



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Round-the-clock emergency services for dangerous buildings

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The Buildings Department had received a total of 574 calls for emergency services to remove dangers from buildings during the 12 months preceding May this year, the acting Deputy Director of Buildings, Mr Ng Hon-keung, said today (Saturday).

About 18 per cent of the cases involved dangerous signs, 13 per cent on structural defects of buildings and about 10 per cent were related to dangerous appendages or canopies.

Other problems ranged from drainage defects, water leakage, dangerous scaffolding to loose external wall finishes.

Mr Ng said the department, in recognition of the importance of public safety, was committed to maintain a 24-hour services to the community.

"The department provides expert advice on private buildings and developments in case of danger. Our professional officers attending an emergency scene will make an initial assessment of the situation and decide what immediate action should be taken in order to restore public safety.

"In many cases, government contractors are called to carry out emergency works to remove dangers from the affected building," Mr Ng said.

During office hours, emergency calls are directed to the relevant case officers, while two professional officers are on emergency call on a rotation basis from the police control and command centre after office hours.

Mr Ng said the department had pledged a performance standard of inspecting and responding to any emergency situation within three hours.

"We are glad that in 1995, we had achieved a successful rate of 97.4 per cent of the response time. The shortfall was mainly due to the engagement of the duty officers in other emergency cases or heavy traffic condition," he said.

When tropical cyclone No 8 warning signal is hoisted or the rainstorm black warning is issued, or during major emergency situation, an emergency duty centre will be set up at the Buildings Department office.

Professional officers will be on duty round-the-clock at the centre to provide and co-ordinate expeditious services to handle problems arising from dangerous buildings, private slopes, scaffolding, or advertising signs.

Noting that the emergency system had been functioning for more than 20 years, Mr Ng said it would be reviewed from time to time to better improve the services.

"Through its 24-hour emergency services, the Buildings Department undertakes to provide a safe and healthy built environment for our community," he said.

End

TDS review report for sale

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A public consultation document entitled "Consolidated Technical Report on the Territorial Development Strategy Review '96" is now available for sale, a spokesman for the Planning Department said today (Saturday).

Public interest has been drawn to the Territorial Development Strategy (TDS) Review since the announcement of its results by the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands, Mr Bowen Leung, on July 16 for a six-month public consultation.

The 179-page full colour publication, available in English language only, is a summary of a three-part final technical report on the TDS Review which provides a comprehensive planning framework for Hong Kong up to 2011, said the spokesman.

"The Report will provide more technical details and background information on the Review to enable the public to give views and comments. Copies can now be purchased at \$92 each at the Government Publications Centre on the ground floor, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway," he said.

Meanwhile, free copies of the bilingual TDS Review Consultative Digest can still be collected from the Planning Department, 16th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, or any District Offices.

Views on the Review should be sent in writing before the end of December this year to the Planning Department (Tel:2848 2402, Fax: 2877 0389).

End

Firing practice in September

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Firing practice will take place at the Ha Tsuen/Castle Peak Range on two days next month. The public is advised not to enter the area when red flags are hoisted.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
September 5 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
September 12 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm

End

Transcript of FS

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The following is the English transcript of the media session given by the Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, at the airport today (Sunday) before his departure for Jakarta for a duty visit:

Reporter: Mr Tsang, will you discuss the Natrass controversy with the New Zealand .... or with any people when you go down there?

FS: I will not. It is a matter which is sub judice, you know it is under trial at the moment. And the Chief Justice and Acting Chief Justice are already looking into the matter and they are starting enquiries. It is not a matter which the Administration, which respects fully the independence of the judiciary, going to interfere.

Reporter: Mr Tsang, is the Government going to give the assurance that important legislation like the ones to give Beijing the right to declare trade sanctions in Hong Kong will not be rushed through the LegCo without proper time for examination ?

FS: Well, we will never rush things through Legislative Council. That is a very technical issue. It is nothing peculiar about it. It is part of the localisation of Hong Kong legislation. I am quite sure my colleague, the Secretary for Trade and Industry will explain very fully the import of any such legislation to LegCo before she put it through.

Reporter: Hong Kong will remain in the community of APEC once it becomes part of China?

FS: Definitely. It is part of the idea which is recognised and accepted by all other members of APEC that our membership is not affected by the transition at all. We must remember our membership is derived from the fact that Hong Kong is an autonomous economy. APEC is a conglomeration, it is a collection of economies not of sovereign states. So the change in 1997 for Hong Kong which is a change of sovereignty should not affect that underlying status that Hong Kong is an autonomous economic entity.

Reporter: Mr Tsang, we expect one comment generally on inflation figures. In recent figures, the rate appears to be fairly steady. There are forecasts that the rate may be coming down in the next few months.... I mean.... what are your assessment then?

FS: I am very happy about those figures. It indicates inflation generally is under control. I estimated early in the year that the overall inflation rate for 1996 would be roughly 7.5(%). I may have to look at that again. It looks as if we might not reach that figure too. It is very good news.

End

Paralympic team congratulated on magnificent achievements

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The acting Governor, Mrs Anson Chan, extended her warmest congratulations to the athletes on their magnificent achievements at the 1996 Paralympic Games.

In a letter to the Chief de Mission of the Hong Kong Paralympic Team, Mr Silas Chiang, Mrs Chan said the athletes had done exceedingly well and earned international recognition for themselves and for Hong Kong.

"They have shown us all what determination, hard work and perseverance can achieve," she said.

Mrs Chan pointed out that the Team had made a new record in the history of Hong Kong's participation in the Paralympic Games since 1972.

"The personal achievements of Mr Cheung Wai-leung, in particular, have brought great pride and honour to the people of Hong Kong.

"I am sure this year's achievements will encourage our athletes to do even better in future competitions," said Mrs Chan.

End

Survey to identify needs of office development

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The Planning Department has commissioned the Survey Research Hong Kong to conduct a survey to identify the needs and opinions of office users on office development.

The survey is part of a consultancy study on the propensity for office decentralisation and the formulation of an office land development strategy, a spokesman for the department said today (Sunday).

"The objective of the study is to formulate plans for office development to meet the future needs of Hong Kong."

On the survey, the spokesman said the field work has already started and will complete before end of October.

"It will cover establishment characteristics, business operation/activities, factors affecting the choice of office location and future plans for establishments," he said.

He urged for the full co-operation of the office users who were selected for interviews and that all information would be kept strictly confidential.

"Findings of the survey will serve as an important input in the formulation of a comprehensive office development strategy for the territory up to the year 2011.

"Survey results will assist the government in determining the future locations of office development and the need for the development of new office nodes," he added.

Any queries on the survey can be directed to the Planning Department on 2848 2308.

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#### Periodic test of electric wiring compulsory

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The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) reminded the public today (Sunday) that about 60,000 fixed electrical installations are subject to five-yearly periodic test and about 42,000 of them should undergo their first periodic test before June 1, 1997.

"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.

Copies of an information leaflet on the new requirements are available at all district offices and the Customer Service Office of EMSD.

For more information, please telephone 2882 8011 or write to EMSD's Electricity Legislation Division, 98 Caroline Hill Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

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#### Anti-rabies inoculation drive in fishing ports

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The Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) will launch a half-yearly dog inoculation drive in fishing ports later this week so that fishermen can have their dogs immunised against rabies.

Starting from Tuesday (August 27), AFD's mobile dog inoculation teams will go to the territory's fishing ports one after the other and make boat-to-boat visits between 10 am and 4 pm daily. The inoculation programme is as follows:

<u>Port</u>	<u>Date</u>
Shau Kei Wan	27.8.96 - 28.8.96
Cheung Chau	29.8.96 - 30.8.96
Aberdeen	2.9.96 - 3.9.96
Sha Tau Kok	9.9.96
Sam Mun Chai	10.9.96 - 11.9.96
Castle Peak Bay	12.9.96 - 13.9.96
Sai Kung	19.9.96 - 20.9.96

The drive, a regular exercise since 1980, is intended to help fishermen who find little time to take their dogs to an inoculation centre or a government kennel for inoculation.

An AFD senior veterinary officer, Dr Liu Kwei-kin said that the drive was part of Government's continuing efforts to prevent the outbreak of rabies in Hong Kong.

"Hong Kong regained the rabies-free area status on July 10, 1989 by having successfully prevented the outbreak of any indigenous rabies case since July 10, 1987," Dr Liu said.

Nevertheless, he stressed that rabies was a deadly disease transmissible from animals to human. Dogs on fishing vessels are particularly vulnerable because of their possible contacts with other animals outside Hong Kong.

It is therefore important that fishermen's dogs are inoculated against rabies, he added.

Under the Rabies Ordinance, all dogs over five months old are required to be licensed and inoculated against rabies. Failure to do so will render the owner liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

End

### Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine visits Beijing

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A 28-member delegation of the Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine (PCCM) today (Monday) left for Beijing for a five-day visit.

Led by the Committee's Chairman, Dr Daniel Tse, the delegation will visit various organisations involving in the development and regulations of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in China.

A spokesman for the Committee said: "It is envisaged that the visit will provide the necessary information for the Committee to draw up recommendations on the development, promotion and regulation of TCM in Hong Kong."

While in Beijing, the delegation will visit the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, universities, research institutes, manufacturers for proprietary TCM and a TCM hospital.

This is the first overseas visit after the committee was formed last year and the delegation will return to Hong Kong on Friday.

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### Water cut in Yuen Long

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The fresh and flushing water supply to some premises in Yuen Long will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Thursday (August 29) to 6 am the following day for waste detection work on watermains.

The suspension will affect all premises along Tai Tong Road between Tai Shu Ha Road East and Hop Yick Road.

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