



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Governor media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after attending the SHA's Spring Reception this (Tuesday) evening:

Question: Have you been cheered up by Mr Major who came for the visit? He is on your side ....

Governor: Not very surprising, since he is the Prime Minister who appointed me and I've been implementing the British Government's policy, and a very sensible policy it is too. I said this morning that I think his visit was an excellent one, extremely successful. He brought good news for Hong Kong and I very much hope that Chinese officials will bring good news for Hong Kong on right of abode. Now that we've sorted out the issue of visa-free access for SAR passport holders to the United Kingdom, we want to move on as rapidly as possible to deal with the right of abode issue. And the sooner we can have sensible and practical and generous proposals to implement the promise that Mr Qian Qichen has made about everybody who has permanent residence before 1997 enjoying it after 1997, the sooner we can have proposals on the table about that the better. I also think it is extremely important for us now to start lobbying other countries in the European Union and North America and elsewhere to ensure that we have as much visa-free access for people from Hong Kong as possible.

Question: But the Chinese side thinks Mr Major is using the international pressure ....

Governor: I answered the question on that this morning. It is a ridiculous charge by the united front newspapers.

Question: Chinese officials think that the Hong Kong Government hasn't been in contact with them for the liaison office. So when will the Government be in contact with them?

Governor: The Hong Kong Government has offered assistance to the Preparatory Committee. We've established the liaison office. We've made it absolutely clear that we are standing by to be co-operative whenever we are asked for help. We are still waiting to know what the Preparatory Committee would like us to help them with.

Question: The Chinese side has said yes to the Lutheran Church to hold its world assembly in July 1997. But today Dr Noko of the Lutheran Church said the Chinese side has yet to make a very firm promise on allowing Taiwanese delegates to enter Hong Kong. What is your comment on this?

Governor: Well, I haven't heard about the latter point. But it's nothing to do with the Chinese Government or any other Chinese authority whether the Lutherans hold the conference here in 1997. It's entirely a matter for them. This is a free society in which people enjoy freedom of religious worship, in which they enjoy freedom to organise conferences as they wish. The Hong Kong Government doesn't interfere in those matters now. Those are things that are guaranteed in the Joint Declaration. It's nothing to do with the Chinese Government whether the Lutherans have the conference in the summer of 1997, and I very much hope that they will have a successful conference and enjoy Hong Kong as much as the rest of us do.

Question: But is it already on JLG discussions ...?

Governor: You've asked about three questions already. No. It's nothing to do with the JLG as I've just said in my reply.

Question: You think the SAR should also give the visa-free arrangement for the British people who will come to Hong Kong after 1997 in return?

Governor: I am sure the SAR Government will want to have as open a policy as far as travellers and visitors and business people are concerned as we have today. Hong Kong is a great international city. One of the reasons for its success is that people can come in and out very freely as to do business, to invest, to set up firms, to visit. We're one of the business centres in the world and one of the tourist centres in the world as well. O.K.

Question: What is your plan after 1997?

Governor: To have a rest. I shall have a lie-in and hope that somebody brings me a cup of coffee in bed. And then I shall spend some time reading and writing and reflecting on what a happy five years I've had in Hong Kong.

End

Transcript of the Governor

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Following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after the Executive Council meeting this (Tuesday) morning:

Governor: Good morning. I'm obviously delighted that the Prime Minister had such a successful visit to Hong Kong and, from his point of view, I think he found the visit both very useful and extremely enjoyable. It was a successful visit above all because I think it gave all of us in the community a considerable confidence boost because of the decisions made by the British Cabinet about visa-free access, because of the further decisions made about war widows, which I very much welcomed, and of course the decision made about the ethnic minorities. Some people would have liked to have gone further, but I think it's an important step in very much the right direction. I think that after the Prime Minister's speech yesterday, and after his answers to questions, nobody should be able to say again that Britain doesn't recognise its substantial and substantive commitment in the short, the medium and the long term to Hong Kong, a commitment that is legal, that is moral and that is economic. And that commitment was underlined by the Prime Minister yesterday I think as forcefully as it's ever been done by any British minister or politician. I think there are now a number of consequences which follow from that visit. First of all, we in Hong Kong must do all we can to ensure that private members legislation comes forward rapidly on the war widows. I think there are a number of things that the Chinese have to do in order to make their contribution to greater confidence in the community. The British Government has made a sensible and helpful decision on visa-free access. Now it's for Chinese officials, for Chinese leaders, to make as rapidly as possible an equally sensible and positive decision on right of abode in Hong Kong after 1997. The sooner we can have proposals brought forward for the detailed and sensitive implementation for Mr Qian Qichen's promises and the promises in the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law on right of abode the better. And I think the whole community will be looking to Chinese officials for those sort of assurances within the coming weeks. So there's obviously still much work for us to do. There are decisions which we still need to take and to get right, but I think that this week has been a good one for Hong Kong, and a week whose consequences will echo down the coming months and indeed years. Thank you very much indeed.

Question: Did Mr Prime Minister discuss about the right of abode with the Chinese Premier in Bangkok?

Governor: I think you'll have to ask the Prime Minister's Office or the Foreign Office for details of his meeting. I think that every British official who has met an opposite number recently has raised the question of right of abode. I'm pretty certain that the Prime Minister after telling Premier Li Peng about our decision on visa-free access went on to mention the importance of an early decision on right of abode as well. But in order to get confirmation of that, you have to ask the Foreign Office.

Question: (on China's reaction to PM's remarks)

Governor: Well of course, the sort of thing that is said by some of those united front newspapers in Hong Kong doesn't surprise anybody. That's what you expect them to say. The notion that it's inappropriate for the Prime Minister to talk about how best one can safeguard the way of life in Hong Kong, how best one can honour the commitments and obligations set out in the Joint Declaration, the notion that it's inappropriate for the British Prime Minister to discuss those things is one that could only feature in a united front editorial. Of course, everybody recognises that the most effective way in which Chinese officials could meet what they say is their aim of boosting confidence in Hong Kong would be by making it absolutely clear that they stand by the promises that have been made to Hong Kong on both human rights and their safeguarding, and as well on the development of representative institutions, the development of democracy on Hong Kong. It's difficult to see how commitments on those matters can be matched by what's been said by Chinese officials about dismantling the Legislative Council. Does one dismantle the Legislative Council in order to have a fairer electoral system? And it's difficult to match those promises with what's been said about gutting, filleting the Bill of Rights, and about reporting obligations under the international covenants. So obviously we would very much like to see positive responses by Chinese officials on those matters. And I'm sure those positive responses, were they to come, would meet with overwhelming relief and overwhelming enthusiasm here in Hong Kong. I think those matters are exceptionally important. And I don't doubt that it would take some effort of will and some political effort to reverse positions that have been taken publicly. But I'm equally no doubt that it would be hugely in Hong Kong's interest were that to happen.

Question: How about your role in the hand-over ceremony ...?

Governor: Shiny. Can I just make this point as vigorously as I have made it before, and I don't want to answer any more questions about it. It is a ridiculous issue for anybody to harp on. Who represents the British Government at the hand-over in 1997 is entirely a matter for the British Government. It has nothing to do with Chinese officials. It has nothing to do with NCNA sources, it has nothing to do with those who write editorials and comments for united front newspapers. It is a matter for the British Government and it is impertinent for anybody to suggest otherwise. Is that now reasonably clear? Have we got it absolutely plain?

Question: Is it true that in your closed door and background briefings for the British press, you've said ... back to British politics?

Governor: No, What is true is what they actually reported on the record because that part of my discussion with them was entirely on the record and let me tell you what is on the record and then you can decide what you think it means. When asked about my future intentions, I said I didn't intend making up my mind until after I've completed this job and I went on to say that I didn't rule in trying to get back into British politics and I didn't rule out trying to get back to British politics. That sounds to me about as neutral as one can get in the circumstances though some people wrote it up a bit. I think that sometimes happens in newsrooms.

Question: Yesterday John Major when talking about confidence levels in Hong Kong, he talked about how the eyes of the world will be on Hong Kong after it reverts to Chinese rule. China today announced it is going to stage missile test in the sea north of Taiwan. What effect do you think the missile tests have on people's confidence ...?

Governor: I think that people look at what's happening in the region as a whole and it affects their confidence both today and their confidence in the future. I don't want to get involved in arguments that take place elsewhere in the region. Life is difficult enough without that. But I very much hope that all those disputes and arguments can be settled amicably and peacefully and through negotiation. This is a community more than most others which reads the newspapers and watches the television and knows what's going on and we know from previous events that these matters do have an impact on public opinion and do have an impact on sentiment and do have an impact on confidence. So, I hope that we'll see a peaceful and negotiated settlement of all these matters which are obviously of considerable consequence.

Question: The Chinese are likely to say what John Major has done is to internationalise the Hong Kong issue and ... he mustn't drag the Hong Kong issue into the international arena ...?

Governor: Next year, there will be some people think three, four, five, six thousand journalists from all over the world in Hong Kong to report what happens in June and July. Why are they here? Because what happens in Hong Kong is of interest to the whole world. It's of interest to the whole world for a number of reasons partly because it is one of the most open cities anywhere, partly because it is a city which culturally, economically, socially is not only at the hub of Asia, but at the cross-roads between Asia, North America and Europe. Whatever anybody may like, whatever any united front editorialist may write, Hong Kong is going to remain at the top of the world's interest for some time to come. It's also of course true that the treaty which guarantees Hong Kong's way of life for the indefinite future is lodged at the United Nations. It is true that our human rights, our civil liberties here in Hong Kong are guaranteed by international covenants which are agreed by the United Nations. So, nobody should kid themselves that Hong Kong is somehow going to be lost to public view internationally in 1997 or thereafter. Hong Kong is going to be a very big issue as far as the world is concerned and I am sure the world is going to want to see Hong Kong as successful after 1997 as it's been before 1997. It will be, provided it's way of life is maintained. Thank You.

End

New Director of Environmental Protection appointed

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The Government today (Tuesday) announced that the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection, Mr R J S Law, has been selected to succeed Dr S B Reed as the Director of Environmental Protection from April 27. Dr Reed will proceed on pre-retirement leave on the same day.

In making the announcement, a government spokesman said a promotion exercise was conducted in December last year to consider the suitability of professional grades directorate officers in the Planning, Environment and Lands Branch, Works Branch and their groups of departments.

All serving professional officers with relevant administrative experience at D3/DL3 and D4 levels and assistant directors of Environmental Protection (D2) were considered.

Mr Law was selected as the most suitable candidate for the job.

Following are biographical notes of Mr Law and Dr Reed:

Mr R J S Law

Aged 46, Mr Law first joined the civil service as a Senior Environmental Protection Officer in July 1981.

He was promoted to Assistant Director of Environmental Protection in April 1987 and to Deputy Director of Environmental Protection in December 1990.

Dr S B Reed

Aged 59, Dr Reed first joined the civil service as Environmental Protection Adviser in July 1977.

He became the Commissioner for Environmental Protection in November 1980 and the Director of Environmental Protection in April 1986. He will retire from the civil service on reaching the normal retirement age of 60.

End

Transport Department's response to CMB's labour dispute

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In response to press enquiries on today's dispute between maintenance staff at the China Motor Bus Company's Chai Wan Depot and CMB management, a spokesman for the Transport Department said:

"The department has monitored the situation very closely throughout the day to ensure that normal bus operation is not affected.

"Despite the dispute at Chai Wan depot, CMB managed to provide normal service and we will continue to monitor its operation.

"Throughout the day, the department has maintained close contact with Labour Department, union representatives and CMB management.

"We understand that staff representatives and CMB management had held a meeting, with the Labour Department as mediator, to solve their differences.

"We welcome the staff's decision to resume their normal duties tomorrow."

End

Majority of primary schools to adopt TOC

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The Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) will be adopted by about 500 schools in September, representing more than 60 per cent of all primary schools in Hong Kong, the Director of Education, Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu, said today (Tuesday).

Opening a TOC Resource Centre for Hong Kong region, Mrs Yu urged other schools to join in so as to improve the quality of education, adding that TOC would be used in the subjects of Chinese, English and Mathematics at Primary One.

The new centre is the second one in the territory to provide a comprehensive range of services and resource support which would help schools to effectively implement TOC.

The first one, in To Kwa Wan, is already in operation and the third one will be opened later this month in Sheung Shui.

The resources provided include exemplar learning and assessment tasks produced by the TOC Development Unit; a collection of reference materials, including books, journals, worksheets, teaching kits and audio visual materials from other countries practising curriculum similar to TOC; and a computerised cataloguing system for retrieving reference materials.

The centres are equipped for viewing audio-visual materials, and there is a loan system for exemplar learning and assessment tasks.

Training programmes, seminars and workshops will be organised for school heads and teachers. There will also be talks, exhibitions and experience sharing sessions.

The TOC Resource Centre for Hong Kong region is situated at 14th floor, CRE Building, 303 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, and the one for Kowloon Region is at seventh floor, To Kwa Wan Market and Government Offices, 165 Ma Tau Wai Road, To Kwa Wan.

The New Territories Region centre will be located at Units 709-711, seventh floor, Landmark North, Sheung Shui.

The opening hours are 9 am to 5 pm from Mondays to Fridays and 9 am to noon on Saturdays.

Enquiries may be made at the TOC Assessment Unit, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Department on 2762 1769.

End

Financial Secretary to answer questions on Budget

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The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, will have direct dialogues with members of the public on matters relating to the 1996/97 Budget through a radio phone-in programme to be broadcast live on Thursday (March 7) morning.

The Financial Secretary will take questions from callers of RTHK Radio 1 and 5's "Talkabout" and Radio 3's "Hong Kong Today" programmes from 7.45am to 9 am.

The programme, "Financial Secretary Phone-in", with simultaneous interpretation, will take place in Broadcasting House, 30 Broadcast Drive, Kowloon.

The phone-in numbers are 187 2311 for Cantonese speaking callers and 2338 8266 for English speaking callers.

Later in the morning, the Financial Secretary will brief chairmen of the two municipal councils and 18 district boards at 10 am at the Home Affairs Department Headquarters on the 96/97 Budget.

In the afternoon, Mr Tsang will give his second press conference at 3 pm in the Information Services Department.

On Friday (March 8), Mr Tsang will brief legislative councillors at 9 am at the Legislative Council.

End

Budget summary broadcast on TV and radio

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Television and radio stations will broadcast the 1996-97 budget summary by the Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, tomorrow (Wednesday).

Following is the timetable for the broadcast:

<u>Station</u>	<u>Time</u>
TVB Jade	5.46 pm
TVB Pearl	7.10 pm
ATV Home	5.50 pm
ATV World	6.55 pm
Cable TV News Channel	7.25 pm
RTHK Radio 1 (Chinese)	5.30 pm
RTHK Radio 2 (Chinese)	6.15 pm
RTHK Radio 3 (English)	5.30 pm

Commercial Radio 1 (Chinese)	5 pm (after main news)
Commercial Radio 2 (Chinese)	6 pm (after main news)
Commercial Radio (English)	6 pm (after main news)
Metro News (English)	6.30 pm

End

Budget guide for public collection tomorrow

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A budget guide highlighting the major points of the 1996-97 budget and how they affect the average Hong Kong citizen will be distributed free to the public tomorrow (Wednesday) immediately after the Financial Secretary has delivered his Budget Speech.

Entitled "What the 1996 Budget Means for You", the leaflet is a bilingual publication with 200,000 copies to be issued by the Government on Budget Day.

The easy-to-read leaflet, giving budget facts and figures at a glance, will be available from 4.30 pm at:

- \* Mass Transit Railway stations in Central, Causeway Bay, Mong Kok, Wong Tai Sin, Kwun Tong, Tsim Sha Tsui, Tsuen Wan;
- \* Kowloon and Sha Tin stations of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation;

and from 4.30 pm to 7 pm from:

- \* the Publishing Sub-Division of the Government Information Services, 17th floor, Siu On Centre, 188 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai;
- \* the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, Lower Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, and

\* all district offices.

Meanwhile, copies of the 1996-97 Budget Speech will also be available for collection by members of the public from all district offices and the Publishing Sub-Division of the Government Information Services from 10 am on Thursday (March 7).

End

Contract to convert plan data to digital format signed

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The Planning Department has signed an agreement with China Siwei Surveying and Mapping Technology Corporation today (Tuesday) for the provision of service to convert plan data to digital format.

The project would involve converting plan data on about 300 Outline Development Plans/Layout Plans and 300 land supply record plans covering the New Territories to digital format, a spokesman for the department said.

"The digital plan data will facilitate the implementation of various computer projects which include computer aided drafting systems and geographical information systems in the department," he said.

The project will take about six months to complete.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

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Tender date	5 Mar 96
Paper on offer	EF Bills
Issue number	Q610
Issue date	6 Mar 96
Maturity date	5 Jun 96
Coupon	-
Amount applied	HK\$7,560 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN
Average yield accepted	4.90 PCT
Highest yield accepted	4.91 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 33 PCT
Average tender yield	4.92 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning 11 Mar, 1996

Tender date	12 Mar 96	12 Mar 96
Paper on offer	EF Bills	EF Bills
Issue number	Q611	H660
Issue date	13 Mar 96	13 Mar 96
Maturity date	12 Jun 96	11 Sept 96
Tenor	91 days	182 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300 MN	HK\$800+160 MN

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	2,197	0930	+605
Closing balance in the account	2,184	1000	+605
Change attributable to :		1100	+605
Money market activity	+605	1200	+605
LAF today	- 618	1500	+605
		1600	+605

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 123.6 \*+0.1\* 05.03.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.67	2 years	2802	5.16	99.81	5.33
1 month	4.79	3 years	3901	5.57	100.09	5.61
3 months	4.92	5 years	5012	6.38	101.25	6.16
6 months	5.02	7 years	7302	6.02	97.52	6.57
12 months	5.07	5 years	M502	7.30	103.68	6.48

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$13,484 million

Closed March 5, 1996

End