thirds to four-fifths of an employee's wages, whilst maintaining the existing minimum qualifying requirement of four consecutive sickness days.", the spokesman said.

He pointed out that the rate of sickness allowance was last increased from half pay to two-thirds of wages in 1977, and had since remained at that level.

"The Labour Department would at a later stage conduct a comprehensive review of the other provisions on sickness allowance under the Employment Ordinance, including the qualifying period of sick leave and other related issues," he added.

As for the proposals regarding compensation for work-related injuries, the spokesman said under the existing Employees' Compensation Ordinance (ECO), an employee who had been incapacitated by a work-related injury for more than three consecutive days would be entitled to periodical payments at the rate of two-thirds the difference between his monthly earnings at the time of the accident and his monthly earnings after the accident, and medical expenses.

"Taking into account International Labour Conventions No 17 and No 121 on Workmen's Compensation for Accidents and Employment Injury Benefits respectively, the provisions on work-injury benefits in our neighbouring countries as well as the sentiment of employees and employers, the Administration has conducted a thorough review of the current provisions on periodical payments," the spokesman said.

As a result, the Government proposes that:

- \* the current waiting period of three days before an employee qualifies for both periodical payments and medical expenses should be removed, so that both these payments will become payable to an employee suffering temporary incapacity as a result of work-related injuries, irrespective of the duration of such incapacity; and
- \* the rate of periodical payments should be increased from two-thirds to four-fifths of normal earnings. The spokesman said arising from the proposals, the Administration had also reviewed both the existing compensation settlement mechanism under ECO and the adjudication procedures for the recovery of compensation claims.

"We anticipate that the proposal to enable an employee to receive compensation for temporary incapacity without any qualifying period of incapacity may lead to a considerable increase in the number of compensation claims for periodical payments.

"Besides, an employee incapacitated for not more than three consecutive days as a result of work usually suffers a lesser degree of injury and that the relevant compensation claim should be relatively straightforward when compared to those incapacitated for a longer period of time.

"Hence, the Government proposes to simplify the notification procedure. Specifically, we will require employers of employees who have been incapacitated as a result of work-related injuries for a period not exceeding three days to report less information in notifying the Commissioner for Labour of the accident, in a new form specified administratively by the Commissioner.

"This simplified notification procedure will save administrative work for both the employers and the Labour Department," the spokesman said.

It is also proposed under the bill that payments from this category of claims may also be recovered as a civil debt in the Small Claims Tribunal, rather than exclusively in the District Court.

"This will relieve the District Court of the burden to handle the expected increase in the number of claims, and will reduce the waiting time. In effect, this will put the procedures for this category of claims on a par with those for claiming medical expenses," the spokesman explained.

These two Bills will be introduced into the Legislative Council on July 10.

End

#### HK's enviable finances a result of balancing the books: FS

\* \* \* \* \*

The enviable state of Hong Kong's public finances was not a fluke but a direct consequence of its basic principle of balancing the books, the Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, said today (Friday).

He said Hong Kong's state of public finance emerged directly from its underlying belief in small governments and big citizens and was reward for its courage in exercising the 'tough love' of tight control of government expenditure and firm adherence to logical revenue principles.

Speaking to the School of Business and Management of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Mr Tsang said the basic principle of Hong Kong's public finances was that the Government should live within its means.

"That does not mean that we can never have a deficit budget. At a time when public investment is very high, or when a short term fall-off in economic growth causes a shortfall in revenue, then it may be that we do run a modest deficit for a year or two.

"But what it does mean is that we should consciously plan our affairs so that taking several years together Hong Kong's budgets are balanced or in mild surplus," he said.

He stressed that the Government would never run deficit budgets so as to maintain a flamboyant lifestyle on recurrent spending.

"We believe in small government. Or, to put it another way, we believe in big citizens. We accept that individuals have the main responsibility for managing their own lives," Mr Tsang said.

"The Government's job is to maintain law and order, keep the economic playing field level, ensure fair employment practices, and help the very small minority unable to help themselves."

On control of expenditure, Mr Tsang said prudent control was absolutely critical to Hong Kong's management of public finance and provided a chance of success.

He said control of government spending was very simple in concept but very difficult in execution and at the end of the day that meant saying no to someone.

With regard to the government's revenue needs, Mr Tsang reiterated the importance of adhering to the seven simple principles of: living-within-our-means; maintaining adequate fiscal reserves; maintaining a low, simple and predictable tax regime; maintaining a rigorous user-pays system; combating tax avoidance and tax evasion; providing tax concessions where most needed and avoiding fuelling inflation.

The Administration would defend these budgetary principles with all its might, he said.

End

#### HK-China officials discuss water supply issues

\* \* \* \* \*

At the invitation of the Secretary for Works, Mr H S Kwong, a delegation from the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Water Conservancy led by Director, Mr Guan Zongzhi, visited Hong Kong during June 24-29 for the seventh business meeting to discuss water supply to Hong Kong under the Dongjiang-Shenzhen Water Supply Works.

Items discussed included a review of water supply in the 1995 water year, the plan for water supply in the 1996 water year, water prices from January 1, 1997, to December 31, 1999, Hong Kong's future water demand from the East River, quality of the water supply and other matters of mutual concern.

After a series of discussions, both sides reached an initial agreement on the unit water prices for 1997, 1998 and 1999 and will seek the approval of their respective government for implementing the agreement.

The negotiation on water price was understood to be a difficult one.

"It was difficult to come to a figure which would satisfy both sides since the inflation figures differed widely between Hong Kong and Guangdong in recent years," the Director of Water Supplies, Mr M S Hu, said.

"There was also the complication of the exchange rate variation of Renminbi in 1994. However through the mutual understanding and the long established smooth co-operation and relationship between both sides, we had been able to come to an agreement."

The price index for Guangdong increased by 17.7 per cent last year according to Guangdong Provincial Statistics Bureau.

Mr Hu also brought up the issue on measures to be taken to reduce overflows from Hong Kong reservoirs in the light of the current high storage position.

On water quality issue Mr Guan made special reference to the long term and short term measures being taken by the Guangdong Provincial People's Government for implementation through the Bureau, Environmental Protection Department and local authorities, to protect water resources in the East River and en-route the Dong-Shen Water Supply Scheme from pollution with a view to enhancing the quality of water supply to Hong Kong.

On both issues, the two sides agreed to continue to closely co-operate to resolve the problems.

Mr Kwong expressed appreciation to Mr Guan for the continued efforts made by the Guangdong Bureau in meeting the water needs of Hong Kong.

End

Chief Secretary to visit UK

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The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, will leave Hong Kong tomorrow (Saturday) evening for a three-day visit to London.

Mrs Chan's visit will begin on Monday (July 1) with a luncheon speech to the Hong Kong Association in London.

In the afternoon, she will call on the Prime Minister, Mr John Major, to discuss with him the latest developments in Hong Kong.

After her meeting at No 10 Downing Street, Mrs Chan will address a group of fund managers at a dinner hosted by Morgan Stanley.

On July 2, the Chief Secretary will call on the Foreign Affairs Spokesman of the Liberal Democrats, Mr Menzies Campbell, before meeting the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and the British-Hong Kong Parliamentary Group.

On the following day, she will meet Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, Mr Robin Cook, and opposition spokesman on Hong Kong, Mr Derek Fatchett. She will then address the Royal Institute of International Affairs before attending a lunch with journalists.

Her visit to London will end with a session with the Hong Kong stringers.

Mrs Chan will proceed on leave after the duty visit and return to Hong Kong on July 31.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, will act as the Chief Secretary during Mrs Chan's absence.

End

Site inspection strengthened to ensure safety

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A total of 484 construction sites were inspected and 168 summonses would be issued to contractors for violating industrial safety laws as a result of the special operation by factory inspectors of the Labour Department during the past week.

The operation was launched last Friday (June 21) following the high-level inter-departmental meeting chaired by the Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mr Joseph Wong, on industrial safety.

A 12-point action plan was drawn up in the meeting to ensure sufficient safety measures were taken in high-risk construction sites.

Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health), Mr Lee Kai-fat, said this (Friday) afternoon that the special task force comprising 10 factory inspectors have inspected 67 sites and 47 summonses would be issued.

The operation of this task force, which is being targeted at active sites as well as sites with unsatisfactory safety records, will complete by the end of July.

Meanwhile, more than 100 factory inspectors being mobilised for a special inspection exercise on working at heights and in confined spaces have inspected 417 sites and 121 summonses would be issued. This exercise will last until July 4.

"The Factory Inspectorate would not tolerate contractors who fail to provide safety measures in building sites under construction as this may result in serious or fatal accidents," said Mr Lee.

He also urged construction workers to be more mindful of the hazards and dangers at work.

"To protect their own lives, all employees should fully co-operate with their employers by taking safety measures as required under the law," he added.

He said all workers engaged in industrial work activities, especially construction workers, should make use of the 24-hour industrial safety hotline 2815 0678 when they encounter any dangerous occurrences or unsafe practice.

End

### Renewal of China's MFN trading status

\* \* \* \* \*

The Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue, welcomed the US House of Representatives' vote for the renewal of China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trading status this year.

On June 27, the House rejected a draft resolution to disapprove the President's decision to extend China's MFN status for another year. This in effect means the end of this year's debate on the matter.

"We are very pleased with the early conclusion of the debate. As China and US are our largest trading partners, we are naturally delighted that China's MFN status in the coming year is assured. This will provide a very useful basis for our businessmen to continue to plan their businesses with China and the US," Miss Yue said.

End

### External trade figures for May

\* \* \* \* \*

In May 1996, re-exports grew only moderately over a year earlier, while domestic exports fell. Taken together, total exports still showed a small positive growth. Imports decreased over a year earlier. These are shown in the external trade figures for May released by the Census and Statistics Department today (Friday).

The value of total exports (comprising re-exports and domestic exports) increased by 1.1% over a year earlier to \$117.9 billion in May 1996. Within total exports, the value of re-exports rose by 3.8% to \$100.3 billion. The value of domestic exports decreased by 12%, to \$17.6 billion. Meanwhile, the value of imports decreased by 2.6% over a year earlier to \$129.9 billion in May 1996.

As the value of total exports in May 1996 was smaller than that of total imports, a visible trade deficit of \$12 billion, equivalent to 9.2% of the value of imports, was recorded.

This was nevertheless considerably smaller than the deficit of \$17 billion, equivalent to 13% of the value of imports, in April this year; as well as the deficit of \$16.8 billion, equivalent also to 13% of the value of imports, in May last year.

For the first five months of 1996 as a whole, the value of total exports grew by 6.4% over the same period last year. Within this total, the value of re-exports rose by 8.9%, while that of domestic exports decreased by 5.9%. The value of imports showed an increase of 4.7%.

In the first five months of 1996, a visible trade deficit of \$68.7 billion, equivalent to 11% of the value of imports, was recorded. This was smaller than the deficit of \$73.7 billion, equivalent to 13% of the value of imports, recorded in the same period last year.

Commenting on the latest trade figures, a government spokesman said the more modest performance shown up in the year-on-year comparison for the trade aggregates in May 1996 was affected to a considerable extent by the high base of comparison in May 1995.

In May 1995, both re-exports and domestic exports recorded large increases, by 27% and 13% respectively; taken together, total exports rose by 25%.

Meanwhile, reflecting the continued adjustment to the large inventory build-up last year, retained imports fell further, by 12% over a year earlier.

A more detailed analysis of Hong Kong's external trade for May 1996, by commodity and country, will be released in mid-July 1996.

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Census & Statistics Department, Hong Kong  
香港政府統計處

External Trade Figures for May 1996

一九九六年五月份對外貿易數字

(HK\$ Million)  
百萬港元

MERCHANDISE TRADE VALUES for May 1996		一九九六年五月份商品貿易實值			
	Domestic Exports		港產品出口		17,618
	Re-exports		轉口		100,290
	Total Exports		整體出口		117,908
	Imports		進口		129,924
	Trade balance		貿易差額		-12,017
<hr/>					
COMPARATIVE FIGURES	比較數字	Change 變動			
		May 1996	May 1995	Value	%
		一九九六年五月	一九九五年五月	實值	百分率
Same month last year	去年同期				
Domestic Exports	港產品出口	17,618	20,033	-2,415	-12.1
(% of Total Exports)	(佔整體出口百分比)	(14.9%)	(17.2%)		
Re-exports	轉口	100,290	96,620	+3,670	+3.8
Total Exports	整體出口	117,908	116,653	+1,255	+1.1
Imports	進口	129,924	133,419	-3,495	-2.6
Trade balance	貿易差額	-12,017	-16,766	+4,750	
		May 1996	April 1996		
		一九九六年五月	一九九六年四月		
Last month	上月				
Domestic Exports	港產品出口	17,618	17,177	+441	+2.6
(% of Total Exports)	(佔整體出口百分比)	(14.9%)	(14.8%)		
Re-exports	轉口	100,290	98,907	+1,383	+1.4
Total Exports	整體出口	117,908	116,083	+1,824	+1.6
Imports	進口	129,924	133,037	-3,113	-2.3
Trade balance	貿易差額	-12,017	-16,954	+4,937	
		Mar 96 to May 96	Mar 95 to May 95		
		九六年三月至五月	九五年三月至五月		
Latest 3 months	最近三個月				
Domestic Exports	港產品出口	49,173	54,546	-5,373	-9.9
(% of Total Exports)	(佔整體出口百分比)	(14.9%)	(16.9%)		
Re-exports	轉口	281,501	268,081	+13,420	+5.0
Total Exports	整體出口	330,674	322,627	+8,046	+2.5
Imports	進口	383,769	377,768	+6,001	+1.6
Trade balance	貿易差額	-53,096	-55,141	+2,045	
		Jan-May 1996	Jan-May 1995		
		九六年一月至五月	九五年一月至五月		
Calendar year to-date	本年前五個月				
Domestic Exports	港產品出口	82,359	87,489	-5,130	-5.9
(% of Total Exports)	(佔整體出口百分比)	(15.2%)	(17.2%)		
Re-exports	轉口	458,919	421,240	+37,679	+8.9
Total Exports	整體出口	541,278	508,729	+32,549	+6.4
Imports	進口	610,022	582,418	+27,604	+4.7
Trade balance	貿易差額	-68,744	-73,689	+4,945	
		Jun 95 to May 96	Jun 94 to May 95		
		九五年六月至九六年五月	九四年六月至九五年五月		
Last 12 months	過去十二個月				
Domestic Exports	港產品出口	226,527	230,517	-3,990	-1.7
(% of Total Exports)	(佔整體出口百分比)	(16.5%)	(18.4%)		
Re-exports	轉口	1,150,149	1,021,175	+128,974	+12.6
Total Exports	整體出口	1,376,676	1,251,692	+124,983	+10.0
Imports	進口	1,518,725	1,371,008	+147,717	+10.8
Trade balance	貿易差額	-142,049	-119,316	-22,733	

Note: Value of domestic exports and value of re-exports may not add up to the value of total exports due to rounding.

註：由於進位關係，港產品出口實值加上轉口實值，可能會與整體出口實值略有出入。

This sheet can be obtained free of charge from:  
Trade Statistics Dissemination Section  
Census and Statistics Department  
Address: 19/F., Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road,  
Wan Chai, Hong Kong  
Tel: 2582 4915 Fax: 2802 1101

本單張可以於下列地點免費索取：  
香港政府統計處  
貿易統計資料發布組  
地址：香港灣仔港灣道十二號灣仔政府大樓十九樓  
電話：2582 4915 傳真：2802 1101

End

### Monetary statistics for May

\* \* \* \* \*

Total deposits and total loans and advances both fell in May 1996, according to statistics published by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (Friday).

As for the HK dollar components, HK dollar deposits dropped slightly while HK dollar loans rose. Table 1 summarises figures for May 1996 and comparisons with earlier months.

#### Deposits

HK dollar deposits fell slightly by 0.3% in May while foreign currency deposits dropped by 2.4%. As a result, total deposits declined by 1.3% in May, after a 0.9% rise in April.

The fall in HK dollar deposits in May was attributable to declines in both HK dollar demand and time deposits, which more than offset the rise in HK dollar savings deposits.

During the month, HK dollar demand and time deposits fell by 3.1% and 0.4% respectively, reversing their respective increases of 3.1% and 1.1% in April. On the other hand, HK dollar savings deposits rose by 0.9% in May, having contracted by 1.4% in April.

The decline in foreign currency deposits was accounted for by a fall of 3.5% in non-US dollar foreign currency deposits and a 1.2% drop in US dollar deposits during the month.

Foreign currency swap deposits decreased by a further 0.5% in May. From their peak registered in November 1994, foreign currency swap deposits have fallen for eighteen consecutive months, cumulating a total reduction of 58.5%.

#### Loans and advances

Total loans and advances contracted by 0.4% in May, reversing the 2.1% growth in April. The fall reflected primarily the decline in offshore lending, with loans for use outside Hong Kong (including those where the place of use is unknown) dropping by 2.3%.

On the other hand, loans for trade financing (including offshore trade) and other loans for use in Hong Kong rose further by 1.2% and 2.1% respectively during the month.

Analysed by currency, HK dollar loans increased by 2.6% during the month while foreign currency loans fell by 2%. As HK dollar loans rose but HK dollar deposits declined, the HK dollar loan-to-deposit ratio rose to 109.6% at end-May, from 106.6% at end-April.

#### Money supply

HK\$M1 dropped by 1.4% in May, as the decline in HK dollar demand deposits more than offset an increase in currency held by the public of 0.9%. HK\$M2 and HK\$M3 both fell slightly by 0.1% during the month, after rising by 0.3% and 0.4% respectively in April.

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TABLE 1 : MONETARY STATISTICS - MAY 1996

	(HK\$mn)			
	May 1996	Earlier months (% change to May 1996)		
		Apr 1996	Feb 1996	May 1995
<b>Money Supply</b>				
1 - HK\$	173,538	176,083 ( -1.4 )	183,223 ( -5.3 )	166,090 ( 4.5 )
Foreign currency	18,460	18,858 ( -2.1 )	20,280 ( -9.0 )	17,590 ( 4.9 )
Total	191,998	194,941 ( -1.5 )	203,503 ( -5.7 )	183,681 ( 4.5 )
2 - HK\$@	1,317,528	1,319,328 ( -0.1 )	1,299,565 ( 1.4 )	1,162,516 ( 13.3 )
Foreign currency*	1,009,721	1,037,254 ( -2.7 )	1,014,694 ( -0.5 )	972,252 ( 3.9 )
Total	2,327,249	2,356,582 ( -1.2 )	2,314,259 ( 0.6 )	2,134,768 ( 9.0 )
3 - HK\$@	1,333,917	1,335,306 ( -0.1 )	1,315,340 ( 1.4 )	1,180,067 ( 13.0 )
Foreign currency*	1,073,549	1,100,002 ( -2.4 )	1,075,095 ( -0.1 )	1,033,626 ( 3.9 )
Total	2,407,466	2,435,308 ( -1.1 )	2,390,435 ( 0.7 )	2,213,693 ( 8.8 )
Notes and coins in circulation	82,304	81,412 ( 1.1 )	90,248 ( -8.8 )	78,286 ( 5.1 )
of which held by public	72,860	72,203 ( 0.9 )	80,279 ( -9.2 )	69,325 ( 5.1 )
<b>Total Deposits</b>				
Total Demand deposits	119,138	122,738 ( -2.9 )	123,224 ( -3.3 )	114,356 ( 4.2 )
Total Savings deposits	455,088	452,631 ( 0.5 )	456,340 ( -0.3 )	398,265 ( 14.3 )
Total Time deposits	1,690,168	1,718,108 ( -1.6 )	1,663,279 ( 1.6 )	1,574,169 ( 7.4 )
With licensed banks	1,630,462	1,660,822 ( -1.8 )	1,609,445 ( 1.3 )	1,515,621 ( 7.6 )
With restricted licence banks	43,481	40,700 ( 6.8 )	36,647 ( 18.6 )	38,510 ( 12.9 )
With deposit-taking companies	16,225	16,585 ( -2.2 )	17,187 ( -5.6 )	20,037 ( -19.0 )
KS deposits@	1,220,336	1,223,737 ( -0.3 )	1,197,707 ( 1.9 )	1,081,250 ( 12.9 )
Demand deposits	100,678	103,880 ( -3.1 )	102,944 ( -2.2 )	96,766 ( 4.0 )
Savings deposits	318,498	315,625 ( 0.9 )	316,882 ( 0.5 )	271,593 ( 17.3 )
Time deposits@	801,160	804,232 ( -0.4 )	777,881 ( 3.0 )	712,891 ( 12.4 )
US deposits*	512,311	518,526 ( -1.2 )	524,347 ( -2.3 )	509,055 ( 0.6 )
Other foreign currency deposits*	531,747	551,215 ( -3.5 )	520,789 ( 2.1 )	496,485 ( 7.1 )
Foreign currency deposits*	1,044,059	1,069,741 ( -2.4 )	1,045,136 ( -0.1 )	1,005,540 ( 3.8 )
All deposits	2,264,395	2,293,478 ( -1.3 )	2,242,843 ( 1.0 )	2,086,790 ( 8.5 )
Foreign currency swap deposits	43,183	43,408 ( -0.5 )	46,423 ( -7.0 )	64,678 ( -33.2 )
<b>Total Loans and advances</b>				
Loans for use in H.K.	1,687,340	1,653,574 ( 2.0 )	1,614,437 ( 4.5 )	1,499,456 ( 12.5 )
To finance H.K.'s visible trade	166,835	165,103 ( 1.0 )	158,062 ( 5.6 )	153,156 ( 8.9 )
To finance merchandising trade not touching H.K.	20,304	19,811 ( 2.5 )	19,508 ( 4.1 )	18,182 ( 11.7 )
Other loans for use in H.K.	1,500,201	1,468,660 ( 2.1 )	1,436,867 ( 4.4 )	1,328,117 ( 13.0 )
Loans for use outside H.K. #	2,077,289	2,126,592 ( -2.3 )	2,144,967 ( -3.2 )	2,279,391 ( -8.9 )
Other loans for use outside H.K.	2,037,113	2,086,301 ( -2.4 )	2,105,539 ( -3.2 )	2,237,674 ( -9.0 )
Other loans where the place of use is not known	40,176	40,292 ( -0.3 )	39,428 ( 1.9 )	41,717 ( -3.7 )
Loans in HK\$	1,337,965	1,303,916 ( 2.6 )	1,273,113 ( 5.1 )	1,180,216 ( 13.4 )
Loans in foreign currencies	2,426,663	2,476,251 ( -2.0 )	2,486,291 ( -2.4 )	2,598,630 ( -6.6 )
Total loans and advances	3,764,628	3,780,167 ( -0.4 )	3,759,404 ( 0.1 )	3,778,846 ( -0.4 )

\* Adjusted to exclude foreign currency swap deposits.  
 @ Adjusted to include foreign currency swap deposits.  
 # Including those where place of usage is unknown

Note: Data may not add up to total due to rounding.

End

STI to attend meeting in Switzerland

\* \* \* \* \*

A Hong Kong delegation led by the Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue, left for Switzerland tonight (Friday) to attend an informal ministerial meeting in Lausanne on June 1 and 2 to discuss the future work programme of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

This visit is one of a series of preparatory meetings being held in the run-up to the first Ministerial Conference of WTO this December, which will chart the course of global trade liberalisation in the future.

The Lausanne meeting is hosted by the President and Federal Minister for Economy of Switzerland, Mr Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, and will be attended by the trade ministers or senior officials from seventeen other WTO members, including Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Korea, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, and Thailand.

The Hong Kong delegation comprises Permanent Representative of Hong Kong to the World Trade Organisation, Mr Stuart Harbinson; Director-General of Trade (designate), Mr Alan Lai; Deputy Director-General of Trade, Mr Tam Wing-pong; Assistant Representative of Hong Kong to WTO, Mr Bryan Chan and Assistant Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Monica Chen.

On the invitation of the Government of Norway, Miss Yue will go to Oslo for a two-day official visit on July 3 and 4 after the Lausanne meeting.

During the visit, she will exchange views with senior Norwegian government officials and business leaders on matters of mutual interest.

End

Board of Education appointments announced

\* \* \* \* \*

The Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mr Joseph W P Wong, today (Friday) announced the appointment of Mr Moses Cheng Mo-chi as Chairman of the Board of Education.

Mr Cheng is a former Legislative Council member and a partner of P C Woo and Co.

New members appointed to the Board are:

Sister Bernadette Au Yee-ting, Principal of Sacred Heart Canossian College;  
Miss Eliza Chan Ching-har, consultant of Jewkes and Partners;  
Mr Ronald Lau Yiu-fai, Principal of Hong Kong Weaving Mills Association Chu Shek Lun Prevocational School; and  
Mr Clement Tao Kwok-lau, Managing Director of Associated Advisors Ltd and a member of the Language Fund Advisory Committee.

The following members are appointed to the Board on an ex-officio basis:

Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Administration and Finance;  
Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Guidance and Support Services;  
Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Places Allocation;  
Chairman, Committee on Home-School Co-operation;  
Chairman, Curriculum Development Council; and  
Chairman, Private Schools Review Committee.

Mr Wong also announced the re-appointment of the following serving members:

Mr Chan Tak-hang, a teacher of Pui Ching Middle School;  
Mr Cheng Chi-leung, Assistant Principal of SKH Bishop Mok Sau Tseng Secondary School;  
Mrs Philomena Chu Tang Lai-kuen, Supervisor of kindergartens and child care centres under Caritas;  
Mr Irving Koo Yee-yin, Director of Jardine Pacific Limited;  
Dr Simon Leung Man-on, Principal of the Ebenezer School for the Blind;  
Professor Leslie Lo Nai-kwai, Dean of Faculty of Education at the Chinese University of Hong Kong;  
Dr Pang King-chee, Deputy Director of the Hong Kong Institute of Education;  
Mr Pun Tin-chi, Headmaster of GCEPSA Tseung Kwan O Primary School (PM); and  
Mr Tang Hing-lin, Principal of the SKH Chan Young Secondary School.

The Director of Education will continue to serve as the Vice-chairman of the Board, and the Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower as a member, both in their ex-officio capacity.

Mr Wong thanked the retiring Chairman, Dr Tam Man-kwan, for his leadership and his contribution to the Board over the last two years.

"Dr Tam initiated two significant reviews during his term as the Chairman of the Board, namely, the review on nine-year compulsory education which is on going and that on special education which has just been completed and the results of which are currently under public consultation," Mr Wong said.

He also thanked the three retiring members, Sister Marie Remedios, Mr Herman Hu and Mr Sheung Kwok-chu, for their dedication and good work.

The Chairman and all members of the Board are appointed on a two-year term starting July 1.

The appointments have been made by Secretary for Education and Manpower under delegated authority of the Governor under section 7 of the Education Ordinance.

Following is the new membership of the Board:

Membership of the Board of Education  
(July 1, 1996 to June 30, 1998)

Chairman

Mr Moses Cheng Mo-chi

Vice-chairman

Director of Education (ex-officio)  
(Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu)

Non-Official members

Sister Bernadette Au Yee-ting  
Miss Eliza Chan Ching-har  
Mr Chan Tak-hang  
Mr CHeng Chi-leung  
Mrs Philomena Chu Tang Lai-kuen  
Mr Irving Koo Yee-yin  
Mr Ronald Lau Yiu-fai  
Dr Simon Leung Man-on  
Professor Leslie Lo Nai-kwai  
Dr Pang King-chee  
Mr Pun Tin-chi  
Mr Tang Hing-lin  
Mr Clement Tao Kwok-lau

Ex-officio members

Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Administration and Finance  
Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Guidance and Support Services  
Chairman, Advisory Committee on School Places Allocation  
Chairman, Committee on Home-School Cooperation  
Chairman, Curriculum Development Council  
Chairman, Private Schools Review Committee  
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower  
Senior Education Officer (Secretary)

Document Imaging System going live at Land Registry

\* \* \* \* \*

About 240 million pages of existing land records at the Land Registry will be stored in a state-of-the-art optical imaging system.

The Document Imaging System (DIS) will start operating from Monday (July 1) by scanning and recording all newly registered land documents on optical disks. About 55,000 pages of newly registered documents will be processed each day.

Speaking at the inauguration of the system today (Friday), the Land Registrar, Mr Kenneth Pang, said electronic images stored on optical disks would replace the paper documents currently maintained by the Land Registry.

"The present system of storing, searching and reproducing land documents manually will be automated with the introduction of the new system," Mr Pang said.

"By scanning paper documents and putting their images on optical disks, the DIS can store, retrieve, reproduce and distribute the required land records much more efficiently and effectively."

He said DIS would also streamline the Registry's land document management processes, resulting in savings in storage space and manpower resources.

DIS will be operated at the Land Registry's Central Imaging Centre at Grand Central Plaza, Sha Tin. The Centre is equipped with optical disk jukeboxes, servers, scanners, printers and computer terminals. The new system is designed to manage 300 million pages of land documents eventually.

Mr Pang said the conversion of some 240 million pages of the existing land documents into electronic images would be done in phases.

"The conversion exercise for documents maintained in the New Territories Land Registries will take 18 months to complete. The conversion of microfilmed documents kept in the Urban Land Registry into imaged records will be carried out at a later stage.

"The whole exercise will be completed by the end of 1998," he said.

Another advantage of DIS was that delivery of the imaged documents to users via facsimile transmission would soon be possible, said Mr Pang.

"By September, subscribers to the Land Registry's on-line search facility, the Direct Access Services, will be able to receive facsimile copies of imaged documents automatically at their own offices without calling at the Land Registry," he said.

Mr Pang also pointed out that with the introduction of DIS, the Land Registry was moving a step closer to providing a one-stop land search facility to its customers.

"A Central Search Office will soon be set up on the 19th floor of the Queensway Government Offices to centralise all land search services which are currently provided on two different floors.

"In addition to using normal counter services, customers can also use the self-service computer terminals installed at the Central Search Office to obtain copies of land documents more quickly.

"By the end of the year when the new facility for cross-district search of land documents becomes available, customers will no longer have to travel to different regional offices in the New Territories to search the required information," said Mr Pang.

End

#### Inquiry into ferry and tanker collision ordered

\* \* \* \* \*

The acting Director of Marine, Mr S Y Tsui, has ordered a local marine inquiry into the collision between a hover ferry and a tanker yesterday (Thursday) morning, a Marine Department spokesman said today (Friday).

In accordance with the powers granted under section 58 of the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance, Mr Tsui appointed Surveyor of Ships (Nautical), Mr S H Tse, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the collision.

The collision was happened at about 9.50 am yesterday between the locally licensed hover ferry "HYF 120" and locally licensed tanker "Feoso Eight" about 9.50 am yesterday when they are about 0.6 nautical mile south east of Tsing Yi Island.

Nine passengers on board the hover ferry were injured in the impact.

End

#### Restored historic ancestral hall to be opened

\* \* \* \* \*

The Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall, built in 1701 during the reign of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty, will be open to the public following a rehabilitation ceremony on Sunday (June 30).

The ancestral hall is situated in Kam Tin, Yuen Long. It was used for worshipping ancestors of the Tangs who settled in the area more than eight hundred years ago. Because of its historical significance, it was deemed a monument by the Government in November 1994.

Due to its dilapidated condition, restoration work at a cost of \$2.7 million was carried out in July last year under the supervision of the Antiquities and Monuments Office of the Broadcasting, Culture and Sport Branch.

Most of the decorations including plaster mouldings and wood carvings of the hall have been preserved. A historic stone tablet recording major restoration work carried out in 1782 by the Tangs is also displayed in the hall.

The rehabilitation ceremony will be officiated by the Deputy Secretary for Broadcasting, Culture and Sport, Mr Benjamin Tang; the Director of Architectural Services, Mr Kenneth Chan; and the Chairman of the Antiquities Advisory Board, Mr David Lung.

End

#### Marketing organisations contribute to community

\* \* \* \* \*

The Vegetable Marketing Organisation (VMO) and Fish Marketing Organisation (FMO) have made considerable contributions to Hong Kong in the past 50 years, the Secretary for Economic Services, Mr Stephen Ip, said today (Friday).

Speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of VMO and FMO, Mr Ip emphasised their contributions to the development of primary production, wholesale marketing services and improvement of people's livelihood.

He pointed out that these organisations had been working closely with the Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) to promote the territory's primary production in addition to their role of providing wholesale marketing services for vegetables and fresh marine fish.

Mr Ip said the two organisations were established by the Government in 1940s with the objectives of encouraging local production of vegetables and fish as well as providing orderly and efficient wholesaling for these produce.

The Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dr Lawrence Lee, said VMO and FMO had developed greatly over the years in improving and adapting their operations to meet the changing needs of the community.

"Apart from playing key roles in the territory's fresh food supply, the organisations have established, in the eyes of the public, a symbol of wholesaling quality foods, which is crucial to local residents' good livelihood," he said.

"During their establishment shortly after World War II, Hong Kong experienced a low economic situation with acute food shortage. In view of this, the Government decided to develop local primary production with a view to increasing fresh food supply and maintaining social stability."

Also as Director of Marketing, Dr Lee said in addition to providing wholesaling services, VMO and FMO had been working hard to tie in with AFD's objective of taking part in and modernising local primary production.

Notable achievements included the introduction of farm mechanisation and advanced farming techniques, production and marketing of premium vegetables and development of the Accredited Farm Scheme.

Other areas of work included the mechanisation of fishing vessels and promotion of advanced capture fishery methods, which had helped build up a modern and efficient fleet.

He noted that VMO and FMO had set up development loan funds in the years to promote agricultural and fishery projects.

VMO set up the Agricultural Development Fund in 1988 and utilised its surplus to improve infrastructure in farming areas and subsidise a number of development projects, including the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme, Accredited Farm Scheme and the effluent-free pig-on-litter system.

Looking forward, Dr Lee reiterated that VMO would continue to promote the Accredited Farm Scheme in both Hong Kong and China as well as utilise funds for agricultural land rehabilitation and other development projects.

On the other hand, FMO will upgrade and diversify its marketing services.

It has commissioned a consultancy study on the redevelopment of the Aberdeen Fish Market into a modern integrated market complex aimed at better serving the modern-day need of fishermen and the community.

It will also continue to co-operate with AFD on the implementation of PRC fishermen deckhand scheme and promotion of the environmentally friendly pellet feed for mariculture, he said.

At today's ceremony, certificates of appreciation were presented to 42 public-spirited individuals and four organisations in recognition of their contributions to the work of VMO, FMO and AFD in the past years.

End

Improvements to UC Lockhart Road Complex tenders invited

\* \* \* \* \*

The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for improvement works for the existing Urban Council Lockhart Road Complex.

The works involves improvements to the second and third floors of the complex, as well as associated conversion and fitting out works to the basement, ground and first floors. Drainage and air-conditioning, electrical and fire service installation works are also included in the contract.

The project will start in September for completion in October 1998.

Tender forms and further particulars can be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tender offers will close at noon on July 19.

End

Identification of slope maintenance responsibility

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government has taken a major step in improving slope safety by awarding a \$58.4 million consultancy to carry out a systematic identification of slope maintenance responsibility (SIMAR) for up to 50,000 sizeable man-made slopes and retaining walls in the territory.

The consultancy agreement, awarded by the Lands Department, was signed today (Friday) by the Director of Lands, Mr Bob Pope, and a representative of Larry H C Tam and Associates Limited.

Speaking after the signing of the agreement, Mr Pope said the consultant would interpret leases, land documents, prevailing government policies and all available information to determine the party or parties responsible for maintaining each of the slopes or retaining walls as well as his/their respective liability for maintenance.

"The results of the three-year study will be compiled in a database register which will serve as a ready reference for government use.

"Members of the public may also check the register to see if they are responsible for the maintenance of any slope or retaining wall within or adjoining their land," he said.

The commencement of the consultancy study represented a significant milestone in the government's efforts in enhancing slope safety, said Mr Pope.

The locations of the 50,000 man-made slopes and retaining walls are now being identified under another consultancy managed by the Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department.

End

#### Tenders for two water pumping stations

\* \* \* \* \*

The Water Supplies Department is inviting tenders for two water works projects in the Mid-Levels of Hong Kong and in Tseung Kwan O.

The first project relates to the construction of the New Albany Fresh Water Pumping Station Extension and associated works.

When completed, now scheduled in early 1998, it will improve the water supply to the mid-level and high-level areas on the Hong Kong Island.

The Tseung Kwan O project involves the construction of a salt water pumping station and the laying of about 600 metres of fresh watermains and 660 metres of salt watermains in Tseung Kwan O New Town.

It is part of a programme to improve the existing water supply system in Tseung Kwan O to meet the increasing demand. Works will start in October for completion in 18 months.

Tender forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Water Supplies Department, Immigration Tower, 44th floor, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Tender offers for both projects will close at noon on July 19.

End

Dredging works for Stonecutters Island Naval Base

\* \* \* \* \*

Approval has been given for the Government to carry out dredging works to the south of Stonecutters Island to provide a military anchorage area of about 695,000 square metres for four mooring buoys.

Works will commence in September for completion in April next year.

The extent of the area affected is contained in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

Any person who considers that his interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed involved will be injuriously affected may submit a written claim for compensation to the Director of Lands before June 28, 1997.

He should state in his submission the sum of money he is willing to accept in full and final settlement of his claim and should submit such particulars which he possesses to substantiate his claim.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with related plans can be seen at the Lands Department's Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong (where copies can be purchased on order), and at the Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi Public Enquiry Services Centre, Kwai Tsing District Office, second floor, Kwai Hing Government Offices Building, 166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories.

End

Submarine cable circuit for new airport

\* \* \* \* \*

To enable the provision of permanent electricity supply to the new airport, the China Light and Power Company has proposed to install a submarine cable circuit between Tuen Mun and Chek Lap Kok.

The circuit, comprising three submarine cables and one submarine telecommunication cable, will be installed within an area of about 118 hectares of foreshore and seabed from Tuen Mun Area 40 to the new airport site.

Works to be completed in six months will be carried out in two phases.

Phase I involves conventional dredging at both sides of the landing points while Phase II will be on the laying of the submarine cables. No underwater blasting and chemical will be used.

The project will need to be completed by the end of January 1998 to coincide with the opening of the new airport.

The extent of the area affected is described in a notice published in Government Gazette today (Friday).

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with related plan can be seen on notice boards near the site.

The plan can also be inspected at the following locations:

- \* Lands Department's Survey and Mapping Office 14th floor, Murray Building Garden Road;
- \* Tuen Mun District Office second floor, Tuen Mun Government Offices 1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun;
- \* Island District Office 20th floor, Harbour Building 38 Pier Road, Central;
- \* Mui Wo Sub-office Islands District Office ground floor, Mui Wo Government Offices 2 Ngan Kwong Wan Road Mui Wo, Lantau Island.

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands on or before August 28.

The notice of such objection shall describe the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

End

#### Village flood protection works in San Tin

\* \* \* \* \*

The Drainage Services Department is inviting tenders for village flood protection works for seven villages in San Tin area of north-west New Territories.

This was part of the department's continuous efforts to alleviate flooding hazard in the New Territories, a spokesman for the department said today (Friday).

Works will involve construction of a flood protection embankment, a floodwater storage pond, a flood water pumping station, a maintenance road and other associated works to alleviate flooding hazard.

Construction will commence in October and scheduled for completion by May 1999.

Tender forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Chief Engineer, Drainage Projects Division, Drainage Services Department, 44th floor, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Hong Kong. Enquiries can be made on 2594 7405.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat tender box in the lift lobby on the lower ground floor, Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong, before noon on July 26.

Late tenders will not be accepted.

End

Tuen Mun government land for sale by tender

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The Lands Department is inviting tenders for the sale of two pieces of government land in Area 16 and 18 in Tuen Mun.

The first site in Area 16 has an area of about 2,128 square metres and is intended for use as a godown or offices related to industrial or godown operations.

With an area of about 36,941 square metres, the second site in Area 18 is designated for non-industrial purposes under the Private Sector Participation Scheme, excluding hotel, service apartment, cinema, godown and petrol filling station.

The closing date for submission of tenders for the first site is noon on July 26 while the second site is noon on August 23.

Tender form, tender notice and conditions may be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, and the District Lands Office/Kowloon, 10th floor, Yau Ma Tei Car Park Building, 250 Shanghai Street, Kowloon.

Tender documents will also be available at the district lands offices of Sha Tin, Tai Po, North, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Tuen Mun, Sai Kung and Islands.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,732	0930	+226
Closing balance in the account	7,516	1000	+226
Change attributable to :		1100	+226
Money market activity	+630	1200	+230
LAF today	+5,154	1500	+230
		1600	+630

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.40 \*-0.1\* 28.6.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.18	2 years	2805	6.30	100.04	6.37
1 month	5.11	3 years	3904	6.30	99.08	6.77
3 months	5.24	5 years	5106	7.23	99.80	7.41
6 months	5.47	7 years	7305	7.60	99.96	7.75
12 months	5.82	5 years	M502	7.30	99.49	7.57

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$23,329 million

Closed June 28, 1996

End