



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Governor's media session

Following is the transcript of the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten's media session after officiating at the inauguration of the 29th term of the Heung Yee Kuk today (Tuesday):

Question: Can we have your response to this JLG meeting this morning when they said that we are spending too much in social welfare ... It's like a formula one car which is going to crash and kill all six million people...

Governor: I think that people in Hong Kong will be astonished to hear Chinese officials suggesting that we should make savage cuts in our provision for the elderly, for the disabled, for those in need, that we should slash our programmes for kindergartens for the young, for education for our children. I think it is astonishing. People in Hong Kong have earned the money for these community programmes through their own hard work, and of course we can afford them. When people talk about driving cars, what they should remember is that according to a very well known, prestigious American think-tank which reported at the beginning of the week we are the best car drivers in the world. They've just put us top of the league for managing the economy and one of the things that they've underlined is our very sensible and prudent control of public spending. So, I think everybody should stick to what they know about and not get involved in areas where they are not particularly expert. Of course, the question of how much Hong Kong spends on its welfare and social programmes will have nothing to do with any Chinese official after 1997. It's entirely a matter for the people of Hong Kong and for those who govern them and those who represent them. Hong Kong people running Hong Kong means Hong Kong people running their schemes for the elderly, their schemes for the disabled, their education programmes, their health programmes. So I hope we won't hear any more of this sort of suggestion. I've pointed out before and it remains true that as a proportion of the community's income, the state will take less in 1997 than it was taking in the early 1980's. When European countries, when American countries look at our sensible control of public spending, when they see that we keep it below 20 per cent of our GDP, they are overwhelmed with admiration for the fact that we've managed to provide decent community services for people in Hong Kong without ever jeopardising the strength of our economy. So I think that people should leave us to drive our own car and I'm sure that they'll be able to get some good tips from us as we continue to cruise along the road.

Question: Will you be bringing this ... expenditure .. of the JLG in the future?

Governor: What we are doing at the moment because we want a smooth transition is informing Chinese officials how we run our economy and how we run our public spending programmes and frankly, they should have a look at the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law and they should understand that after 1997 these are matters for the people of Hong Kong. And the people of Hong Kong aren't going to take too kindly to the suggestion that we should cut all our community programmes to shreds. One more question.

Question: Are you saying that Hong Kong people can run their own economy after 1997?

Governor: Of course. That's what it says in the Joint Declaration. That's what it says in the Basic Law.

Question: A question on the environment. The Government spent about \$9 billion on the airport project. discrepancy...

Governor: I think you under-estimated the amount that we spent on the airport. We are spending a lot more than that on the airport. But nobody sensibly would, I think, suggest that you should directly compare what's spent on preserving our country parks - which is enormously important to our environment - with what we are spending on developing our infrastructure. If you want to consider the sort of priority that we give to environmental matters, look at the proposals that we've put forward for dealing with air pollution, look at the \$8 billion that we are spending on the first phase of our sewage strategy in order to clean up the waters around our shores. But also look at the efforts we are making in the New Territories through our task force to clear up those part of the environment which have been most affected by unsightly development, or by unplanned development. On top of all that, anybody who is concerned about the quality of life in Hong Kong must want to do everything possible to preserve our country parks and I hope that those who use our country parks, and who walk in our country parks will remember first of all not to drop litter in them. If you have a picnic in the country parks, please clear it up. And secondly I hope that all remember the danger of fire particularly at this time of year.

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Fundamental policy applies to the NT as to the rest of HK

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The Government's fundamental policy of making Hong Kong a better place in which to live and work applies as fully to the New Territories as to the rest of Hong Kong, the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, said today (Tuesday).

Speaking at the Inauguration Ceremony of the 29th Term Heung Yee Kuk, Mr Patten said: "The community of indigenous New Territories residents is a special community, one that adds a great deal to the life of Hong Kong. But it is not a separate community, it is an integral part of the whole community of Hong Kong."

Like each other group within society, the New Territories indigenous residents benefited from the projects and policies that brought benefit to the whole community, Mr Patten said.

Giving examples of how the Government is working to serve the villagers of the New Territories, Mr Patten said: "While 13 villages still remain without mains water, 678 to 98 per cent of the villages and over 99 per cent of the population of the population - have already been supplied."

He added that many of the territories' present and planned major road works were being carried out in the New Territories, including the upgrading of Tuen Mun Road, the Route 3 Country Park Section and the North Lantau Expressway.

"The Kam Tin and Lam Kam Roads, though neither substandard nor facing capacity constraints are both scheduled for upgrading works as part of general transport improvement plans, the first starting in 1998," Mr Patten continued.

"Proposals for the Western Corridor Railway Scheme, that take account of the long expressed desire of western New Territories residents, and which will be the next major development project for Hong Kong after the new airport, are moving to an advanced stage of study.

"Flood protection works for 15 villages have been completed, preparatory work for 12 more is underway and Stage I works on the Shenzhen River began in May and will be completed by 1997. New measures to deal with flooding caused by the blocking of drainage on private land are also being introduced.

"A fast track programme to build the North District Hospital is being implemented."

On minor rural improvement works, Mr Patten said \$50 million was spent in 1994-95 and that \$150 million would be spent this year.

"In 1994-95, the Lands Department pledged that it would deal with 500 applications for small house grants. In fact it exceeded its pledge by over 1,200," he added.

Mr Patten said these were just a few examples of the spirit of service to the community that the administration brought to all its work.

"I am sure that with the support, advice and encouragement of the Heung Yee Kuk, even better things will be achieved as the community of Hong Kong continues to build its future together," the Governor said.

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HYP fare rise approved by ExCo

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The Governor-in-Council today (Tuesday) approved a fare increase by a weighted average of 13.96 per cent for the Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Company (HYF) to take effect in mid January next year.

HYF last revised its fares in July 1994. With falling patronage and increasing operating costs, the company incurred a loss of \$19.7 million last year and is expected to incur a substantial loss this year.

In approving the fare increase, the Governor-in-Council took a number of factors into account, including the financial position of HYF and that the company had been providing an acceptable level of service.

It had also considered the fact that HYF had introduced a number of service improvements despite its financial difficulties and the impact the fare increase would have on the Consumer Price Index (A), that is by only 0.01% of a percentage point.

Details of the fare increase are as follows:

	Range of % increase -----	Increase in money terms -----
(a) Passenger services		
- cross harbour	12.5% - 20%	30 cents - \$1
- new town	10% - 18.2%	20 cents - \$3
- outlying districts		
weekdays	12.5% - 18.2%	20 cents - \$3
weekends and holidays	12.5% - 20%	\$1 - \$3.5
(b) vehicular service	No increase	
(c) freight	25% - 41.7%	\$6 - \$8.5

The approved rate of increase is in line with the forecast rate of inflation of 13.3% between July 1994 and January 1996. Overall about 71% of the passengers would have to pay 20 cents to \$1 more per trip.

A government spokesman said even with its pier development package, HYF would need to increase its fares in line with inflation to cover part of its operating losses.

The spokesman added that after a fare increase of 13.96%, HYF was expected to incur substantial losses in the next few years.

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Increase in public expenditure well within limits

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The Government's social welfare policy is to provide welfare services for those who are in genuine need, including the elderly, people with a disability and families in need of financial and other assistance, the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, said today (Tuesday) in response to media enquiries about Government's expenditure on social welfare.

This policy is in line with public consensus that the Government should spend more on welfare so as to provide new and improved services for the community, she added.

"To meet these aspirations, we shall be spending a total of \$14.9 billion on social welfare this year, representing a 24 per cent increase in real terms over that of last year.

"But we are doing no more than we can afford to do in line with the prudent budgetary guidelines. We shall continue to hold fast to the rule that over time public expenditure grows no faster than the economy as a whole," Mrs Fok said.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, also said the growth rate of the public sector expenditure should be looked at in global terms. Each and every year, he said, the Government set out very clearly its spending proposals, and in this year, the Governor had also done so in his policy address.

"The Government would adhere to a fundamental principle, that is the Government would not spend at a rate higher than that of the growth rate of the economy as a whole.

"This is a very important discipline but within that discipline, the Government has to allow for individual programmes - some to spend more and some to spend less," he said.

In response to the aspirations expressed by the people of Hong Kong and the priorities suggested by Legislative Councillors, Mr Tsang said the Government tended to, in the last few years, spend more on social, welfare and educational programmes.

"It is quite a natural and responsible thing to do. Overall, the Government is still quite well within its expenditure limits," he added.

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Hong Kong and Italy sign investment protection agreement

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The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, today (Tuesday) signed a bilateral agreement with the Italian Government on the promotion and protection of investments.

The signing took place in Rome with Ambassador Walter Gardini, the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and came on the second day of Mrs Chan's official visit to Italy.

The agreement, which is binding under international law, aims to provide additional reassurances to overseas investors in Hong Kong. The protection and benefits derived from these agreements are also enjoyed reciprocally by Hong Kong companies and individuals investing in the relevant overseas countries.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mrs Chan said the agreement "symbolises the common desire of our two governments to promote investment between Hong Kong and Italy.

"Hong Kong has become East Asia's premier business hub, offering world class services and opportunities to those doing business in the region.

"But investors like to minimise future risk, so the agreement signed today guarantees them equality of treatment, proper compensation if investments are expropriated, and the free transfer of investments and returns. It also provides for investment disputes to be settled in accordance with internationally accepted rules," Mrs Chan said.

Ambassador Gardini said: "We appreciate very much the propulsive role that Hong Kong has been playing in the development of Southern Asia and we are confident that you will continue to play such a role after 1997.

"In our view, the maintaining of the present characteristics of your system, based on market economy and civil and political liberties, will be essential to safeguard the most precious heritage - in terms of economic effectiveness and productivity - which Hong Kong has accumulated in the last decades and which has allowed your people to enjoy high living standards."

Ambassador Gardini said the numerous meetings Mrs Chan was having with Italian politicians and entrepreneurs during her present visit demonstrated "the great interest with which Italy looks at the political and economic developments undergoing in Hong Kong".

Hong Kong has now signed investment promotion and protection agreements with seven countries - the Netherlands, Australia, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, New Zealand and Italy. An eighth will be signed in Paris on Thursday (November 30).

The Chief Secretary flew to Rome from Milan last night to continue the Italian leg of her visit. During the day she met the President of the Senate, Professor Carlo Scognamiglio, to bring him up to date with recent developments in Hong Kong, including economic matters and preparations for the change of sovereignty in 1997.

She also had discussions with leading Italian business people, including lunch with the board of ENI, one of the country's largest state-owned enterprises; a meeting with Dr Mario D'Urso, the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Trade; and a round-table discussion with members of the Italian Institute of International Affairs.

Earlier in Milan, Mrs Chan had an hour-long meeting with the president and ministers of the Lombardy government during which a number of topics were raised to boost commercial and tourist links between northern Italy and Hong Kong, including the possibility of a direct Milan-Hong Kong air service.

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Joint efforts to tackle abuses of imported labour

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The Secretary for the Education and Manpower, Mr Joseph W P Wong has asked the top management of the Provisional Airport Authorities (PAA) and the Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTRC) to remind their principal contractors that anyone found to have breached the rules and conditions for importing labour might have their quotas withdrawn and denied the right to participate in the scheme in future.

"The principal contractors are also asked to ensure that their sub-contractors strictly observe the rules and conditions laid down in the contracts signed with the workers, because they as the principal contractors will be held liable for the breach of the scheme by their sub-contractors," Mr Wong said.

A meeting was convened by Mr Wong this morning (Tuesday) with the Chief Executives Officer of the PAA, Mr Henry Townsend; the Project Director of the MTRC, Mr Russell Black; and the Director of the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office, Mr Billy Lam; and their senior officers.

All sides have agreed to further their co-operation in the administration of the special scheme for the new airport related projects to tackle any possible abuses.

At a press session after the meeting, Mr Wong stressed that all imported workers working in Hong Kong had the full protection under the laws of Hong Kong.

"The Government will not tolerate any abuse of the scheme and will prosecute those employers who have violated the provisions of the Employment Ordinance, such as unlawful deduction of wages and failure to grant statutory holidays.

"We will maintain a record of contractors who have been established to have abused the scheme and their applications for importing labour will not be considered," Mr Wong said.

At the meeting, Mr Wong told the representatives of PAA and MTRC that employers were required to provide adequate accommodation for imported workers. To further safeguard the interest of the imported workers, the Labour Department will inspect the accommodation arrangement for workers before visas are issued by the Immigration Department.

"Those contractors who failed to comply with the accommodation requirement have been asked to take remedial measures as soon as possible," Mr Wong said.

"The special scheme is very important to the timely completion of the New Airport and its related projects. We will continue to uphold the integrity of the scheme and to ensure that the imported workers are given what they are entitled to," he said.

As a continued drive to help imported workers understand their rights and benefits, the Labour Department carries out on-site briefings for all imported workers. Contractors have also been asked to provide full briefings to them on arrival and the Labour Department will introduce a four-language (Cantonese, Putonghua, English and Thai) interactive voice phone system from tomorrow.

Information posters will also be put up at easily accessible locations at the sites.

Airport Committee meets

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The British and Chinese sides have agreed that a meeting of the Airport Committee will be held in Hong Kong on November 29 (Wednesday) in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding to discuss the Airport Authority Ordinance, the membership of the Airport Authority and airport-related franchises.

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More data on proposals to reduce diesel emissions

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The Government today (Tuesday) released more information to answer points raised on the proposals to reduce emissions from diesel vehicles.

The data show that diesel automobiles constitute about one third of the vehicle fleet in Hong Kong and travel two-thirds of the total vehicle mileage that accounts for about 98% of the respiratory suspended particles (RSP) emissions from road traffic.

The high level of RSP, which causes respiratory illness, cancer risks, and deterioration of the urban fabric, has consistently exceeded the air quality objective (AQO) by two to 25 per cent at all the five monitoring stations located at Mong Kok, Tsuen Wan, Central and Western, Sham Shui Po and Kwun Tong.

Even with the proposed switch from diesel to petrol for light duty vehicles and stringent inspection and maintenance for large diesel vehicles, RSP can only be reduced to the AQO level by 2002.

Comparatively, unleaded petrol (ULP) vehicles emit virtually no RSP throughout their useful life.

On the concern that increased use of petrol may raise the concentrations of benzene, a carcinogen, Environmental Protection Department surveys show the roadside benzene level in Hong Kong is only about 45 per cent of the limit set by the UK expert panel.

The benzene level is expected to further drop to about 20 per cent of the UK limit when vehicles without catalytic converters are phased out.

The proposed switch of light duty diesel vehicles to unleaded petrol will increase the ambient benzene concentration slightly but Hong Kong will still be able to meet the most stringent international health target.

It should also be noted that diesel engines also emit a proven carcinogen known as Benzo(a)pyrene and there is as yet no effective technical means to reduce its emission. Furthermore, it poses a greater health risk at present level than benzene.

On the point that petrol vehicles emit more carbon monoxide than diesel vehicles, information available shows that the maximum hourly average of carbon monoxide level at the Mong Kok monitoring station is only about one quarter of the AQO limit. The proposed switch will only increase carbon monoxide level to about one third of the AQO limit, still well within the acceptable level.

Regarding the emission of two other pollutants, namely nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide which cause respiratory illnesses and lung impairment, emissions from ULP vehicles are substantially less than diesel vehicles.

On the operating costs of the proposed switch, the Deputy Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands, Mr Tony Cooper, said the Government used information known to the Transport Department as a basis for the conversion of light diesel vehicles to petrol when listing out the broad operating cost structure in the consultation document.

Mr Cooper said: "Overseas information and manufacturers' data have also been used to arrive at the estimates.

"If the proposed scheme is implemented, the operating cost estimates will be closely monitored and adjusted if necessary."

However, he added that he would consider now any alternative figures provided by the trade provided these figures could be justified.

As regards the concern of some operators of small school buses and private vehicle fleets that the five-year conversion period might cause undue economic hardship to them because most of their vehicles were well-maintained and could be used for up to 10 years, Mr Cooper said consideration might be given to extend the conversion period for these vehicles.

He also noted that small vehicles including taxis in North America and Europe operated on petrol and taxis in China and other Asian cities such as Jakarta, Bangkok and Taiwan were mostly petrol-drive.

"In many American cities such as New York, taxis clock up to 150,000 km a year compared with the local average of 100,000 km a year and there are no technical data to support that petrol vehicles can not be used intensively as taxis and minibuses in Hong Kong," he said.

Regarding a suggestion for a more stringent inspection and maintenance programme for light duty diesel vehicles, Mr Cooper said: "To be effective in minimising RSP emissions, a diesel vehicle would have to be inspected for every 10,000 km it travels, which practically means monthly maintenance for high mileage vehicles.

"This would be very costly and disruptive to the travelling public.

"The proposed diesel to petrol scheme is a sensible, pragmatic cost-effective approach to our most serious environmental problem - air pollution.

"Unless action is taken now, pollution from diesel emissions will continue to harm health, damage the environment and reduce enjoyment of life in the city."

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External trade figures for October

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Both re-exports and imports continued to show significant growth in October 1995 over a year earlier. Domestic exports however fell. These are shown in the external trade figures for October released today by the Census and Statistics Department.

Compared with the same month in 1994, the value of total exports (comprising re-exports and domestic exports) increased by \$10.2 billion or 9.1% to \$122.9 billion in October 1995.

Within total exports, the value of re-exports, at \$102.1 billion in October this year, was \$10.8 billion or 12% higher.

The value of domestic exports, at \$20.8 billion, decreased by \$560 million or 2.6%. Meanwhile, the value of imports increased by \$15.1 billion or 13% to \$131.3 billion.

As the value of total exports in October 1995 was smaller than that of total imports, a visible trade deficit of \$8.3 billion, equivalent to 6.4% of the value of imports, was recorded.

This was nevertheless still substantially smaller than the peak figures of \$21.3 billion and 17.4% recorded in April this year.

In the first 10 months of 1995, the value of total exports grew by 16% over the same period last year. Among this, the value of re-exports rose by 19%, while that of domestic exports increased by 6.1%.

The value of imports showed an increase of 21%. Over the same period, a visible trade deficit of \$122.4 billion, equivalent to 9.9% of the value of imports, was recorded.

Commenting on the latest trade figures, a government spokesman said a relatively slower growth in total exports together with a continued rapid increase in retained imports, by 15% in value terms in October over a year earlier, contributed to a widening of the visible trade deficit in October as compared to September.

However, it was noteworthy that the increase in retained imports comprised mainly a larger intake of raw materials and capital goods for production, construction and business operation. This was helpful to economic performance.

The table annexed presents the external trade figures in October 1995.

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

EXTERNAL TRADE FIGURES FOR OCTOBER 1995

MERCHANDISE: Domestic Exports :	\$20,785 million
Re-exports :	\$102,135 million
Total Exports :	\$122,920 million
Imports :	\$131,257 million
Trade balance :	-\$8,337 million

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Latest 3 months	Aug 95 to	Aug 94 to	Change	
	Oct 95 HK\$ Mn.	Oct 94 HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	62,436	62,338	+99	+0.2
(% of Total Exports)	(16.8%)	(18.9%)		
Re-exports	308,240	266,802	+41,438	+15.5
Total Exports	370,677	329,140	+41,537	+12.6
Imports	393,345	339,343	+54,002	+15.9
Trade balance	-22,668	-10,203	-12,465	

Same month last year	October	October	Change	
	1995 HK\$ Mn.	1994 HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	20,785	21,345	-560	-2.6
(% of Total Exports)	(16.9%)	(18.9%)		
Re-exports	102,135	91,340	+10,795	+11.8
Total Exports	122,920	112,685	+10,235	+9.1
Imports	131,257	116,174	+15,083	+13.0
Trade balance	-8,337	-3,489	-4,848	

Last month	October	September	Change	
	1995 HK\$ Mn.	1995 HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	20,785	21,123	-338	-1.6
(% of Total Exports)	(16.9%)	(16.7%)		
Re-exports	102,135	105,502	-3,367	-3.2
Total Exports	122,920	126,625	-3,705	-2.9
Imports	131,257	130,951	+307	+0.2
Trade balance	-8,337	-4,326	-4,011	

Calendar year to-date	Jan-Oct	Jan-Oct	Change	
	1995 HK\$ Mn.	1994 HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	192,655	181,519	+11,136	+6.1
(% of Total Exports)	(17.3%)	(18.9%)		
Re-exports	923,512	779,123	+144,388	+18.5
Total Exports	1,116,166	960,642	+155,525	+16.2
Imports	1,238,528	1,022,040	+216,488	+21.2
Trade balance	-122,361	-61,398	-60,964	

Last 12 months	Nov 94 to	Nov 93 to	Change	
	Oct 95 HK\$ Mn.	Oct 94 HK\$ Mn.	HK\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	233,228	221,245	+11,983	+5.4
(% of Total Exports)	(17.6%)	(19.3%)		
Re-exports	1,092,310	925,248	+167,062	+18.1
Total Exports	1,325,538	1,146,493	+179,045	+15.6
Imports	1,467,197	1,210,559	+256,638	+21.2
Trade balance	-141,659	-64,066	-77,593	

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CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

Fishermen reminded not to adopt illegal fishing practices

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Local fishermen are regularly called on not to adopt illegal practices while fishing in Hong Kong and international waters to avoid breaking the law and damaging the marine environment.

The latest reminder has been in the form of a pamphlet, distributed to the local fishing community through Agriculture and Fisheries Department's (AFD) liaison offices and the Aberdeen Fisheries Office. Copies of the pamphlet have also been given to the fishing vessel registration offices of the Marine Department.

An AFD senior fisheries officer, Mr Joseph Sham, said the main objective of the publicity exercise was to remind local fishermen not to use dynamites or poisonous substances including cyanide in fishing at Hong Kong and other territorial waters.

Mr Sham pointed out that under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance, any person found guilty of possessing or using dynamites or poisonous substances in fishing in Hong Kong waters would be liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 fine and six months' imprisonment.

Citing a court case as an example, he said a 34-year-old man was recently fined \$5,000 and sentenced to two months' imprisonment, suspended for two years, after being convicted by the Kwun Tong Magistracy for possession of a large quantity of cyanide powder on board his boat off Cape Collinson in March.

This is the first convicted case involving the use of cyanide for purpose of fishing under the ordinance, he said, hoping that relatively heavy penalty would serve as an effective deterrent.

"Apart from breaking the law, fishermen using these methods in fishing could endanger their and other people's lives, cause serious damage to the marine environment and reduce fish landings," said Mr Sham.

To enforce the law and help protect the territory's marine environment and fishery resources, the Marine Police and AFD have stepped up patrols in Hong Kong waters.

Mr Sham also reminded Hong Kong fishermen to observe marine regulations of neighbouring countries when fishing in their or international waters.

The maximum penalty for people convicted of using cyanide or dynamites in fishing at waters in some Southeast Asian countries could be as high as life imprisonment, he added.

Further enquiries on the pamphlet and issues relating the ordinance can be directed to AFD's Capture Fisheries Section on 2873 8341.

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LegCo member remuneration commission chairman appointed

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) the appointment of Executive Councillor, Mr James D McGregor, as Chairman for the Commission on Remuneration for Members of the Legislative Council. He will succeed Professor Wang Gungwu who will be leaving Hong Kong early next year.

Mr Cheng Hon-kwan, Mr Christopher Cheng Wai-chee, Mr Thomas Leung Kwok-fai, Miss Gladys Li Chi-hei and Mr Lawrence Lam Ying-ming have been re-appointed as members of the Commission.

The terms of appointment for the Chairman and all members will be for one year starting from December 1.

A government spokesman thanked Professor Wang for his invaluable contribution to the work of the Commission.

"His able leadership has been one of the most important factors in the smooth establishment and operation of the present Commission and its predecessor," he said.

"But we are very pleased that Mr McGregor has agreed to take over the Chairmanship, and are sure that the Commission will benefit greatly from his extensive and recent experience as a member of the Legislative Council."

The functions of the Commission are to carry out regular reviews of the remuneration of Legislative Council members and to advise the Government on the interpretation of guidelines for the use of members' allowances when necessary.

The Commission also advises the Government on any other issues related to the remuneration of Legislative Council members.

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Multi-lingual telephone enquiry service for imported workers

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The Labour Department will provide a 24-hour telephone enquiry service in four different languages for imported workers and their employers from tomorrow (Wednesday).

The special hotline 2815 2255, to be operated by an Interactive Voice Processing System, will contain six lines with four language options : Cantonese, Putonghua, English and Thai.

Information will be provided mainly on employment terms in the standard contract, employment rights of the worker and obligations of the employer.

Those who wish to lodge complaints will also be informed of the proper channels.

All imported workers and employers related to the General Labour Importation Scheme and Labour Importation Scheme for the New Airport and Related Projects are welcome to use the service.

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Discretionary P. 1 place allocation results out on Friday

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The Education Department today (Tuesday) reminded parents that the results of allocation of discretionary Primary One places for the 1996-97 school year under the Primary One Admission System will be released on Friday (December 1) by all government and aided primary schools.

About 37,000 out of 65,800 applicants have been offered a primary one discretionary place by the schools.

A spokesman for the department advised parents to go back to the school to which they had applied for a Primary One place on Friday (December 1) between 9 am and 5 pm or on Saturday (December 2) between 9 am and noon to find out the results of their applications.

Registration of successful applicants will take place on December 6 and 7 (Wednesday and Thursday) during school hours. Parents are advised to note carefully the registration procedures and requirements of individual schools, such as the parent's copy of the Application Form for Primary One Admission and the number of photographs to be brought along to the school for registration purpose.

Registration of the child with the school will be regarded as binding on both the school and the parent.

The spokesman said: "If parents, for matters of grave importance, cannot register their child with the school within the specified period, they should notify the responsible person of the school concerned to make alternative arrangements.

"If they fail to do so, they will be deemed to have given up the discretionary place offered by the school."

Parents of children who are unable to secure a discretionary place at this stage, together with those who only intend to take part in the Central Allocation, will be informed by letter in late February or early March 1996 to go to a Distribution/Collection Centre in their home district for choice of schools.

The Education Department will then allocate to the children Primary One places within their home district in accordance with parental choices as far as possible. Detailed procedure of the Central Allocation will be announced later.

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	28 Nov 1995	28 Nov 1995
Paper on offer	EF BILLS	EF BILLS
Issue number	Q549	Y596
Amount applied	HK\$5,020 MN	HK\$2,550 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN	HK\$500 MN
Average yield accepted	5.57 PCT	5.57 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.58 PCT	5.58 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 54 PCT	About 3 PCT
Average tender yield	5.59 PCT	5.59 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning 4 DEC 1995

Tender date	5 DEC 1995	5 DEC 1995
Paper on offer	EF BILLS	EF BILLS
Issue number	Q549	H579
Issue date	6 DEC 1995	6 DEC 1995
Maturity date	6 MAR 1996	5 JUN 1996
Tenor	91 DAYS	182 DAYS
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300MN	HK\$800+160MN

End/Tuesday, November 28, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
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Opening balance in the account	2,064	0930	-791
Closing balance in the account	1,856	1000	-791
Change attributable to :		1100	-793
Money market activity	-803	1200	-793
LAF today	+595	1500	-793
		1600	-803

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 122.4 *+0.2* 28.11.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.63	2 years	2711	5.60	99.92	5.72
1 month	5.61	3 years	3810	6.15	100.61	6.00
3 months	5.58	5 years	5009	6.95	102.03	6.55
6 months	5.58	7 years	7211	6.82	99.98	6.94
12 months	5.58	5 years	M502	7.30	101.25	7.12

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$14,007 million

Closed November 28, 1995

End/Tuesday, November 28, 1995