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Donald Tsang appointed Financial Secretary

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) that Mr Donald Tsang will succeed Sir Hamish Macleod as Financial Secretary in September 1995.

Mr Tsang has very wide experience in the Government, having served in a variety of posts in the Civil Service for more than 27 years. He has had a particularly close association with finance and trade related fields in his career.

He was on secondment to the Asian Development Bank from 1977 to 1978. In 1981, he was sent to Harvard University, where he completed a Master in Public Administration specialising in economic affairs.

In recent years he has been Director of Administration, Director-General of Trade and has served as Secretary for the Treasury since May 1993.

Sir Hamish has been directed to retire in the interests of localisation. He was appointed to his present post of Financial Secretary in August 1991.

Commenting on the announcement, the Governor, the Right Honourable Christopher Patten, said: "Hong Kong owes a great debt of gratitude to Sir Hamish for his outstanding success over the past four years as Financial Secretary.

"He has managed the economy in a way which has earned the admiration and respect of both the local community and international investors; cutting taxes three times in a row while increasing investment in our social and physical infrastructure and boosting our reserves to a formidable level.

"Sir Hamish also left a distinctive mark on the two APEC meetings of Economic Leaders at which he represented Hong Kong. His tremendous knowledge of international trade issues helped to shape the historic agenda these meetings set for the economic opening up of our region into the next century.

"These achievements have crowned a brilliant career in the public service spanning almost 30 years and virtually every aspect of life in Hong Kong. He has been a wonderful colleague whose integrity and loyalty to Hong Kong have been an example to us all. I shall greatly miss him and his wise counsel."

Mr Patten said it was a reflection of the depth of talent and diversity in the civil service that the Government was able to find such an extraordinarily able replacement for Sir Hamish.

"I am sure Donald Tsang's appointment will be widely welcomed in the Civil Service and the community as a whole," he said. "Donald Tsang has a tremendous record of achievement and commitment to Hong Kong. I have absolutely no doubt that he will build on the strong foundations laid down by Sir Hamish.

"This and other appointments we have announced today mark another major step towards our goal of filling all Policy Secretary posts by suitable local officers by the end of 1995," he added.

Brief biographical notes on Sir Hamish Macleod and Mr Donald Tsang are:

The Honourable Sir Hamish Macleod, KBE, JP

Aged 55. Sir Hamish joined the Administrative Service in 1966. During the early part of his career, he held a variety of posts in branches and departments including the former Resettlement Department, Finance Branch, Civil Service Branch, the former Social Services Branch and the former New Territories Administration. He was Director of Trade from 1983 to 1987, Secretary for Trade and Industry from 1987 to 1989 and Secretary for the Treasury from 1989 to 1991. He was appointed Financial Secretary in August 1991.

Mr Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, OBE, JP

Aged 50. Mr Tsang first joined the Civil Service in 1967 and was subsequently appointed an Administrative Officer in 1971. He rose to his present rank of Secretary, Government Secretariat in 1995. During the early years of his career, he held appointments in Finance Branch, Civil Service Branch and the former City and New Territories Administration. He was on secondment to the Asian Development Bank from 1977 to 1978. In 1981, he was sent to the Harvard University, where he completed a Master in Public Administration specialising in economic affairs. He was Deputy Director of Trade from 1984 to 1985, Deputy Secretary in the former General Duties Branch from 1985 to 1989, Director of Administration from 1989 to 1991 and Director-General of Trade from 1991 to 1993. He took up the present post of Secretary for the Treasury in May 1993.

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Appointments of senior Government officials

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) a series of appointments at senior levels of the Administration.

Mr Kwong Ki-chi will be appointed Secretary for the Treasury in April 1995. He will succeed Mr Donald Tsang who will proceed on leave and then undertake a series of visits and familiarisation briefings related to his future post of Financial Secretary.

Mr Rafael Hui will be appointed Secretary for Financial Services in September 1995. He will succeed Mr Michael Cartland who has been directed to retire in the interest of localisation. Mrs Lily Yam will take over from Mr Hui as Commissioner for Transport in July 1995.

Mr Dominic Chan will be appointed Director of Audit in May 1995. He will succeed Mr Brian Jenney who is due to retire.

Mr Alan Lai will take over from Mr Kwong Ki-chi as Deputy Secretary for the Treasury in May 1995.

Brief biographical notes on these officers are:

Mr Kwong Ki-chi, JP

Aged 43. Mr Kwong first joined the Civil Service in 1972 and was subsequently appointed an Administrative Officer in 1978. He rose to his present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 in 1993 and will be promoted to Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in May 1995. He served in a number of branches and departments including the former Trade, Industry and Customs Department, Environment Branch, City and New Territories Administration, Finance Branch and Monetary Affairs Branch. He was Deputy Commissioner of the Hong Kong Government Office in London from 1989 to 1992. He took up the present post of Deputy Secretary for the Treasury in April 1992.

Mr Michael D Cartland, JP

Aged 49. Mr Cartland joined the Administrative Service in 1972 and rose to his present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in 1991. During the early years of his career, he held appointments in the former Social Services Branch, Government House, the former New Territories Administration, Security Branch and the former Trade, Industry and Customs Department. He was Deputy Director of Trade from 1982 to 1984, Counsellor(Geneva) from 1984 to 1986, Permanent Representative of Hong Kong to the GATT from 1986 to 1988, Deputy Secretary for Trade and Industry from 1988 to 1990 and Director of Social Welfare from 1990 to 1992. He took up the present post of Secretary for Financial Services in 1993.

Mr Rafael Hui Si-yan, JP

Aged 47. Mr Hui first joined the Civil Service in 1970 and was subsequently appointed an Administrative Officer in 1971. He rose to his present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in 1994. During the early years of his career, he held appointments in a number of branches and departments including Home Affairs Department, Security Branch, Economic Services Branch and Transport Branch. He was seconded to ICAC from 1977 to 1979 and attended an overseas training programme in Harvard from 1982 to 1983. He was Deputy Secretary-General in the former UMELCO from 1985 to 1986, Deputy Secretary for Economic Services from 1986 to 1990, Deputy Secretary for Works from 1990 to 1991, when he was appointed Director, New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office. He took up the present post of Commissioner for Transport in November 1992.

Mrs Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying, JP

Aged 48. Mrs Yam joined the Administrative Service in 1969 and rose to her present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 in 1994. She served in a number of branches and departments including Urban Services Department, Home Affairs Department, Education and Manpower Branch and Civil Service Branch. She was an Assistant Director and later a Senior Assistant Director in ICAC from 1978 to 1984. On return from an overseas training programme in Harvard, she joined Civil Service Branch in 1985 and was appointed Commissioner for Television and Entertainment Licensing from 1989 to 1991. She became Deputy Head, Central Policy Unit in 1991 and Secretary-General of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service the following year. In 1994, she was appointed Secretary to the ICAC Review Committee. She is now serving as Chairman of the 1995 Administrative Officer Recruitment Board.

Mr Brian G Jenney, OBE

Aged 59. Mr Jenney joined the Hong Kong Government as an Administrative Officer in 1969 and was promoted to Administrative Officer Staff Grade C in 1974. He was appointed Principal Assistant Financial Secretary in Finance Branch in 1981 and subsequently Senior Principal Assistant Financial Secretary in 1987. He was appointed Director of Audit in April 1992.

Mr Dominic Chan Yin-tat, JP

Aged 51. Mr Chan joined the Hong Kong Government as an Auditor in 1969 and was promoted to Senior Auditor in 1976, Principal Auditor in 1980 and Assistant Director of Audit in 1982. He was promoted to Deputy Director of Audit in May 1993.

Mr Alan Lai Nin, JP

Aged 43. Mr Lai joined the Administrative Service in 1976 and rose to his present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B in 1993. He served in a number of branches and departments including Civil Service Branch, the former New Territories Administration, Home Affairs Department and the former UMELCO. He was on secondment to the ICAC from 1984 to 1987. He was Assistant Director-General of Trade from 1987 to 1991 and later became Deputy Director-General of Trade from 1991 to 1993. He was appointed Deputy Director of Administration from 1993 to 1995. He is now serving as Vice-Chairman, 1995 Administrative Officer Recruitment Board.

Attention News Editors :

Following arrangements have been made for the press to meet the officers today (Tuesday):

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| 1 pm | Mr Rafael Hui, Secretary for Financial Services (Des), at
Transport Department Headquarters, 41/F, Immigration Tower,
7, Gloucester Road, Wan Chai |
| 2 pm | Mr K C Kwong, Secretary for the Treasury (Des), at
Press Room, Ground Floor, Central Government Offices |

- 3.15 pm Mr Donald Tsang, Financial Secretary (Des), at Room 442, Main Wing, Central Government Offices
- 4 pm Commissioner for Transport (Des), Mrs Lily Yam, at Room 933, West Wing, Central Government Offices
- 5 pm Director of Audit (Des), Mr Dominic Chan, at GIS Press Conference Room, 5/F, Beaconsfield House, Queen's Road Central

The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, together with Mr Donald Tsang, Secretary for Housing Mr Dominic Wong, Secretary for Security Mr Peter Lai, Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands (Des) Mr Bowen Leung, Mr Rafael Hui and Mr K C Kwong, will be available for a photo call tomorrow (Wednesday) at 8.45 am in Room 501, Main Wing, Central Government Offices.

Reporters and photographers are requested to assemble at the Press Room, Ground Floor, Central Government Offices, before 8.30 am.

Officers from Secretariat Press Office will be on hand to assist.

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Transcript of Governor's media session

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The following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, the Financial Secretary, Sir Hamish Macleod and the Financial Secretary (Designate), Mr Donald Tsang, at the Central Government Offices after the Executive Council meeting today (Tuesday):

Governor: As I think you know, we're making today a number of announcements about important appointments in the Civil Service, these are further steps along the road to the localisation of the senior positions here in Hong Kong and is a process that we almost completed. The most significant of the appointments is, of course, the appointment of a new Financial Secretary. There will be many future occasions for paying tribute to the work of Sir Hamish Macleod who'll be leaving his post in September. But I would like at this moment to pay tribute to his 30 years of service to Hong Kong, most recently, his work as Financial Secretary. He's been, I think, one of the most outstanding Financial Secretaries in Hong Kong's history, making a significant contribution not only to the prosperity and well-being of this community, but playing as well a regional role as one of the most creative forces behind the development of APEC and one of the main proponents of APEC's transformation into one of the foremost organisations committed to global free trade. So Sir Hamish has done a great deal of which he should be proud and for which Hong Kong should be grateful. I am sure that the appointment of Donald Tsang as the next Financial Secretary in September will be warmly and widely welcomed in the Civil Service and in the broader community. Donald has been a member of the Civil Service for 27 years. This appointment crowns a brilliant career in a number of different branches of government. He's extremely well-known in Hong Kong and I think respected for his intellect, for his energy, for his professionalism, for his dedication, for his commitment to the well-being of Hong Kong. So I am delighted to be able to make this announcement, and others are being made with photo calls and so on later today and tomorrow. Hamish, would you like to say a word?

FS: First, Governor, thank you very much for those very kind remarks. I made a pretty clear hint in my budget speech by referring to a close colleague and good friend and of course I am very happy now to see Donald as Financial Secretary (Designate). He's worked with me over the years not just at present as Secretary for Treasury, but in previous incarnations, for instance, in trade. Our path crossed and over the years they have crossed many times. I guess this must be one of the easiest hand-overs in the Government since he's already of course intimately involved in the budgetary process. So, I think, Donald will be an outstanding Financial Secretary. I am delighted to see him coming forward now as my replacement. Thank you.

FS (Designate): Governor, thank you very much for your kind word. I am very deeply honoured by the appointment. I know that honour comes with considerable and formidable responsibility and challenge. The challenge is ability to contribute to a smooth transition to Chinese sovereignty and to be able to serve the people of Hong Kong after that. It is indeed my great honour to serve this community of mine. Sir Hamish, as you know, is my good friend. For the past two decades, he has been my best tutor in the service. He's, in my eye, a civil servant of the highest ability and integrity. He's indeed an almost impossible act to follow. But I shall do my best. Thank you very much.

Governor: I think I am right in saying that you're giving a press conference this afternoon, Donald. There will be conceivably some speculation about what this means. What I want to assure you it doesn't mean is that from now on I will be wearing a bow tie. That is not going to happen. Just for the record, I wrote to Director Lu Ping about these appointments yesterday. Thank you very much.

Question: The appointment of a new Chinese, the first Chinese Financial Secretary can help to discuss with the Chinese over the budgetary concession list ...

Governor: I am sure that the arrangements we've suggested to Chinese officials would lead to constructive negotiations and discussions whoever was carrying them out. But I am also sure that Chinese officials will have as much respect for Donald Tsang as I am sure they have for Sir Hamish Macleod. If ever there was a justification for the remark that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, it's the state of the Hong Kong economy which is a tribute not only to the exceptionally hard work of the people of Hong Kong, not only to the gifted entrepreneurism of the people of Hong Kong, but also a tribute to the successful, skilful and prudent management of Hong Kong's finances by a succession of Financial Secretaries, most recently and brilliantly Sir Hamish Macleod. And that is a tradition which would be carried on by Donald Tsang who I know will do the job exceptionally well. Thank you very much indeed.

Question: Governor, do you think that Mr Donald Tsang's visit to Beijing can help to solve the problem about the making of the budget of 96/97 to 98?

Governor: I don't think there should be a problem about that at all. We've demonstrated our determination to secure the economic prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and I hope that Chinese officials will join us in that enterprise. The proposals I put forward in my Legco speech, proposals we discussed with Chinese officials last November or put to Chinese officials last November and discussed with them in December, those proposals are eminently sensible. I think that they're widely regarded as sensible by the community, and I am sure they'll lead to good discussions and dialogue. Everybody will know that in Donald Tsang, we have a man with an extremely good mind, a tough, honest and honourable negotiator, who always do his best for the people of Hong Kong.

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Postage rates, fees and charges to rise in June

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The Postmaster General, Mr Mike Pagliari, announced today (Tuesday) that principal postage rates and miscellaneous postal fees and charges would be increased from June 1 this year.

These rates and charges were last revised on November 1, 1993.

Commenting on the revised rates at a press conference, Mr Pagliari said: "As a result of the increase in operating costs over the past one-and-a-half years due to inflation, increased staff costs and higher payment to overseas postal administrations, it is necessary to revise postage rates and charges in order to restore their real value.

"The overall weighted average increase for postage rates will be 14.7 per cent, which is in line with inflation of about 14 per cent for the period from the last increase in November 1993 to June 1995," he said.

The marginal difference is due to rounding off of certain postage rates to fit the coinage.

The basic rates for local letters and printed papers will be increased by 20 cents, from \$1 to \$1.20 for letters, and from 90 cents to \$1.10 for printed papers.

For surface letters and printed papers to China, Macau and Taiwan, the basic rates will be increased from \$1.20 to \$1.50 and from \$1 to \$1.30 respectively.

For surface mail to other countries, the basic rates will be increased from \$2 to \$2.30 for letters and from \$1.80 to \$2.10 for printed papers.

The basic rates for air mail letters will be increased by 20 cents and for printed papers by 30 cents.

For Zone 1 (mainly Asian countries), basic rates at the first weight step will be increased from \$1.90 to \$2.10 for letters and from \$1.30 to \$1.60 for printed papers.

For Zone 2 (rest of the world), basic rates will be increased from \$2.40 to \$2.60 for letters and from \$1.80 to \$2.10 for printed papers.

Elaborating on the postage rate increases, Mr Pagliari said: "Local and surface mail services have traditionally been operating at a deficit. These services are currently being cross-subsidised by other services.

"To reduce cross-subsidisation, the increases for local mail and surface mail to China, Macau and Taiwan will be slightly higher than inflation while the increases for surface mail to other destinations and for all air mail are below inflation.

"We have had a growing problem with large corporations and commercial mailers sending their printed papers in a manner that cannot be processed by the Mechanised Letter Sorting System (MLSS)," he said.

The major problems are plastic covers, over-sized printed papers or unenveloped printed papers.

"This results in the Post Office having to incur substantially higher operating costs.

"In addition there has been public concern over the rapidly increasing use of plastic envelopes.

"In order to discourage such practice, printed papers that cannot be processed by the MLSS will no longer be entitled to the printed paper discount," Mr Pagliari said.

In line with the new charging system introduced by Universal Postal Union Congress which was held last year, the pricing structure for Bulk Air Mail, which is commonly used by commercial organisations in sending airmail items overseas in bulk, will be changed to recover the additional cost.

Unlike the current system of charging postage according only to the weight of the shipment, postage for this type of mail will be charged on both the weight and the quantity of the items posted. This will result in average increases of 4.3 per cent.

"Even after these increases, Hong Kong postal charges remain among the lowest in the industrialised world.

"Given that postage constitutes only a small proportion of overall consumer expenditure and business costs, the increases are unlikely to have any significant impact on general inflation," he said.

Mr Pagliari pointed out that because increase in costs incurred was higher than inflation, the Post Office was absorbing part of the increase through productivity improvement.

"Were postage rates and postal charges maintained at existing levels, the Post Office would incur a loss of \$125 million in 1995-96, which would have to be subsidised from General Revenue.

"Also, even with the increases, local and surface mail services will continue to operate at a deficit," he added.

There are also increases in some of the miscellaneous fees and charges that at present are operating at a deficit. The notable example is registration fee which will be increased from \$11 to \$13.

Also, annual rental for post office boxes will be increased, for example, from \$570 to \$650 for large boxes and from \$450 to \$500 for small boxes at the General Post Office and the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office.

Rentals at other post offices attract smaller increases.

Owing to the tremendous increase in requests for redirection of mail, the Post Office is incurring a substantial loss for this service.

To recover costs, the redirection service which is currently provided free for the first three months will be charged at \$100 for private users and \$300 for business users.

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Governor to attend Fortune Global Forum

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The Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, will leave for Singapore tomorrow (Wednesday) to attend a world business forum organised by the Fortune magazine group.

Mr Patten will give a keynote address at a breakfast session of the "Fortune Global Forum" on Thursday (March 9).

Top policy makers and prominent business leaders from different countries have been invited to take part in the forum, which will last from March 8 to 10. They include the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Goh Chok Tong, the Senior Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Ms Benazir Bhutto, and former UK Prime Minister, Lady Thatcher.

Mr Patten will deliver a speech entitled "Freedom Under The Law - The Right Road To Prosperity".

During his two-day stay in Singapore on March 8-9, the Governor will have separate meetings with Prime Minister Goh, Senior Minister Lee, the Deputy Prime Minister, Brigadier-General Lee Hsien Loong and Lady Thatcher.

Mr Patten will depart for Singapore at 9 am on CX 717 tomorrow (Wednesday) and will return to Hong Kong at 9.45 pm on CX716 on Thursday.

Attention News Editors:

There will be no press facilities at the airport for the Governor's departure. A speaking position will be set up on his return.

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LegCo panels briefed on community response to airport consultation

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Acting Secretary for Economic Services, Mrs Elizabeth Boshier, and Director of Civil Aviation, Mr Peter Lok Kung-nam, this (Tuesday) morning briefed members of the Legislative Council's Economic Services and Environmental Affairs Panels on the Administration's proposals to enhance the operating capacity of Kai Tak Airport.

The Administration, over the past few months, has invited views of the community on the proposals. A report on the submissions was presented to members today.

Up to the end of February, a total of 94 written submissions had been received from District Boards, organisations and individuals since the consultation exercise was launched on December 19 last year.

The proposals suggest providing a total of 26 additional slots within the airport's existing operating hours in the periods between 6.30 am and 7 am and between 9 pm and 11.30 pm; and extending the airport's operating hours by one hour to provide six additional departure slots.

The consultation paper was issued to all 18 District Boards and particular emphasis was placed on consulting the five District Boards representing residents who would be most directly affected by the proposals, that is Kowloon City, Eastern, Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin.

Other interested organisations were also given copies of the paper and briefing sessions were arranged for organisations in the aviation and tourism sectors.

Among the 94 submissions, 45 are in support of the proposal; 13 do not support the extension of the airport's operating hours and 34 are opposed to the entire proposal; two have mixed opinions.

As far as District Boards are concerned, six raised objection to the extension of the airport's operating hours but held different views on whether additional aircraft movements within the existing operating hours are acceptable.

The principal concern of many District Board members is the large number of people who would be affected by the additional noise nuisance, if the proposals were implemented.

Some District Board members recognise the potential economic benefits to be brought by the extra flights.

Representations received from the business sector, totalling 40, are unanimous in their view that the proposals should be supported. The submissions covered responses from 14 hotels, four travel agencies, five airlines, three travel related companies and 14 various trade and business organisations/chambers of commerce.

The tourism and aviation industries also consider it important to build up a stronger traffic base to benefit the new airport. They worry that if the current demand for air services is accommodated elsewhere through diversion of traffic, the economy of Hong Kong will be adversely affected in the long run.

Three political parties have petitioned the Government with signatures and opinions collected from the affected residents, expressing opposition to the proposals.

Representations from individual District Board members, environmentalists and residents groups argue, among other things, that the proposals would adversely affect the environmental quality and well-being of local residents.

Individual respondents who wrote in support of the proposals believe that additional flights would generate more business and employment opportunities for Hong Kong people.

The briefing to members of the panels today is part of the Administration's consultation exercise to invite views on the proposals. All comments received will be carefully considered, before the Administration decides on how best to proceed.

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Views on the implementation of Covenant invited

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Views are invited from the Legislative Council, non-government organisations and other interested parties on the state of implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Hong Kong (ICCPR).

Following the Government's undertaking to give the Legislative Council, non-government organisations and other interested parties a formal opportunity to express their views on the state of implementation of the Covenant in Hong Kong before making a submission to the United Kingdom (UK), a letter was issued to the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs today (Tuesday).

A Government spokesman said the UK Government ratified the Covenant in 1976 in respect of the UK and its dependent territories, including Hong Kong.

"As a State Party to the Covenant, the UK Government is required under Article 40 of the Covenant to submit periodic reports to the Secretary General of the United Nations, for transmission to the Human Rights Committee for consideration," the spokesman said.

The UK Government has recently notified the Administration that it intends to submit its Fourth Periodic Report under the ICCPR in respect of the Dependent Territories to the United Nations in summer this year. The report will cover developments up to December 31, 1994.

The Hong Kong Government will contribute to the report by preparing a draft submission to the UK on the implementation of the Covenant in Hong Kong.

"To enable the Administration to take into account views during the drafting of the report, and also to meet the deadline of submission set for this summer, any comments will need to reach the Administration before April 20, 1995."

To facilitate comments, the Administration has prepared an outline of topics which it intends to include in the draft report.

Non-government organisations or individuals who would like to express their views can write to the Secretary for Home Affairs before April 20, 1995.

Copies of the outline of the draft report can be obtained from the Home Affairs Branch, 31st floor, Southorn Centre, Wan Chai, on request.

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ICC visits in Hong Kong

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Members of the Infrastructure Co-ordinating Committee (ICC) now in Shenzhen will continue their programme in Hong Kong tomorrow (Wednesday).

They will visit the Lok Ma Chau border crossing and the northwestern New Territories tomorrow and attend a seminar on cross-border infrastructure co-ordination on Thursday.

Attention News Editors:

The following press facilities will be provided for covering the Hong Kong programme:

Helicopter tour

The Director of Planning, Dr Peter Pun, will accompany some of the Chinese members on a helicopter tour tomorrow (Wednesday) of Hong Kong.

There will be a photo opportunity to cover their departure from the helipad in Fenwick Street, Wan Chai. Media representatives should assemble outside the helipad at 8.30 am.

Visit to Northwest New Territories

The flying party will join other ICC members in Lok Ma Chau before proceeding on a tour of the northwestern New Territories which will include a visit to Blackpoint in Tuen Mun.

A press coach will leave for Blackpoint from the Peak Tram Station, Tramway Path, Garden Road at 12.45 pm tomorrow (Wednesday).

Those who wish to make their own way to Blackpoint should arrive at the viewing platform on the high ground above the power station in Blackpoint (further down from Tap Shek Kok Power Station) before 2.15 pm.

Seminar on Crossborder Infrastructure Co-ordination

A photo opportunity will be arranged for the media prior to the start of the seminar at the Conference Hall of the Central Government Offices on Thursday (March 9). Members of the media wishing to attend should assemble at the CGO press room at 9.15 am.

Representatives of the two sides will speak to the media after the seminar. Members of the media wishing to cover this event should assemble at the CGO press room at 12.15 pm.

Staff of the Secretariat Press Office will be on hand to assist in all these press facilities.

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Secretary for Security to visit Vietnam

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The Secretary for Security, Mr Peter Lai, will pay a short visit to Vietnam between March 8 and 10, a Government spokesman announced today (Tuesday).

"Vietnamese migrant issues are high on the agenda of the Secretary for Security and he is anxious to make personal contact with his Vietnamese counterparts as soon as possible," the spokesman said.

During his brief stay in Hanoi, Mr Lai will call on ministers and officials of the Vietnamese Government who have responsibilities for migrant issues.

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Cheung Ching Tunnel excavation completed

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Excavation of the Route 3 Cheung Ching Tunnel -- Hong Kong's widest road tunnel -- has been completed this week, two months ahead of schedule.

This milestone in the Airport Core Programme (ACP) comes only 10 months after the tunnel breakthrough last May, which was marked by a ceremony at which the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, officiated.

Blasting works in connection with the excavation have also ended. More than 440,000 cubic metres of spoil has been removed from the tunnel drilled through the centre of Tsing Yi Island.

"We are glad to report that the tunnel excavation has been completed, and well ahead of schedule," said Mr Duncan Siu, the Chief Engineer of the Route 3 Division of the Highways Department.

Mr Siu said a number of safety and monitoring measures had been implemented during excavation work to minimise its impact on the residential areas nearby.

"These include advance warning to residents before each blasting operation and stringent safety and noise controls.

"The measures covered the use of noise reduction equipment, controls on the amount of explosives used in each blast, and a ban on night-time work in places close to the residential areas.

"In addition, 24 stations have been set up to monitor the vibration levels caused by blastings," Mr Siu said.

The Cheung Ching Tunnel, 1.6 kilometres long, will have three lanes in each direction. It will form part of the Route 3 which is a major element in the ACP's highways network connecting the new airport at Chek Lap Kok and Tung Chung new town to the urban areas in Kowloon and Central Hong Kong.

Work on the tunnel began in March 1993 following the award of an \$856 million contract to Dragages et Travaux Publics with the first blast taking place two months later.

The tunnel was excavated by blasting through solid volcanic rock and granite working inwards from either ends.

"For the first time in Hong Kong, two drilling machines of a type known as an 'Automatic Jumbo', equipped with computers and operated with the aid of laser beams, were used to drill the holes for explosives, further improving accuracy in blasting and in the amount of explosives needed," Mr Siu said.

"The spoil was transported by barge to Chek Lap Kok and other Government works sites for use as fill for reclamation works there," he said.

Mr Siu said construction of the Cheung Ching Tunnel was on schedule for completion in early 1997.

"Over 57 per cent of the works have been completed so far," he said.

"The remaining works include the laying of tunnel concrete lining, the tunnel's drainage and road pavement works, the installation of supporting facilities including the traffic control and surveillance systems, the ventilation systems, and the lighting and power supply systems, as well as the construction of 900 metres long associated roads," he said.

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Delinking of Infoline from IDD service

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The Telecommunications Authority, Mr Alexander Arena, announced today (Tuesday) that he had given his approval to Hong Kong Telephone Company Limited (HKTC) to implement a new Infoline access arrangement which would effectively delink the Infoline service from the IDD service.

The new arrangement is aimed at striking a balance between a variety of community concerns about the existing Infoline access arrangements and the continued provision of the Infoline service to those that consciously decide to acquire the Infoline service.

"The new arrangement will affect not only the new IDD customers but also all existing IDD customers," Mr Arena said.

Starting from tomorrow (Wednesday), all new IDD customers will not be provided with automatic access to the Infoline service unless they specifically request for such a provision.

In addition, during the period from March to June this year, all existing IDD customers will be requested to indicate whether they would like to be continuously provided with access to Infoline service after July 1, 1995.

HKTC will provide Infoline access according to customers' instructions.

In case no instruction is received from a customer, HKTC will stop providing the customers with access to the Infoline level "9" programmes (including adult programmes, dating programmes and children programmes) starting from July 1, 1995, but access to the non-level "9" Infoline programmes will continue unless the customer subsequently requests a change.

Mr Arena said: "The arrangement for only barring the level '9' programmes for those customers who do not respond is made with a view to meeting the dual requirements of preventing children from easy access to the Infoline level '9' programmes and, in the mean time, to minimising the inconvenience that may cause to an Infoline user who has omitted to give his instruction to HKTC.

"In any case, customers may request a change of their Infoline access arrangement by contacting HKTC, even after they have indicated their choices in this opt-in exercise," he explained.

"I have also noted that there are requests from the public for the separation of children programmes from adult programmes and dating programmes.

"I agree that there is a need for such a separation. HKTC has committed that it would perform such a separation by end 1995 when the prefix of Infoline service will change from '173' to '900'," Mr Arena added.

The new access arrangement for Infoline service has been discussed between the Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) and HKTC for a number of months.

Before arriving at the final decision, the Telecommunications Authority considered experiences in overseas countries and consulted the information providers, the Commissioner for Television and Entertaining Licensing (CTEL) and the Telecommunications Users and Consumers Advisory Committee (UCAC).

"I would like to thank all who have contributed to the development of this new access arrangement for Infoline service, particularly the UCAC Members who have given a lot of valuable advice to OFTA on this subject," Mr Arena said.

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Pharmacy registration examination results announced

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The Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong announced today (Tuesday) results of the registration examinations for pharmacists held in December last year.

A total of 61, 56 and 52 candidates sat for the examinations in "Pharmacy Legislation in Hong Kong", "Pharmacy Practice" and "Pharmacology" respectively with corresponding passing rates of 34.4 per cent, 42.9 per cent and 69.2 per cent.

Apart from meeting other conditions set by the Board, a pharmacy graduate returning from overseas who intends to be registered as a pharmacist is required to pass all the three subjects.

The Board conducts its examinations twice a year, normally in June and December.

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Immigration officers on attachment to UK Immigration Service

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Four immigration officers will leave for the United Kingdom later this month for a six-week attachment programme with the United Kingdom Immigration Service.

They will visit branches of the Home Office handling immigration and nationality matters as well as immigration offices and ports.

At a briefing before their departure, the Director of Immigration, Mr Laurence Leung Ming-yin, pointed out that the Immigration Department placed great importance on giving its staff professional training.

He said owing to the growing complexity of immigration work, members of the service were required to be vigilant and alert towards changes that had taken place.

Mr Leung said he hoped that the attachment would provide a good opportunity for the officers to widen their horizon and to have a better understanding of the work of their counterparts in the United Kingdom.

The four officers are acting Senior Immigration Officers, Mrs Chow Pang Siu-fong, Mr Sham Kin-fai and Mr Chan Kwok-ki, and acting Immigration Officer Mr Li Kin-sing.

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Views on compulsory education sought

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The Board of Education is inviting school councils, associations, sponsoring bodies and supervisors and principals of all primary and secondary schools to express their views and suggestions on the implementation of the nine-year free and compulsory education.

Letters and circulars have been sent to these organisations inviting them to send their submissions on or before March 25, 1995.

Views and suggestions in writing should be sent to the Secretary for the Sub-committee on Review of School Education, Board of Education, at Room 1161, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai.

The Sub-committee of the Board of Education on Review of School Education was formed to study the educational system with a view to identify areas of concern and to make recommendations to the Board of Education on measures to further enhance the system.

Meanwhile, chairmen of school councils, associations, sponsoring bodies and supervisors and principals of all primary and secondary schools are also invited to attend two public forums to be held on March 25, 1995.

Participating return slips should be sent to the Secretary of the Sub-committee on before March 17.

Details of the forums are as follows:

1st Forum:

Date : Saturday, March 25, 1995
Time : 9 am - noon
Venue : School Hall
Tang Shiu Kin Victoria Technical School
5 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

2nd Forum:

Date : Saturday, March 25, 1995
Time : 2 pm - 5 pm
Venue : School Hall
Methodist College
50 Gascoigne Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	7 Mar 95
Paper on offer	EF bills
Issue number	Q510
Amount applied	HK\$7,880 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN
Average yield accepted	5.96 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.97 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 100 PCT
Average tender yield	6.03 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning March 13, 1995

Tender date	14 Mar 95	14 Mar 95
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q511	H560
Issue date	15 Mar 95	15 Mar 95
Maturity date	14 Jun 95	13 Sept 95
Tenor	91 days	182 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300 MN	HK\$800+160 MN

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	2,498	0930	+225
Closing balance in the account	1,524	1000	+225
Change attributable to :		1100	+235
Money market activity	+256	1200	+256
LAF today	-1,230	1500	+256
		1600	+256

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 118.8 *-0.2* 7.3.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/Hong Kong Government bonds				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.14	15 months	2605	6.35	99.62	6.79
1 month	5.35	24 months	2702	7.50	100.63	7.28
3 months	5.96	29 months	3707	6.95	99.30	7.40
6 months	6.28	35 months	3801	8.00	101.26	7.64
12 months	6.67	58 months	5912	8.15	100.60	8.15

Total turnover of bills and bonds - \$15,213 million

Closed March 7, 1995

End/Tuesday, March 7, 1995