



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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/Committee endorses

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Government determined to beat drug abuse

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The Government will take a lead to work with the private sector, educationists, social workers and non-governmental organisations in a bid to develop a first-rate programme to beat drug abuse.

The determination was reiterated by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after he visited a Life Education Centre today (Tuesday).

"I think there is a great commitment right across the community to do more to beat drugs and to reduce the amount of drug abuse in the community," he said.

At a summit earlier this month, the Government launched a new programme committing extra resources in manpower and cash to the fight against drug abuse.

"One of the earliest things that we'll be doing is reviewing the ideas that came up during the summit and reporting on which of those ideas we intend to carry forward and to translate into action and into policy," Mr Patten said.

Noting that education has a particularly crucial role to play in preventing and reducing drug abuse, he said that was why he started his series of visits with a visit to the Life Education Centre.

Life education provides a progressively graded preventive drug education programme for children aged between five and 12 years.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

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 visiting the Life Education Activity Programme Centre today (Tuesday).

Governor: Good afternoon. I think there is a great commitment right across the community to do more to beat drugs and to reduce the amount of drug abuse in the community. We had a very successful summit the other day at which we in Government launch a new programme committing extra resources both in terms of people and ideas and in terms of cash to the fight against drug abuse. Throughout the coming months I'll be trying to take a particularly close interest in the way that our campaign develops. One of the earliest things that we'll be doing is reviewing the ideas that came up during the summit and reporting on which of those ideas we intend to carry forward and to translate into action and into policy. I think that there is general agreement that education has a particularly crucial role to play in preventing and reducing drug abuse. I was therefore keen to start my series of visit with a visit to Life Education to see what LEAP are doing because I have heard from the Chief Secretary and from others what an excellent job is being done. It's being done as you know with the help of private sponsorship. There is a terrific waiting list for this great Life Education facility and we obviously got to look in Government at what more we can do to assist the development of Life Education.

So those of you who follow me around will found over the next few months that there are quite a few visits similar to this that we'll be making. As I've said before, one of the statistics in Hong Kong which is going the wrong way is the figure that we see month after month, year after year, for drug abuse and drug-related crimes. We've got to tackle it, we've got to tackle it energetically. We've got to tackle it at every level and that's what we intend to do, giving a lead from Government, but working with the private sector, and working with educationists, and social workers, and non-governmental organisations to develop a really first rate programme here in Hong Kong so we can avoid some of problems that happen in other communities.

Question: Governor, do you think the request of Peter So Lai-yin, his request for an early retirement will affect the confidence of the Police force?

Governor: No, I very much hope that it won't. He is as you know coming up to pensionable age. He has given, I think, 34 years of excellent service to the Royal Hong Kong Police and to the community. And I think that he has been making a decision based on the length of his service and on his pensionable entitlement. But I am sure that with an outstanding Commissioner and with morale as high as it's been in the Police force we'll continue to see a good recruitment, continuing commitment to the highest professional standards in the force. Everyone knows, I think, that we've got what is generally regarded as the finest Police force in Asia and possibly one of the finest well beyond Asia as well. And I intend to do everything we can to ensure that that continues.

Question: Are you concerned that other officers, or in fact others in the civil service will follow his...?

Governor: We very much hope that we can do everything possible to ensure that morale in the civil service and in the police is as high as possible. I've said before that there are many reasons why people consider retirement, or leaving public service. I don't think that many of them, even though some of them are of course personally based, as I think is the case that you mentioned, there are very few I think which relate to anything that may happen before June 30, 1997. And I hope that through deeds as well as words our colleagues in China will be able to give reassurances to the civil service and we'll be doing everything we can to make clear our commitment to the highest standard of public service and to doing everything possible to ensure that Hong Kong retains an outstanding civil service.

Question: What do you expect from Lady Thatcher's visit to China can help the Sino-British relationship and Hong Kong's transition?

Governor: I think that any visit by a leader as prominent and distinguished as Lady Thatcher should help in building up understanding. Lady Thatcher was of course one of the architects of the Joint Declaration. She knows personally many of the Chinese leaders and I hope that she will be able to reaffirm to them the importance of standing by the spirit and the letter of the Joint Declaration. I'm sure that she'll want to point to Hong Kong's continuing successes. 10 years, 11 years after the Joint Declaration, Hong Kong has still been doing outstandingly well. I imagine she'll want to underline the importance of Chinese leaders' giving reassurance to Hong Kong and beyond Hong Kong, not only through words but also through action as well. Words speak loudly but deeds speak even more loudly.

Question: Is it her mission to urge the Chinese counterparts to speed up the JLG agenda?

Governor: She hasn't got a specific mission. She was invited to visit China by a distinguished Chinese institute. I am sure that during the course of the visit and during the course of the interviews* that she has with senior Chinese leaders, she will put forward, among other things, the importance of speeding up the work of the JLG. Chinese leaders themselves very often speak about the importance of speeding up the work of the JLG. I don't think there is anybody really, apart from the editor of Wen Wei Po in Hong Kong, who thinks that the Hong Kong Government is responsible for as not making greater progress at a greater speed in the JLG. You all know what the situation is. We're committed to making as rapid progress as possible. And I hope that we can do that constructively with Chinese officials. Nobody gains from the deadlocks, nobody gains from the prolonged arguments. And everybody is a loser. We occasionally get very specific information about what's going to happen on the Chinese side. Director Lu Ping in the United States last week said that we'll get agreement on the FSAs, for the airport and the airport railways within days, within days, not my phrase, not me making pledges or promises. So I hope that is translated into action and into agreement within days.

Questions: That means so far no good news to put Mr Lu Ping's words into practice?

Governor: Well, I suppose it's good news that we have a promise that an agreement is going to be within days. But I think our negotiators look forward to seeing that on paper.

Question: Do you think that the Chinese side is using delaying tactics in the Court of Final Appeal issue?

Governor: I think it's for others to judge the intentions of the Chinese side. I don't think it's helpful for me to speculate about motive. We all know what the facts are. We all know that we gave the Chinese side a copy of our Bill last May. We all know that there were a few technical amendments which we gave them in January. What nobody has still told me is in what way the Bill that we have given the Chinese side the parts from the precise letter of the agreement reached in the JLG in 1991. You would think that if there was anywhere in which that Bill which Chinese officials have had for nearly 10 months. You would think that if there was any way in which that draft Bill differed from the JLG agreement Chinese officials would have told us by now. But there has been silence on that. So we must presume that the Bill is as we've said in line with the JLG agreement and if it is in line with the JLG agreement I very much hope we'll soon have the agreement of the Chinese side and we can go ahead in the spirit of co-operation and enthusiasm about the rule of law there in Hong Kong. After all, again Chinese officials has been saying in the United States and elsewhere that China is committed to the rule of law and committed to the 1991 agreement under which it was agreed that the Court of Final Appeal should be set up before 1997.

Question: Do you think there is a need to seek other channels between Sino-British?

Governor: No, I don't think that there is any question of searching for other channels. But what there is the opportunity that's regularly available for senior officials, senior retired officials explaining the situation in Hong Kong to Chinese officials. I repeat that it is 11 years, or there about, since the Joint Declaration was signed. Hong Kong is doing fantastically well. I very much hope Hong Kong is doing fantastically well for another 11 years. What that will require is some sensible decisions and some sensible commitment to the Joint Declaration which I hope will see from Chinese officials.

Question: Is it appropriate for non-Chinese officials to take part in the budgetary expert group? I am referring to the PWC members.

Governor: It's not for me to choose other people's teams for them. I didn't choose the teams for the Sevens the other day, and I don't seek to choose the teams of people that discuss matters with us on the Chinese side. The position is absolutely clear and we've been, I think, very constructive and very helpful about this. What we've said is that over the coming months, we want to discuss with the Chinese side the processes of budget making in Hong Kong and during the 1996-97 financial year, we'll want to discuss the content of the 1997 budget.

Question: But the two non-Chinese officials, they will come to know the secrets of the Hong Kong Government's finance?

Governor: No, what they will get to know if there are experts appointed from outside during the coming year is the processes, the way in which the Hong Kong Government makes the budget and if I may say so, does so very successfully.

Question: Have you ever taken drugs yourself?

Governor: No. I haven't. I'm not even in the position in which I say "Yes, but I didn't inhale." I have never taken drugs. Having said that, let me now qualify because the children who have been hearing, having a life education class would probably qualify what I've said straightaway. I used to smoke cigarettes until 1982, about February 25, when I threw away my last cigarette, partly because I had ulcers and I was told that I had a choice to make between taking medication for ulcer for the rest of my life or stopping smoking. It seemed to me infinitely preferable to stop smoking. But until then I had smoked and I'm sure it was extremely bad for me. I also drink alcohol from time to time, though I'm not drinking it at the moment because it is Lent.

Question: Do you think for fairness in the budget team, do you think they should avoid conflict of interest

Governor: I am sure that the Chinese officials have considered the point of our conflict of interest. But you'd better address those questions to Director Lu Ping or Ambassador Zhao or to other Chinese officials there. It's not one for me.

Question: Talking about the Sevens and underage drinking more done to crack down underage drinking ... drugs?

Governor: I think that the best way of tackling the issue is do the sort of life education that we've seen here. One of the important lessons which I think was being got across to children here is the importance of withstanding peer pressures. Peer pressures are something that we confront at every age. But I think they can be particularly difficult to cope with when you are young, when you are dealing with others who may have a particularly charismatic if youth personality. I think having the self confidence to say no to things that you recognise are bad for you, having that self confidence is something that's important for children to recognise. Frankly, it is important for all of us to recognise it. I think I started smoking when I was a student because my parents smoked and because most of my peers smoked. Back in the middle ages when I was growing up, smoking I think was far more common among young people than it is today. That may have had something to do with the fact that there's been so much evidence since then about the impact of smoking on health and that there's been so much more life education for young people. I believe very strongly that knowing how to say no firmly but courteously is an important way of living a happy life.

Question: So what about underage drinking?

Governor: Nobody can approve of underage drinking or of doing anything else which is illegal.

Question: (inaudible)

Governor: I think if there are particular occasions which encourage underage drinking, we have to take that into account and we have to try to stop it in future. But by and large, the overwhelming impression that I get from something like the Sevens, and I think most visitors get from something like the Sevens is unlike sporting events in some other countries, this is one which is conducted extraordinarily peacefully and even though there're quite a few people there who have to borrow a phrase clearly had taken refreshment, they nevertheless by and large behaved pretty well. So people had fun over the weekend but they didn't give the police the sort of problems which we see often occurring in Europe and other countries and I hope we can long continue in Hong Kong to enjoy ourselves without causing problems. Thank you very much indeed.

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HK continues to attract companies

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The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, said Hong Kong continued to attract companies with a regional dimension to their operations because of its unrivalled connection to China and the Asia-Pacific Region.

Speaking at the Jebsen & Co Ltd's 100th anniversary celebrations today (Tuesday), Mrs Chan pointed out that Hong Kong was home to 714 regional headquarters, a significant increase from the 588 identified in 1992.

It offered one of the most business-friendly environments in the world, with a stable and low-tax regime, a sound legal infrastructure, and a labour force comprising some of the best-trained and hardest-working people in the region, she said.

Trading in goods and services was the lifeblood of Hong Kong, said the Chief Secretary, noting that it was the seventh largest trading entity in the world.

"Over the last decade, Hong Kong's trade with the rest of the world has increased five-fold, and in 1994, total trade exceeded HK\$2,420 billion," she said.

She was delighted that Jebsen has chosen its 100th anniversary to establish an educational foundation to provide financial assistance to tertiary level students.

"Our human resources are our most precious asset and investment in the young people of Hong Kong will provide a lasting benefit to the territory," said Mrs Chan.

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Joint Liaison Group to hold 32nd meeting

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The following is issued on behalf of the Office of British Senior Representative of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group:

The 32nd meeting of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group will take place in Hong Kong on April 4, 6 and 7, 1995. The British team will be led by the Senior Representative, Mr Hugh Davies. The other members of the British team will be Mr Alan Paul (Counsellor, Office of the British Senior Representative, Sino-British Joint Liaison Group), Mr Nicholas Ng (Secretary for Constitutional Affairs, Hong Kong Government), Mr Robert Peirce (Political Adviser, Hong Kong Government), and Mr Sherard Cowper-Coles (Head of Hong Kong Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

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JLG expert talks on Budget

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In response to press enquiries, a government spokesman today (Tuesday) confirmed that experts of the British and Chinese sides of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group will meet very soon in Beijing to discuss matters relating to the preparation of the 1997/98 Budget for Hong Kong.

The British team will be led by Secretary for the Treasury, Mr Donald Tsang. The Chinese team will be led by Chinese representative at the Joint Liaison Group, Mr Chen Zuo'er. They will be assisted by experts from the two sides.

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Sino-British Technical Group meets

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The Sino-British Technical Group on Sewage disposal met today (Tuesday). The session was conducted in a pragmatic and harmonious atmosphere.

The Chinese experts, led by Professor Jing Wenyong and Professor Zhou Jiayi, listened with great care to the information provided by the British experts on technical issues of the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS) which were of concern to them and reached broad agreement on work procedures, work programme and the agenda for the second technical group meeting.

Tomorrow the Chinese experts will visit various projects associated with sewage treatment and SSDS.

The Director of Drainage Services, Mr Ng Yee-yum, and leader of the British side of the Technical Group, said the meeting was a good forum for experts of both sides to exchange information and views on highly technical issues.

Both sides look forward to further meetings in the near future.

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ICC panels to meet

The four panels of the Infrastructure Co-ordinating Committee will meet in Beijing for preliminary discussions.

The panel on Marine Channels will meet on March 30, the Roads and Bridges panel and the Air Traffic Control panel on March 31, and the Railway panel on April 4.

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Bills to enhance protection for vulnerable witnesses

Two bills aiming to protect and assist vulnerable witnesses in giving evidence in criminal proceedings were approved by the Governor-in-Council today (Tuesday).

A Government spokesman said today that the two bills, the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 1995 and the Evidence (Amendment) Bill 1995, would be introduced to the Legislative Council on April 19.

The proposed legislation was based on the recommendations made by the Committee on Evidence of Children in Criminal Proceedings, the Working Party on Mentally Handicapped People Giving Evidence in Court and the Fight Crime Committee, he said.

The legislation will give effect to the scheme on vulnerable witnesses outlined in the Attorney General's Policy Commitments issued in October last year.

The spokesman said that the Evidence (Amendment) Bill 1995, which applied to children giving evidence in criminal proceedings, sought to remove the presumption of a child's incompetence to testify and abolish a rule of evidence which had been described by one judge as a "child molester's" charter.

Under the existing law, he said, children under seven years old were generally incompetent to testify, and a child who understood the duty of speaking the truth but did not understand the nature of the oath might only give unsworn evidence, which, without corroboration, was not sufficient to convict an offender.

The bill seeks to abolish the rule that unsworn evidence of children required corroboration following the change of practice in England.

The spokesman said that the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 1995 sought to introduce special procedures to avoid the trauma and allay the anxiety that would be experienced by vulnerable witnesses, namely the witness in fear, the child and the mentally handicapped.

"The amendment provisions in the bill will enable vulnerable witnesses to testify through live television link in a room separate from the court-room," he said.

They would also enable a video-recorded interview with a child or a mentally handicapped witness to be produced as evidence-in-chief in the trial provided that the witness was available for cross-examination afterwards, he added.

Other amendments, the spokesman said, would enable a deposition of a child or a mentally handicapped witness, taken before a magistrate, to be produced at the trial as the witness' evidence.

Under the bill, a scheme is also proposed to be set up whereby once the prosecuting authority issued to the magistrate a "notice of transfer", committal proceedings can be dispensed with and the case involving a child or a mentally handicapped witness is committed for trial without further ado.

The spokesman said that the purpose of this procedure was to avoid the trauma that would be experienced by the child witnesses and mentally handicapped witnesses being required to give evidence twice, once at the committal proceedings and again at the trial.

It also had the peripheral benefit of reducing pre-trial delay, he said.

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Mandatory Provident Fund

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The proposed Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) System would be operated by the private sector with a sufficient number and variety of schemes to ensure healthy competition and efficient deployment through diverse channels of the huge sums to be invested.

This was stated by the Secretary for Financial Services, Mr Michael Cartland tonight (Tuesday) at the 15th Anniversary of the Dragon Jaycees.

He also called on community support to develop a system that would enable everyone to retire in dignity and in a manner consistent with the independent self-reliant traditions which had served Hong Kong so well.

Mr Cartland revealed that a consultant had just been appointed to help elaborate the details of the scheme.

"The Government aims to have the necessary legislation in place as quickly as possible within the current legislative session," he said.

He said the Government's preliminary thinking was that the compulsory system should contain the following key features:-

- * a minimum obligatory combined contribution rate from every employer and employee of ten percent, of which five per cent should come from the employer;
- * a benefits-qualifying age of 65;
- * preservation (i.e. non-withdrawal) of benefits until the qualifying age;
- * portability of benefits from one employer to another;
- * establishment of a mechanism to ensure preservation;
- * establishment of residual pooling arrangements for employees who are unable to join any other scheme in the market;
- * a private sector guarantee against fraud or other unlawful activity, perhaps financed through insurance or by a retrospective levy on the providers (insurers, trustees, banks and fund managers);
- * tighter regulation of providers, in particular trustees, and of investment vehicles; and
- * an authority to ensure comprehensive and prompt contributions and compliance with regulations.

"The Government considers that, if the community wishes a compulsory system to be introduced, all these features would be essential and in the best interests of the retiring work-force," said Mr Cartland.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine members appointed

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) the appointment of Dr Daniel C W Tse as the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine (PCCM) for two years, with effect from April 1, 1995. Dr Tse is the President and Vice-Chancellor of the Hong Kong Baptist University.

Also appointed at the same time are 20 members for the committee. They include seven traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioners, three members involved in the trade or dispensing of Chinese medicines, four academics or doctors with expertise and knowledge in Chinese medicine, three respectable community figures, and three Government officials.

The three officials are the Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare, the Director of Health and the Chief Pharmacist of the Department of Health, or their representatives. Except for the three Government officials, all members are appointed by the Secretary for Health and Welfare on ad personam basis.

The term of office for all PCCM members is also two years, starting from April 1. The appointments will be gazetted on Friday (March 31).

The establishment of the PCCM is one of the recommendations made in the Report of the Working Party on Chinese Medicine, which was released in November last year.

The Governor-in-Council has endorsed the Report, which is now the cornerstone of the Government's policy in recognising, regulating and developing traditional Chinese medicine.

"The work of the preparatory committee will have a significant bearing on the long-term development and regulation of TCM in Hong Kong," the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, said today (Tuesday).

"I strongly believe, that under the leadership of Dr Tse, the committee will go a long way towards the development on TCM," she added.

The main task of the PCCM is to steer the compilation of a list of TCM practitioners in Hong Kong, based on which the criteria of eventual registration of TCM practitioners will be devised upon the advice of the PCCM.

The PCCM is also responsible for advising on legislation establishing a statutory body for the purposes of promoting, developing and regulating TCM. Furthermore, it will advise on how public education in Chinese medicine, in particular potent herbs, can be enhanced and on other matters incidental to the carrying out of its functions.

"The work of the PCCM is complex and important. If need arises, its membership may be increased," Mrs Fok noted.

"We will also establish sub-committees under the PCCM to examine and discuss specific issues connected with TCM practitioners, Chinese medicine, etc. intensively in order to facilitate the work of the preparatory committee," she added.

The PCCM will hold its first meeting in April.

The following is a membership list of the PCCM :

Chairman

Dr Daniel C W TSE,
President and Vice-Chancellor of the Hong Kong Baptist University

Members

Mr TAM Ling-kwan
The Permanent Governor and President of Sin-Hua Herbalists & Herb Dealers'
Promotion Society

Mr MUI Ling-cheong
President of the Hong Kong Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Mr CHEUNG Tin-kay
Finance Officer of the Chinese Acupuncture Association

Mr KONG Yat-wai
Secretary-General of the Kowloon Herbalists Association

Mr CHEUNG Tai-chiu
Course Officer of Certificate Course in Chinese Medical Science of HKU's
School of Professional and Continuing Education

Mr FAN Siu-tsun
President of the Hong Kong Ching Wah Chinese Medical Institute

Mr KWAN Chi-yee
Permanent Honorary President of the Association of Hong Kong & Kowloon
Practitioners of Chinese Medicine

Mr CHEUNG Wai-chung
Chairman of the Hong Kong Yee Yee Tong Chinese Medicine Association

Mr CHOI Wai-lam
Secretary-General of the Hong Kong & Kowloon Chinese Medicine
Merchants Association

Mr HO Fat-yee
Vice-President of the Hong Kong Chinese Medicine Employees Association

Dr Paul BUT
Director of CUHK's Chinese Medicinal Materials Research Centre

Dr YEUNG Hin-wing
Professor in Biochemistry in CUHK

Dr Mabel YANG
Lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine of HKU

Dr W M KO
Deputy Director of Operations of the Hospital Authority

Professor Patrick HO
Ophthalmologist

Mr Paul C H FAN
Chairman of Paul Fan Securities Ltd

Dr C H LEONG
Legislative Councillor

Director of Health or her representatives
Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare or her representative

Chief Pharmacist or his representative

Attention News Editors:

The Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, will host a cocktail reception for members of the PCCM at 6.30 pm today (Tuesday) at the Staff Club, fourth floor, New Annexe, Central Government Offices (Main Wing).

You are invited to cover the event.

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TCM professionals urged to support preparatory committee

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The establishment of the Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine marks another step forward in Government's policy on traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, said.

The committee, which will be officially set up on April 1, will steer the implementation of the relevant recommendations made in the Report of the Working Party on Chinese Medicine released in November last year, she added.

Speaking at a cocktail reception today (Tuesday), Mrs Fok assured the newly-appointed members that the work of the preparatory committee would be challenging and important.

"Your work does have historical significance because traditional Chinese medicine, which has been existent for thousands of years, is part of our Chinese cultural heritage," she said.

"I hope, and I believe, that under the leadership of Dr Daniel Tse, who has remarkable experience and talent in public service, the preparatory committee will be able to create an environment for even more systematic, healthy and focused development of Chinese medicine."

Mrs Fok realised that professionals in the trade were very concerned about the recognition of their professional status in the community.

However, she emphasised that this professional status had its root only from the recognition by the public, not by the Government.

"The recognition stems from the contributions made by professionals to society over a sustainable period of time.

"Government, or even the preparatory committee, can only provide support for the creation of an infrastructure on which traditional Chinese medicine professionals can strive for excellence of their service," Mrs Fok said.

Her view was shared by Dr Daniel Tse, Chairman of the preparatory committee.

He noted that efforts made by people in the trade were prerequisite to having their professional status be recognised.

"I believe that this is a basic principle applicable to professions across the board," he said.

"This principle is particularly relevant to the TCM profession given its very diverse background in training, methodology and mode of practice on the part of TCM professionals.

"I therefore regard that co-operation among people in the trade is of paramount importance to the status of the TCM profession in our society. 'Persistent self-strengthening' is the crux of the development of Chinese medicine," he said.

On the role of the committee, Dr Tse said it would provide a framework within which the TCM profession could be recognised, regulated and developed.

"Government's policy on TCM will certainly rely on our advice, which has to be unbiased, objective, rational, practical and feasible.

"Our role, just like those of the many other Government's advisory committees in various policy areas, is to provide expert opinion in TCM," he added.

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New TAC chairman appointed and members reappointed

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The Governor has appointed Dr Raymond Ho Chung-tai to succeed Professor Leung Chi-keung as chairman of the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) for two years from April 1, 1995.

In addition, the Governor has reappointed Messrs Donald Chia, Leung Kong-yui and Miron Mushkat as members of the TAC for two years, also from April 1, 1995.

Dr Ho is a civil engineer by profession. He was formerly a partner/senior director of Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd and has been involved in many transport projects.

He is currently chairman of Capital China Group, a company involved in infrastructure, energy, industrial transportation and other projects.

He was previously council chairman of the City University of Hong Kong, president of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers and a vice-president of the Institution of Structural Engineers, UK.

The Secretary for Transport, Mr Haider Barma, said: "I am delighted that Dr Ho has accepted the chairmanship and that I am confident that given Dr Ho's professional background and wealth of experience in chairing committees he would lead the TAC with distinction."

Professor Leung first joined the Committee in 1986 and was appointed chairman in 1991. He has served on the TAC for nine years.

Mr Barma said: "The Administration has respected Professor Leung's wish to step down from the TAC at the end of his present term because of his full time commitments since taking up directorship of the Hong Kong Institute of Education. He will be missed and deserves full credit for his sterling work and substantial contribution."

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Committee endorses seat-belt wearing by bus drivers

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The Transport Advisory Committee today (Tuesday) agreed in principle the compulsory fitting and wearing of three-point seat belts for drivers of all newly registered buses.

The committee had not taken a decision on the time frame for the implementation of the new measure but endorsed the gradual introduction of seat-belt wearing by bus drivers.

As regards existing buses, members agreed that there should be a timetable whereby bus operators were required to modify their fleet, taking into account the types of vehicles involved and the technical feasibility of carrying out the modifications.

Members noted that as far as accident rates for bus drivers were concerned, bus drivers were a more at-risk group, having the third highest rate in comparative casualty rates for drivers per thousand licensed vehicles, and per million vehicle kilometres respectively.

From a road safety viewpoint, therefore, the additional protection offered by seat belts would be beneficial to bus drivers and hence to their passengers, members noted.

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Reclamations pose negligible effects on waterborne activities

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The results of hydraulic studies have concluded that reclamation works being carried out in the Victoria Harbour pose negligible effect on vessel navigation and other waterborne activities.

This was stated by the Principal Government Civil Engineer, Dr Choi Yu-leuk, during a press visit to the Harbour Hydraulic Laboratory of the Civil Engineering Department (CED) in Tuen Mun today (Tuesday).

Dr Choi said detailed hydraulic studies had been conducted by the government to ensure that the hydraulic conditions, both during and after the construction of major port developments, and large-scale reclamations would suit waterborne activities.

"The studies using a suite of advanced mathematical and physical models to find out the effects of harbour engineering works on tidal flow regime, wave climate and sediment deposition characteristics, have helped to select the optimum layouts of these proposed developments," he said.

He pointed out that the department had conducted over 30 hydraulic studies for major port developments since 1989. Of these, the most representative ones were the West Kowloon Reclamation, the Central Reclamation and the Green Island Reclamation in Victoria Harbour and the Lantau Port Development.

"It is found that upon the completion of the three reclamation projects in the Victoria Harbour, the peak current velocity between Central and Tsim Sha Tsui will be reduced by 12% while in other areas the current velocities will be basically unchanged.

"The result of an in-depth hydraulic study for the Lantau Port Development which involves about 1,000 hectares of reclaimed land and the construction of a five-kilometre long breakwater between Lamma Island and Cheung Chau, has indicated that upon the completion of the development, there will be little change to the tidal flow in the Victoria Harbour.

"On the other hand, the development will provide a more even distribution of the tidal flow in the western part of the harbour, resulting in better control of water quality.

"The increase of flow in East Lamma Channel is expected to be about six per cent. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Lantau Port Development does not have significant effect on navigation and other waterborne activities.

"The Lamma Breakwater will have a significant effect on the wave climate of the Western Harbour where an anchorage will be developed.

"The percentage of time during which wave height at the proposed anchorage exceeds 0.75 metre will be reduced from about 9.5% to about 1.8%, representing a substantial improvement to vessel safety," Dr Choi said.

"Meanwhile mathematical sediment transport modelling results have indicated that after the construction of these major developments, the rate of natural siltation in the Victoria Harbour and the Western Harbour will be decreased by 10% and 20% respectively, thus helping to alleviate an excessive sedimentation problem," he added.

Dr Choi said the Harbour Hydraulic Laboratory was built in 1989 to provide hydraulic modelling test services to investigate and assess the effects on the tidal regime of the harbour of various coastal development proposals, such as reclamations, piers, breakwaters and seabed dredging.

A physical tidal model of Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour is housed inside the laboratory, reproducing an area from Lei Yue Mun in the east, to Siu Lam in the west and to Lamma Island and Cheung Chau in the south.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Telecommunications Authority intervenes on competition issues

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The introduction of competition in fixed telecommunications network services (FTNS) requires the resolution of a number of complex technical and commercial issues.

The Telecommunications Authority, Mr Alexander Arena, has issued today (Tuesday) a Statement to assist the FTNS operators to progress their commercial negotiations on these matters.

"While some progress has been achieved so far in commercial negotiations, much more needs to be done quickly" Mr Arena said.

"The Telecommunications Authority is intervening now to help in the early resolution of these issues so that competition can be established as soon as possible after the Hong Kong Telephone Company's monopoly expires on June 30, 1995.

"Now that we have the Joint Liaison Group's endorsement to the issue of the FTNS licences we are moving quickly to ensure that the Hong Kong community can benefit from competition in telecommunications," Mr Arena said.

Copies of TA's Statement may be obtained from Senior Administrative Officer (Legislation & Planning) Miss Eliza Yau on tel 2961 6602 and fax 2803 5112.

Note to Editors:

Following is an executive summary of the statement on Interconnection and Related Competition Issues by the Telecommunications Authority, Mr Alexander Arena, today (Tuesday):

Executive Summary

The introduction of fixed telecommunications network services (FTNS) competition requires the resolution of a number of complex technical and commercial issues. After reviewing the progress of commercial negotiations among the fixed telecommunications operators [Hong Kong Telephone Company (HKTC), Hong Kong Telecom International (HKTI), and the three new entrants], the Telecommunications Authority (TA) is issuing this Statement to assist in the resolution of some of these issues and to progress future commercial negotiations on these and related matters.

The TA is of the view that :

- while some progress has been achieved so far in commercial negotiations, much more needs to be done quickly and the TA now proposes that this statement assists to determine an industry position on a number of outstanding matters;
- calling line identification (CLI) data is integral to the efficient operation of modern telecommunications networks;
 - * CLI should be made available by all fixed telecommunications network services (FTNS) licensees to other FTNS licensees on a ubiquitous basis;
 - * all FTNS licensees should be required to abide by a CLI Code of Conduct on customer information obtained through CLI exchange; and
 - * the Code would be developed by the TA in consultation with all network licensees by 31 May 1995;

- under the terms of the FTNS licences, operators are obliged to provide their services to resellers at their published rates. An FTNS operator is not precluded from reselling tariffed services acquired from another FTNS licensee;
- each operator (HKTI and the four FTNS operators) is the subject of a discrete permission to operate and does not act as an agent of any other operator. Interconnection matters between them fall under Section 36A of the Telecommunication Ordinance;
- numbering issues;
 - * "00X" codes are to be assigned to local FTNS operators for customer access via their networks to the international gateway(s);
 - * a variety of "0XX" access codes are to be removed to the "10X" range after 30 June 1995;
 - * number portability is to be introduced based on an intelligent network (IN) approach. Pending the implementation of the IN approach, operators shall implement an interim solution based on call forwarding.
- customer access arrangements. Direct access is to be facilitated and indirect access allowed subject to particular regulatory oversight.

The rest of this Statement provides more detailed background on these issues and expands on the TA's consideration of them.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Resolution at Arts Development Council meeting

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The Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) resolved at its meeting today (Tuesday) to give its support in principle to two documents - the Guidelines for Representative Arts Organisations and for their Nominees for Membership of the HKADC and the Standing Orders of the HKADC as drafted and presented for discussion at the meeting of the LegCo Panel for Recreation and Culture on March 23.

Upon fine-tuning of the above two documents by the Recreation and Culture Branch (RCB) taking into consideration views of the arts community and the HKADC, the contents of the two papers, if amended, will be circulated again to the HKADC for approval.

The Council is satisfied that the Standing Orders for the HKADC as drafted by the RCB will enable the HKADC to attain the level of open and transparent operations so desired by the HKADC and the arts community and at the same time accord the HKADC due discretion on matters over which the HKADC is in the best position to decide.

Members were unanimously in favour of adopting the Standing Orders.

A vote was taken on whether the requirement for open meetings should be enshrined in the law as proposed by the Ms Christine Loh.

The results was 11 against, six in favour and one abstention.

Two members who were absent from the meeting had earlier indicated that they were not in favour of legislation.

The HKADC would like to urge the Legislative Council to respect the collective wishes of the Council and the arts community and to move towards enactment of the HKADC Bill with all expedition upon its second and third reading.

In so doing the HKADC hopes that the Legislative Council will give paramount importance to the central issue, that is, to consider all aspects of the Bill in the light of their efficacy for the development of the arts in Hong Kong.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

External trade figures for February 1995

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Both re-exports and imports continued to increase substantially in February 1995. Domestic exports also showed a notable increase.

These are shown in the external trade figures for February released today (Tuesday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

The value of total exports (comprising re-exports and domestic exports) increased by \$11.9 billion or 16% to \$84.8 billion in February 1995.

Within total exports, the value of re-exports, at \$70.0 billion in February 1995, was \$10.7 billion or 18% higher than a year earlier.

The value of domestic exports increased by \$1.3 billion or 10% over a year earlier to \$14.8 billion in February. Meanwhile, the value of imports increased by \$20.4 billion or 26% to \$99.7 billion.

As the value of total exports in February 1995 was smaller than that of total imports, a visible trade deficit of \$14.9 billion, equivalent to 15.0% of the value of imports, was recorded. This compared with a deficit of \$6.5 billion, equivalent to 8.2% of the value of imports, in February 1994.

In the first two months of 1995, the value of total exports grew by 20% over the same period last year. Amongst this, the value of re-exports rose by 21%, while that of domestic exports increased by 14%. The value of imports showed an increase of 28%.

In the same period, a visible trade deficit of \$18.5 billion, equivalent to 9.1% of the value of imports, was recorded.

This compared with a deficit of \$4.7 billion, equivalent to 3.0% of the value of imports, recorded in the first two months of 1994.

A Government spokesman said the strong export performance in the first two months of 1995 was encouraging. Of particular note was the continued significant growth in domestic exports, which until fairly recently still recorded declines.

The spokesman added that the larger visible trade deficit recorded so far this year was partly because of a further deterioration in the terms of trade, as the prices of imports continued to rise faster than those of exports in recent months.

Another important contributory factor was the marked increase in retained imports, by 40% in value terms in January and February combined over a year earlier.

The strong absorption of imports for local use was related to the pick-up in industrial activity along with a better export performance, as well as the sustained domestic demand particularly in regard to investment in capital goods.

A detailed analysis of Hong Kong's external trade for February 1995, by commodity and country, will be released in mid-April.

EXTERNAL TRADE FIGURES FOR FEBRUARY 1995

MERCHANDISE: Domestic Exports :	\$14,764 million
Re-exports :	\$70,016 million
Total Exports :	\$84,781 million
Imports :	\$99,706 million
Trade balance :	-\$14,925 million

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Latest 3 months	Dec 94 to	Dec 93 to	Change	
	Feb 95	Feb 94	HK\$ Mn.	%
	HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.		
Domestic Exports	53,066	49,397	+3,669	+7.4
(% of Total Exports)	(18.4%)	(19.8%)		
Re-exports	235,189	199,910	+35,279	+17.6
Total Exports	288,255	249,307	+38,948	+15.6
Imports	316,252	255,732	+60,520	+23.7
Trade balance	-27,997	-6,425	-21,572	

Same month last year	February	February	Change	
	1995	1994	HK\$ Mn.	%
	HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.		
Domestic Exports	14,764	13,474	+1,290	+9.6
(% of Total Exports)	(17.4%)	(18.5%)		
Re-exports	70,016	59,365	+10,651	+17.9
Total Exports	84,781	72,839	+11,941	+16.4
Imports	99,706	79,305	+20,401	+25.7
Trade balance	-14,925	-6,465	-8,459	

Last month	February	January	Change	
	1995	1995	HK\$ Mn.	%
	HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.		
Domestic Exports	14,764	18,178	-3,414	-18.8
(% of Total Exports)	(17.4%)	(17.9%)		
Re-exports	70,016	83,143	-13,126	-15.8
Total Exports	84,781	101,321	-16,540	-16.3
Imports	99,706	104,944	-5,238	-5.0
Trade balance	-14,925	-3,623	-11,302	

Calendar year to-date	Jan-Feb	Jan-Feb	Change	
	1995	1994	HK\$ Mn.	%
	HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.		
Domestic Exports	32,942	28,815	+4,128	+14.3
(% of Total Exports)	(17.7%)	(18.6%)		
Re-exports	153,159	126,136	+27,023	+21.4
Total Exports	186,102	154,951	+31,151	+20.1
Imports	204,649	159,682	+44,967	+28.2
Trade balance	-18,548	-4,732	-13,816	

Last 12 months	Mar 94 to	Mar 93 to	Change	
	Feb 95	Feb 94	HK\$ Mn.	%
	HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.		
Domestic Exports	226,220	220,475	+5,745	+2.6
(% of Total Exports)	(18.8%)	(20.8%)		
Re-exports	974,944	838,631	+136,314	+16.3
Total Exports	1,201,164	1,059,106	+142,058	+13.4
Imports	1,295,676	1,086,081	+209,595	+19.3
Trade balance	-94,512	-26,975	-67,536	

28 March 1995
CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

Application on quota allocation for entry of PRC fisherman deckhands

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Applicants for PRC fisherman deckhands quota allocation under the PRC fisherman deckhands scheme are reminded to submit their applications on or before Friday (March 31), which is the closing date for the application, a spokesman for the Immigration Department said today (Tuesday).

"Applications under the new scheme may be made by hand or by post before the closing date to the Harbour Control office of the Immigration Department at 10th floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central. Late applications will not be entertained," the spokesman said.

Enquiries concerning the new arrangement may be directed to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department on tel 2733 2201 or to the Immigration Department at 2852 3421.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Dead chicken case

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There was no evidence to show that dogs were responsible for the attacks on chickens at the temporary Smithfield market early yesterday (Monday) morning, Senior Veterinary Officer of the Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD), Dr Liu Kwei-kin, said today (Tuesday) following investigation of the case.

Dr Liu said there was no evidence indicating that the premises had been disturbed by dogs. The single metal cage in which the dead chickens were reported to be found showed no signs of damage.

Also, the fact that the deaths were restricted to one cage was not consistent with the usual pattern of dog attacks on caged poultry, he said.

The cause of death of the chickens could not be determined since all the carcasses had been disposed of, he added.

Dr Liu pointed out that in the two days following the incident, the department had organised nine dog-catching operations involving five teams of dog-catching staff near the temporary market in Smithfield, but no stray dogs were sighted in the vicinity. These operations were carried out both in the daytime and overnight.

"Evidence so far did not point to the fact that dogs were responsible for the case," he said.

However, Dr Liu stressed that the department would liaise closely with the market management to monitor the situation. AFD's dog-catching teams would also step up patrols in the area.

He called upon all dog owners to keep their dogs under proper control to prevent causing nuisance to other people.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Schools Dance Festival performances

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The best dancers from among 4,002 students who took part in the 31st Schools Dance Festival will perform for the public in April.

The dance extravaganza is part of the prize presentation and winners performances which will be held at the Concert Hall, Hong Kong City Hall on April 10 and 11, and at the Auditorium, Sha Tin Town Hall on April 14, 15 and 16.

All performances -- Chinese, Oriental, Modern, Western Folk and Children Dances -- will begin at 7.30 pm each evening.

Tickets of \$15, \$25 and \$30 for all performances are available at the URBTIX outlets. There will be a 10 per cent discount for any purchase of 10 or more tickets.

The 31st Schools Dance Festival Winners Performances are presented by the Education Department, the Urban and Regional Councils, and the Hong Kong Schools Sports Council.

A spokesman for the Education Department said today (Tuesday) that 20 special schools, 81 secondary schools and 119 primary schools took part in this year's Dance Festival.

He said 40 schools received honours, 130 were highly commended, 140 commended and nine teams were awarded for their choreography.

Results of the Dance Festival are:

Primary School Section

Champion : Sam Shui Natives' Association School
1st runner-up : St Paul's Convent School Primary Section
2nd runner-up : Dr Catherine F Woo Memorial School
3rd runner-up : Yaumati Catholic Primary AM School

Secondary School Section

Champion : SKH Bishop Mok Sau Tseng Secondary School
1st runner-up : St Paul's Convent School
2nd runner-up : Bishop Hall Jubilee School
3rd runner-up : Tack Ching Girls Middle School

Most Progressive School Award

Primary School Section : Sam Shui Natives' Association School
Secondary School Section : St Paul's Convent School

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Ching Ming Festival holiday reminder

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The Labour Department today (Tuesday) reminded employers that April 5 (Wednesday), the Ching Ming Festival Day, is one of the 11 statutory holidays for employees.

Under the Employment Ordinance, all employees, irrespective of their wage levels, are entitled to statutory holidays and must be paid for the day off if they have worked continuously for the same employer for three months or longer immediately before the statutory holiday.

Holiday pay should be equivalent to an employee's earnings on a full working day and should include basic wages as well as allowances that can be expressed in money terms such as meals and cost of living allowances.

Where the earnings vary from day to day, holiday pay should be the average daily earnings during every complete wage period, which could be between 28 and 31 days, preceding the holiday.

If an employee is required to work on a statutory holiday, he must be given an alternative day off within 60 days before or after that day.

Enquiries about statutory holidays may be made at the Labour Department's General Enquiry Telephone Service on tel 2717 1771.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

No mail delivery on Ching Ming Festival

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The Postmaster General, Mr Mike Pagliari, announced today (Tuesday) that there would be no mail delivery on April 5 (Ching Ming Festival).

All post offices will be closed on that day.

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	28 Mar 95	28 Mar 95
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q513	H561
Amount applied	HK\$5,698 MN	HK\$5,170 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN	HK\$800 MN
Average yield accepted	5.40 PCT	5.63 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.40 PCT	5.64 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 67 PCT	About 17 PCT
Average tender yield	5.44 PCT	5.66 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning April 3, 1995

Tender date	4 Apr 95
Paper on offer	EF bills
Issue number	Q514
Issue date	6 Apr 95
Maturity date	5 Jul 95
Tenor	90 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300 MN

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,965	0930	+666
Closing balance in the account	1,167	1000	+666
Change attributable to :		1100	+651
Money market activity	+654	1200	+654
LAF today	-1,452	1500	+654
		1600	+654

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 118.1 *-0.1* 28.3.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/Hong Kong Government bonds				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.99	14 months	2605	6.35	100.44	6.02
1 month	5.04	23 months	2702	7.50	102.00	6.46
3 months	5.37	28 months	3707	6.95	100.94	6.61
6 months	5.58	34 months	3801	8.00	103.14	6.87
12 months	5.89	60 months	5003	7.75	102.05	7.38

Total turnover of bills and bonds - \$20,918 million

Closed March 28, 1995

End/Tuesday, March 28, 1995