



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Governor on duty visit to UK

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The Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, will depart for London tomorrow (Friday) on a duty visit to brief British ministers on the latest developments in Hong Kong.

The Governor will have separate meetings with Prime Minister John Major, Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind and officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

He will be the keynote speaker at the annual Trade Development Council dinner on October 22.

Mr Patten will also travel to Scotland to take part in a Hong Kong promotion on October 24 and October 25. He will deliver a keynote speech at a business conference in Edinburgh and address the Scottish Financial Enterprise annual dinner in Glasgow on October 24.

Mr Patten will officiate at the opening of a "City of Tomorrow" Exhibition at the Edinburgh City Arts Centre on October 25.

He will be back in Hong Kong on October 27.

End

Rules on court documents translation to be gazetted

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The Official Languages (Translation) Rules which provide for the admissibility of translation of documents written in English or Chinese in judicial proceedings will be published in the Gazette tomorrow (Friday).

Under the Official Languages (Amendment) Ordinance 1995 which was passed by the Legislative Council in July 1995, a judge (or a judicial officer) presiding over a court, as well as the lawyers representing the parties, can use either or both of the official languages.

It also preserves the right of parties and witnesses to use other languages.

Consequential amendments have also been made to other ordinances, including the Evidence Ordinance, whereby only documents which are in a language other than English or Chinese require certified translations.

The result of the amendment is that documents in either of the two official languages can be admitted automatically as a right in evidence at a hearing without the need for translation.

However, this has created difficulties for judges and parties to the hearing who can only read one of the official languages since certified translations of the documents in the other official language are not provided.

The new Rules, made by the acting Chief Justice, Mr Justice Power, under section 5(5) of the Official Languages Ordinance, therefore seek to rectify this situation by providing for the translation of documents into Chinese if they are in English and vice versa, if required by the court.

The Rules apply to both civil and criminal proceedings at all levels.

End

"Toxic" Chinese herbal medicine recalled

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Three brands of Chinese herbal medicine - Niu Huang Chieh Tu Pien - found to contain arsenic at levels known to cause toxic effects had to be recalled, a spokesman for the Department of Health said today (Thursday).

They are:

- * Extra - Niu Huang Chieh Tu Wan, manufactured by Ji Sheng Pharmaceutical Fty, Sichuan;
- * Great Wall Brand Niu Huang Chieh Tu Pien, manufactured by Tian Jin Drug Manufactory, Tian Jin; and
- * Chuan Jiang Pai Refined Niu Huang Superantidote Tablet, manufactured by Sichuan Chengdu Chinese Pharmaceutical Lab, Sichuan.

Acting on reports of suspected intoxication in Macau, the Department of Health had collected seven brands of the product for testing.

Results available today showed that the levels of arsenic in three of the them had exceeded the level known to cause toxic effects.

Actions had been immediately taken to advise the importers to recall the products concerned.

Wholesalers and retailers of Chinese herbal medicine were urged to suspend selling the three brands of Niu Huang Chieh Tu Pien and to surrender them to the department for destruction.

Members of the public were asked not to purchase or use the brands mentioned above as they were considered not fit for consumption.

Meanwhile, the Department of Health would continue to collect samples of other brands of the product for testing and monitor the process of recall.

End

More people satisfied with Govt overall performance: poll

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Fifty-two per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the Government's overall performance, according to a public opinion survey conducted by the Home Affairs Branch (HAB) in September.

This represented an increase of three percentage points from 49 per cent in July, an HAB spokesman said today (Thursday) when releasing the latest findings of the bimonthly survey.

Fifty-six per cent of the respondents opined that the Government was concerned about public opinions on public affairs, which is five percentage points up from 51 per cent.

On the territory's future, 66 per cent of the respondents were confident that Hong Kong will continue to be prosperous and stable, up by five percentage points.

A slight improvement was observed on the general perception of the present situation, with 73 per cent of interviewees responding positively, compared with 72 per cent in the last survey.

Of the three most often mentioned problems facing Hong Kong, housing issues topped the list again at 41 per cent, up from 34 per cent. It was followed by labour-related problems and the future of Hong Kong, which were mentioned by 32 per cent and 25 per cent of the respondents respectively.

Among those who mentioned housing issue, 35 per cent said they were concerned about the high price of private housing, down from 42 per cent in the last survey.

Of those who mentioned labour-related problems, 80 per cent talked about "unemployment". This was nine percentage points lower than the comparable figure recorded in July.

The survey was the 66th in the series started in 1983 to monitor public opinion trends on perceived problems in the territory, the Government's overall performance and the community's views of the general situation.

Through a random sampling of residential telephone numbers, 1,519 persons aged between 15 and 64 were successfully interviewed over the telephone, representing a completion rate of 60 per cent.

End

Payroll statistics for 2nd quarter 1996

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Average labour earnings in all major sectors of the economy, as measured by payroll per person engaged, recorded an increase of 11.2% in nominal terms in the second quarter of 1996 over a year earlier, according to statistics released today (Thursday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

After discounting changes in consumer prices, the increase was 4.4% in real terms.

Analysed by industry sector, average payroll per person engaged in the manufacturing sector increased by 10.5% in nominal terms, or 3.7% in real terms, in the second quarter of 1996 compared with a year ago. The large increase in earnings in this sector was due in part to a rise in working hours over a year earlier.

For the wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels sector, average payroll per person engaged increased by 9% in nominal terms or 2.3% in real terms.

Average payroll per person engaged in the transport, storage and communications sector showed an increase of 13.5% in nominal terms or 6.5% in real terms. The increase in labour earnings was particularly rapid in the communications business.

Average payroll per person engaged in the financing, insurance, real estate and business services sector recorded an increase of 9.7% in nominal terms or 2.9% in real terms.

As for the community, social and personal services sector, average payroll per person engaged recorded an increase of 11.4% in nominal terms or 4.6% in real terms.

Changes in the indices of payroll per person engaged between the second quarter of 1995 and the second quarter of 1996 for selected industry sectors, in both nominal and real terms, are shown in the attached table.

Statistics on average payroll per person engaged are compiled at quarterly intervals based on the results of the labour earnings survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department.

Wage indices are also compiled from the same survey at half-yearly intervals for March and September of the year.

Average payroll includes wages as well as all other irregular receipts such as bonuses and overtime allowances. Statistics on average payroll tend to show relatively larger quarter-to-quarter changes, affected by the number of hours actually worked and the timing of payment of bonuses and back-pay.

Detailed breakdowns of the above statistics are published in the Quarterly Report of Employment, Vacancies and Payroll Statistics, June 1996.

It will be available shortly at \$44 per copy (exclusive of postage) at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, Low Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong; and at the Publications Unit of Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

For enquiries about the indices of payroll per person engaged, please contact the Census and Statistics Department on 2582 5076.

Year-on-Year Change in Indices of Payroll Per Person
Engaged by Selected Industry Sector

% Change for 2nd Quarter 1996
over 2nd Quarter 1995

Selected Industry Sector	(nominal terms)	(real terms)

Manufacturing	+10.5	+3.7
Wholesale, Retail and Import/Export Trades, Restaurants and Hotels	+9	+2.3
Transport, Storage and Communications	+13.5	+6.5
Financing, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	+9.7	+2.9
Community, Social and Personal Services	+11.4	+4.6

All Industry Sectors Above	+11.2	+4.4

End

Special bus services to facilitate grave sweepers

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The Transport Department announces today (Thursday) that the following special bus services will be provided by public bus operators to facilitate grave sweepers visiting various cemeteries during the Chung Yeung Festival:

Wo Hop Shek

- * KMB 70R to and from Fanling KCR Station on October 20 and 21
- * KMB 70S to and from Jordan Road Ferry Bus Terminus on October 20
- * KMB 74R to and from Lam Tim MTR Station on October 20

Tsuen Wan Cemetery

- * KMB 38S to and from Kwai Fong MTR Station on October 20 and 21

Chai Wan Cemetery

- * CMB 388 to and from Chai Wan MTR Station on October 20 and 21
- * CMB 389 to and from Shau Kei Wan Bus Terminus on October 20

Pok Fu Lam Chinese Christian Cemetery

- * CMB 357 to and from Exchange Square, Central, on October 20

Aberdeen Chinese Permanent Cemetery

- * CMB 347 to and from Holland Street, West Point, on October 20

End

Yau Ma Tei Sub-Treasury to be refurbished

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To be in line with the spirit of serving the community, the Treasury plans to refurbish the Yau Ma Tei Sub-Treasury.

In order to continue collection services during the reprovisioning, the refurbishment works will be carried out in four phases with the first one starts in early November and the fourth to be completed by March next year.

While the reprovisioning will bring a modern look to the Yau Ma Tei Sub-Treasury, it is inevitable that there will be inconvenience caused to the public due to partial closure of the collection counters.

To save time, members of the public are encouraged to use autopay or payment by phone service to settle water bills, rates demands, Crown rent demands and student loan repayments or to settle other demand notes by cheque through post.

End

Development strategy exhibition moves to Kwai Fong

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A seven-day exhibition on the Territorial Development Strategy (TDS) Review will start tomorrow (Friday) at the Metroplaza in Kwai Fong.

It is part of a roving exhibition to be held this month at 10 popular locations throughout the territory to introduce to members of the public the proposed development strategies for Hong Kong up to 2011.

It will be open daily from 10 am and 8 pm until October 24. Admission is free.

By browsing among the 32 panels displayed with photographs, maps and charts, visitors will have a better understanding of the various development options recommended by the TDS Review.

They can also see impressive models featuring major future developments in Hong Kong as well as a bilingual documentary video. Copies of a leaflet on the Review will be distributed free of charge.

Members of the public can also visit another TDS Review exhibition which is being held at Tai Wo Shopping Complex in Tai Po until October 22 (Tuesday).

The exhibition will be staged at the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Central Station from October 23 to 26 before moving to the MTR Admiralty Station for display from October 27 to 31.

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	2,229	0930	+30
Closing balance in the account	2,056	1000	+30
Change attributable to:		1100	+30
Money market activity	+27	1200	+27
LAF today	- 200	1500	+27
		1600	+27

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.9 *-0.1* 17.10.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/MTRC				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.80	2 years	2808	6.00	100.25	5.93
1 month	4.86	3 years	3910	6.28	99.89	6.42
3 months	5.03	5 years	5109	7.32	101.86	6.98
6 months	5.13	7 years	7308	7.24	100.13	7.34
12 months	5.40	5 years	M503	7.35	100.85	7.26

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$15,177 million

Closed October 17, 1996

End