



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Chief Secretary's media session

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Following is a transcript of the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan's media session at the Central Government Offices this (Saturday) afternoon:

Chief Secretary: I have nothing to add to my remarks on the transitional legislature. But, the whole question of the transition of civil servants and how to straddle 1997 is in my view a very important matter. I very much hope that when Mr Lu Ping comes to Hong Kong in April there will be an opportunity for the two of us to meet so that we can discuss this and other transitional issues.

End

Social security payment to be increased in April

\* \* \* \* \*

Members of the public receiving payments under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) and Social Security Allowance (SSA) schemes will collect more money from April 1.

The revision is made possible following an inflation-related increase of seven per cent in the payment rates under the CSSA and SSA schemes approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department said today (Saturday).

Apart from these increases, it has been scheduled to seek the Finance Committee's approval on April 12 for implementing a package of improvements to the CSSA scheme arising from the recent review of the scheme.

If approved, the new improvements will take retrospective effect from April 1.

Details of the revised payment rates under the CSSA and SSA schemes are as follows:

CSSA

Payment rates (per month)

(1) Standard Rates	Existing Scale (\$)		New Scale (\$)	
	Single Person	Family Member	Single Person	Family Member
Elderly persons aged 60 or above	1,810	1,505	1,935	1,610 (1,805)
Disabled adult	1,810	1,505	1,935	1,610 (1,760)
50% disabled				
100% disabled	2,260	1,960	2,420	2,095
Requiring constant attendance	3,315	3,005	3,545	3,215
Disabled child				
50% disabled	2,410	2,105	2,580	2,250
100% disabled	2,865	2,555	3,065	2,735
Requiring constant attendance	3,910	3,610	4,185	3,865
Able-bodied child	1,810	1,505	1,935	1,610
Able-bodied adult				
Single parent or family carer	-	1,045	-	1,120 (1,760)
Other adult	1,210	1,045	1,295 (1,615)	1,120 (1,440)
Adult in ill-health	1,210	1,045	1,295 (1,935)	1,120 (1,760)

(2) Annual long-term supplement

1 eligible member	1,340	1,435
2-4 eligible members	2,680	2,870
5 or more eligible members	4,020	4,305
(3) Single-parent supplement	215	230

SSA

(1) Payment rates (per month)

(a) Disability allowance

Normal rate	1,050	1,125
Higher rate	2,100	2,250

(b) Old age allowance

Normal rate	525	560
Higher rate	595	635

(2) Financial eligibility limits for normal old age allowance cases

Monthly income limits

For a single person	4,140	4,350
For a married couple	6,490	6,780

Assets limits

For a single person	141,000	151,000
For a married couple	212,000	227,000

Note: Those figures in brackets denote further improvements awaiting approval from the Finance Committee.

CSSA and SSA recipients who have further enquiries are advised to contact their respective social security field units or the department's hotline 2343 2255, the spokesman added.

End

No truth in report on release of VMs

\* \* \* \* \*

In response to press enquiries, a government spokesman said there was no truth in a press report that 200 Vietnamese migrants would be released from detention today (Saturday).

"While the Privy Council's judgment is still being studied, no decision has been made on any action that may need to be taken arising from this judgment," he said.

"We will not be able to comment on the implications of the Privy Council's judgment until we have concluded our study.

"Meanwhile any report on what action might be taken is pure speculation."

End

Civic Education Committee biennial report published

\* \* \* \* \*

The Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education has published its biennial report for the financial years 1993-95.

The 106-page bilingual report, enlivened with colourful pictures, gives a detailed account of the work of the Committee in the past two years and outlines the way forward.

The contents include the scope and objectives of civic education, the structure of the Committee, the work themes and slogans, and the work of the Community Participation Sub-committee, Human Rights Education Sub-committee, Publicity Sub-committee, Research and Publications Sub-committee and Ad Hoc Committee on Public Education on the Rule of Law.

Copies of the report will be distributed to public libraries, primary and secondary schools, district boards and community organisations.

The biennial report is also available at the Civic Education Resource Centre on the second floor, Tung Sun Commercial Centre, 194-200 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, for public's reference.

Enquiries can be made on Tel 2511 7011.

End

### Passenger ship sets for final journey

\* \* \* \* \*

The passenger ferry, Zenith, which was beached off Kau Yi Chau since last July, weighed its anchor this (Saturday) afternoon to commence the final leg of her journey to a shipyard in Guangdong for scrapping.

The vessel caught fire on the night of July 19 last year while under repairs in Hong Kong. A few hours later she was beached to facilitate fire fighting.

It took the firemen three days to extinguish the blaze. Though fortunately none of her 31 crew members were hurt, the ship sustained extensive damages.

"The Government's involvement with the Zenith incident does not just end with putting out the fire," Senior Marine Officer (Vessel Traffic Centre), Marine Department, Mr Francis Liu said.

"As a port administration, the Marine Department is obliged to protect the integrity of the port and to ensure this stricken vessel will not be hazardous to our port facilities, the environment and other port users," he said.

The department seized the vessel late last October when the owner failed to comply with repeated orders to remove it.

The 106-metre passenger vessel was then put up for sale by tender after clearing all legal formalities. Six companies responded to the sale notice and submitted their bids before the closing date on December 1, 1995.

A local company which acted as an agent for a shipyard in Guangdong assumed the new ownership with a price tag of more than \$1.66 million.

A large part of the proceeds of sale was used to settle the claims for wages for the crew. The remainder covered the pilotage and tug charges and part of the port dues.

"I am glad that the crew members are able to recover their wages through our effort as we are obliged also to protect the interests of seafarers," Mr Liu said.

"We aim at removing the ship before the new typhoon season," he said, adding that the vessel would become a potential threat to the environment and the port when the typhoon season begins.

"Keeping our schedule and conclude the operation to the satisfaction of the crew and a number of other parties involved are perhaps my personal rewards from this exercise," Mr Liu said.

A final check on the vessel was conducted this morning by Marine Department Surveyor, Mr Jeremy Caro, to ensure that the ship is safe for her final journey and the salvage operation was executed in accordance with plans approved by the department.

The ship was refloated about 2.30 pm today and is being towed to her final destination in Guangdong.

End

Hong Kong Government delegation to visit China

\* \* \* \* \*

The Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue, is heading a Hong Kong Government delegation to Beijing.

The delegation will leave tomorrow (Sunday) and return on Tuesday (April 2).

Miss Yue said the purpose of the trip is to understand the work of her counterpart departments in China and to exchange views on subjects of mutual interest.

The delegation will call on the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, State Economic and Trade Commission, State Science and Technology Commission, State Planning Commission, Hong Kong and Macau Office of the State Council, Hong Kong and Macau Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chinese Academy of Science.

Other members of the delegation include Principal Assistant Secretary for Trade and Industry, Mr Kenneth Mak; Assistant Director-General of Trade, Mr Stanley Ying; Assistant Director-General of Industry, Mr Warner Cheuk; Assistant Secretary for Trade and Industry, Mr Charles Chan and Chief Chinese Language Officer, Ms Sarah Loy.

End

New-term membership of economic committee announced

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The Government today (Saturday) announced the appointment of the new-term membership of the Hong Kong Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (HKCPEC) for two years with effect from April 1.

Group Managing Director of Li and Fung Ltd, Mr William Fung, has been re-appointed as its Chairman.

Established in March 1990, HKCPEC is appointed by the Financial Secretary to advise the Government on matters relating to Hong Kong's participation in the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC), a non-governmental organisation seeking to develop closer co-operation on trade and economic policy issues in the Pacific region.

HKCPEC, structured on a tripartite basis, comprises members from the business, academic and government sectors. The new-term membership is composed of 24 members, with eight from each of the three sectors.

Among the new-term members, 16 are re-appointed members including its Chairman.

Members from the business sectors who have been re-appointed are:

- \* Mr Kwok Kowk-chuen, Chief Economist, Standard Chartered Bank;
- \* Mr Lee Jark-pui, Director, Lippo Limited;
- \* Mr Willy Lin, Managing Director, Milo's Manufacturing Co Ltd;
- \* Dr James Liu, Chief Executive Officer, Hong Kong Industrial Technology Centre Corporation;
- \* Dr William Lo, Director, Hong Kong Telecommunications Ltd; and
- \* Mr Martin Tang, Managing Director, Spencer Stuart & Associates (HK) Ltd.

Re-appointed members from the academic sector are:

- \* Professor Liu Pak-wai, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Chinese University of Hong Kong;

- \* Professor Richard Wong, Director, the Hong Kong Centre for Economic Research, University of Hong Kong; and
- \* Professor Yeung Yue-man, Director, Hong Kong Institute of Asia Pacific Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Re-appointed members from the Government are:

- \* Mr Francis Ho, Deputy Secretary for Trade and Industry who serves as the Vice-Chairman of HKCPEC;
- \* Mr Norman Chan, Executive Director, Hong Kong Monetary Authority;
- \* Mr Leo Kwan, Deputy Secretary for Economic Services;
- \* Mr Tang Kwong-yiu, Government Economist;
- \* Mrs Lessie Wei, Deputy Secretary for Financial Services; and
- \* Miss Jacqueline Willis, Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower.

Eight new members from the business, academic and government sectors have been appointed to HKCPEC for the first time. They are:

- \* Mr Yeung Kwok-keung, Deputy Managing Director, Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminal Ltd;
- \* Professor Chen Jay-chung, Director, Research Centre, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology;
- \* Dr Ho Lok-sang, Head, Department of Economics, Lingnan College;
- \* Professor Richard Ho, Dean, Faculty of Business, City University of Hong Kong;
- \* Mr Alexander Tsang, Vice-President, Hong Kong Polytechnic University;
- \* Dr John Ure, Director, Telecommunications Research Project, University of Hong Kong;
- \* Ms Anissa Wong, Deputy Director-General of Industry; and

- \* Ms Doris Cheung, Assistant Director-General of Trade, who act as the Committee's Secretary-General.

Hong Kong became a member of PECC in May 1991. Currently, PECC comprises 22 member committees representing the economies of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States, Vietnam and the Pacific Island Nations.

End

#### Periodic test of electric wiring compulsory

\* \* \* \* \*

About 60,000 fixed electrical installations which were already in place before June 1, 1992 should undergo their first periodic test before June 1, 1997, a spokesman for the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) reminded the public today (Saturday).

"Under the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations which commenced on June 1, 1992, property owners, incorporated owners, estate management agents, occupiers and tenants must have the communal electrical installations in their buildings inspected, tested and certified by a registered electrical contractor at least once every five years.

"This means that if the installations were connected to electricity supply before June 1, 1992, the first test should take place before June 1, 1997.

"This applies to all fixed electrical installations in factories with an approved loading exceeding 200A, commercial and private buildings with an approved loading exceeding 100A, hotels, hospitals, schools and child care centres," he explained.

The spokesman stressed that the requirements were aimed at reducing safety hazards such as fire and electrical accidents caused by improper maintenance of electrical installations.

He urged the public to arrange for the test as soon as possible for their own safety. In doing so, the last minute rush for completing the test in 1997 could also be avoided.

"Failure to comply with the regulations will be liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000," he said.

The spokesman added that the department would kick off a publicity campaign on Monday (April 1) to promote public awareness of the periodic test.

"Publicity efforts include broadcasting the message on radio and televisions. Posters and leaflets will be distributed to all owners incorporations and electricity consumers.

"Seminars on the periodic test will be held for office-bearers of owners incorporations, mutual aids committees and resident groups of all districts," he said.

Copies of an information leaflet on the new requirements are now available at all district offices and the Customer Service Office of EMSD. For more information, please telephone 2882 8011 or write to the EMSD's Electricity Legislation Division, 98 Caroline Hill Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

End

#### Good response to Crown Counsel recruitment

\* \* \* \* \*

An increasing number of legal professionals are interested in developing a career in the Legal Department starting as Crown Counsel, a spokesman for the department said today (Saturday).

The department launched a recruitment exercise earlier this month to invite applicants to join the rank of government lawyers as Crown Counsel.

In response, a total of 305 applications were received for about 10 vacancies.

In a similar recruitment exercise last year, 254 applications were received.

Newly appointed Crown Counsel would be able to develop their abilities and interest in different areas of expertise, as they would be posted to work in the department's various divisions for career development.

Apart from job challenge, they will also have the satisfaction of working for the community in public service.

Activities undertaken by the various divisions of the department include criminal advocacy, civil litigation, both criminal and civil legal advisory work, bilingual legislative drafting, commercial law and legal policy work.

In another recruitment exercise this month for Senior Crown Counsel, the department received 77 applications for about five posts.

The last recruitment in October 1994 had attracted 89 applicants.

End

Electors reminded to vote in by-election tomorrow

\* \* \* \* \*

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) today (Saturday) reminded the 8,855 electors of Kam Ping constituency to vote in the Eastern District Board by-election in respect of their constituency tomorrow (Sunday).

The polling station will be set up in Ming Wai Kindergarten, 2-8 Tsat Tsz Mui Road, North Point. It will be opened from 7.30 am to 10.30 pm.

An REO spokesman said an elector must bring along his identity card to the polling station. But it would facilitate polling proceeding if he could also bring along the poll card sent to him earlier.

For enquiries, please call 2827 1122.

End

### Youngsters attend Easter party at Government House

\* \* \* \* \*

The laughter of about 120 youngsters, some of them disabled, filled the air in Government House this (Saturday) morning as they celebrated Easter with their hosts, the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, and Mrs Patten, at a party.

Coming from diverse backgrounds, the youths were welcomed on their arrival by the Executive Director of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, Ms Rosanna Wong, and the acting Director of Home Affairs, Mr Lee Lap-sun.

They quickly got into the party spirit by singing along with pop star, Mr Emil Chau Wah-kin.

They were soon joined in by Mr and Mrs Patten who also took part in the Easter egg hunt that followed.

To show their appreciation for their eminent hosts' hospitality, two representatives of the young party goers presented an Easter card and a bouquet to Mr and Mrs Patten respectively who reciprocated by handing out chocolate Easter eggs to all visitors.

The party was jointly organised by the Home Affairs Department and the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, with the assistance of Government House, Radio Television Hong Kong and Kowloon Motor Bus, which provided free transport for the guests.

Similar to the Christmas party held last year at Government House for children, today's event was aimed at encouraging youngsters aged between 12 and 18 from different backgrounds and capabilities to integrate among themselves and into the community they live in.

End

66 temporary study rooms to open for examination season

\* \* \* \* \*

The Education Department will open 66 temporary study rooms during the examination season from next Monday (April 1) to June 30.

Senior Education Officer, Mrs Dorothy Chan, said: "Temporary study rooms provide students with quiet study environment.

"Students may use these facilities from Monday to Friday except public holidays."

They are located in 33 schools throughout the territory. Sixteen of them, from 7 pm to 10 pm, are for secondary students while the rest, from 7 pm to 9 pm, are for both primary and secondary students.

At the same time, the department extends temporary study centres scheme to the end of June. The scheme, to be reviewed after three months, provides a total of 420 seats.

The opening hours of temporary study centres are 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturdays and from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 5 pm on Sundays.

Leaflets on study rooms are available for collection at the district offices and the district education offices. Posters with locations of the study rooms have been put up on notice boards in schools.

Students may also use over 280 study rooms run by the Urban Services, the Regional Services, the Home Affairs and the Social Welfare departments as well as non-governmental organisations.

Schools rendering study room facilities for secondary students are:

Hong Kong Region

Queen's College  
120 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay

Lok Sin Tong Leung Kau Kui College  
28 Hospital Road, Sai Ying Poon

Kowloon Region

Lung Kong WFSL Lau Wong Fat Secondary School  
66 Sycamore Street, Tai Kok Tsui

HKSYC&IA Wong Tai Shan Memorial College  
250 Nam Cheong Street, Shek Kip Mei, Sham Shui Po

Concordia Lutheran School  
12 Tai Hang Tung Road

Christian Alliance College  
2 Fu Ning Street, Ma Tau Chung Road

Ho Lap College  
15 Tseuk Luk Street, San Po Kong

PHC Wing Kwong College  
155 Lung Cheung Road, Wang Tau Hom

New Territories Region

HKTA The Yuen Yuen Institute No. 1 Secondary School  
42 Wo Yi Hop Road, North Kwai Chung

CNEC Christian College  
6 Lei Pui Street, Kwai Chung

Ha Kwai Chung Government Secondary Technical School  
85 Hing Shing Road, Ha Kwai Chung

The ADFD POHL Leung Sing Tak College  
Shek Wai Kok Estate, Tsuen Wan

Kiangsu Chekiang College (Shatin)  
7 Fung Shun Street, Wo Che Estate, Sha Tin

NTHYK Yuen Long District Secondary School  
123 Kau Yuk Road, Yuen Long

Tin Shui Wai Government Secondary School  
Tin Yiu Estate Tin Shui Wai

Cheung Chau Government Secondary School  
5B School Road, Cheung Chau

Schools rendering study room facilities for primary and secondary students:

Hong Kong Region

Shaukiwan Tsung Tsin School  
1-3 Basel Road, Shau Ki Wan

Li Sing Primary School  
119 High Street, Sai Ying Poon

Kowloon Region

Jordan Road Government Primary School  
1B Nanking Street, Jordan Road

Kei Tsun Primary School  
150 Tai Kok Tsui Road

SSP Kaifong Welfare Advancement Association Primary School  
2nd-5th Floors, 88 Yu Chau Street, Sham Shui Po

Hoi Ping Chamber of Commerce School  
700 Lai Chi Kok Road, Sham Shui Po

Buddhist Chi King Primary School  
Estate School No 6, Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate

SKH Kei Hin Primary School  
Estate School No 2, Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate

SKH Shiu Keung Primary School  
Estate School No 7, Block 15, Lam Tin Estate

Lok Sin Tong Primary School  
63 Lung Kong Road, Kowloon City

Hung Hom Kaifong Association Primary School  
16 Station Lane, Hung Hom

New Territories Region

Buddhist Lim Kim Tian Memorial School  
Estate School No 4 Kwai Fong Estate, Kwai Chung

Tsing Yi Trade Association Primary School  
Cheung Hong Estate, Tsing Yi Island

Confucian Sam Lok Chow Mud Wai School  
Tai Yuen Estate, Tai Po

Yan Tak Catholic Primary School  
Butterfly Estate, Tuen Mun

Buddhist Wong Cho Sum School  
Area 23 King Lam Estate, Tseung Kwan O

Fanling Government Primary School  
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Five temporary study centres are:

Java Road Government Primary School  
West Block, North Point Estate

Islamic College  
22 Cloud View Road, North Point

Shaukeiwan Government Primary School  
19 Main Street East, Shau Kei Wan

Concordia Lutheran School  
12 Tai Hang Tung Road

Kiangsu Chekiang College (Shatin)  
7 Fung Shun Street, Wo Che Estate, Sha Tin

End

Total eclipse of the moon on Thursday

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A total eclipse of the moon will occur on Thursday (April 4).

However, as the time of occurrence will be from 7.27 am to 8.53 am (more than an hour after local moonset), this total eclipse will not be visible in Hong Kong.

For those who are interested, details of the eclipse are as follows:

	Hong Kong <u>Time</u>	Azimuth <u>Direction</u>	Elevation <u>(degree)</u>
Moon enters penumbra	0516	West-Southwest	13
Moonset	0612		
Moon enters umbra	0621	West	-2
Total eclipse begins	0727	West	-17
Middle of eclipse	0810	West	-26
Total eclipse ends	0853	West	-36
Moon leaves umbra	0959	West-Northwest	-50
Moon leaves penumbra	1104	West-Northwest	-64

The next lunar eclipse observable in Hong Kong will be on September 17, 1997.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time</u> <u>(hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>change</u> <u>(\$ million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	3,216	09:30	-370
Closing balance in the account	2,456	10:00	-370
Change attributable to:		11:00	-370
Money market activity	-370	11:30	-370
LAF today	-390		

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 123.7 \*+0.1\* 30.3.96

End