



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Public views on school quality sought

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The Chairman of the Education Commission, Professor Rosie Young, today (Monday) renewed her appeal to all sectors of the community to give their views on the consultation pamphlet entitled 'Quality School Education : ways to improve performance' which was released in mid-June for public consultation until July 31.

Speaking to the press after a meeting of the Commission, Professor Young said she was pleased with the initial response to the consultation pamphlet. The spirit and the direction of the study are generally supported by the community.

During the consultation exercise, more than 10 briefing sessions have been arranged for LegCo members, the teaching profession, educational bodies, parents, business communities and district boards to gauge their views. Some 35,000 copies of the bilingual pamphlet have been distributed.

At the meeting, members also noted the progress of the Task Group on School Quality and School Funding. It is intended that the second round of consultation on concrete proposals will commence in October.

The Director of Education, Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu, reported on the progress of various recommendations in previous Education Commission Reports No. 1-5. Most of the recommendations in the EC's earlier reports (ECR1-3) have been implemented, or are close to completion; while a few recommendations in ECR4 and 5 will need time and additional resources before they can be fully implemented.

These include the recommendations to convert primary schools to whole-day operation; to accelerate the provision of primary graduate teachers; and to improve: (i) the senior teacher ratio in bi-sessional schools, (ii) the ratio of student guidance teachers, and (iii) the teacher to class ratio in whole-day primary schools.

Members noted that the Administration will continue to seek additional resources to improve the quality of basic education, in particular at the primary level.

End

Hydrogen peroxide not for internal use

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Members of the public are today (Monday) advised not to take hydrogen peroxide for internal use.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said: "Hydrogen peroxide is a chemical for both industrial and medical uses.

"For medical use, it is applied as a disinfectant to clean wounds and ulcers and registered under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance for external use only.

"There is no evidence of any benefit from its internal use. In fact, such use has been reported to cause serious side effects."

He advised members of the public to seek advice from registered medical practitioners on the use of hydrogen peroxide when in doubt.

End

Calls for special site precautions

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Contractors should keep an eye on the weather conditions and take special safety precautions on construction sites to cope with weather changes.

A Labour Department spokesman said today (Monday) that as a typhoon signal has been hoisted, strong wind and heavy rain would cause objects to fall, collapse of scaffolds, cave-in of excavations and electrocutions on sites.

"When the weather turns bad, cranes should stop operating as their stability could be affected.

"All lifting appliances and scaffolds should be further strengthened with wall-ties, ballasting, lashing or guy ropes," he said.

Good house-keeping, proper stacking of materials, protection of electrical installations and equipment are also necessary in bad weather.

The spokesman said that site conditions including plants on the site should be thoroughly checked after the typhoon had subsided.

"It is also the responsibility of the contractor to carry out remedial work where necessary and ensure the site is safe before resuming normal operation.

"If remedial work is required, the contractor should also adopt a safe system of work and instruct the workers on details of the system," he said.

Under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, employers are required to provide a safe plant and a safe system of work for their employees.

End

Unlicensed clubhouse manager fined

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A clubhouse manager was fined \$15,500 by Tsuen Wan Magistracy today (Monday) after pleading guilty to managing an unlicensed club.

The court heard that in response to complaints, officers of the Home Affairs Department's Licensing Authority inspected a mahjong/catering club at first floor, 43-45 Chung On Street, Tsuen Wan, between July and September last year, and found that it was being operated as a member's clubhouse without a certificate.

The manager was subsequently charged under Section 5 of the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance.

A spokesman for the department reminded the public that anyone who operates or manages a club without a certificate of exemption or a certificate of compliance is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

He also stressed that enforcement action will continue to be taken against unlicensed clubhouses to ensure that they are being operated with proper regard for fire and structural safety.

End

Special postmark for social welfare conference

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A special postmark will be introduced on July 29 to commemorate Hong Kong's hosting of the 27th International Conference of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), the acting Postmaster General, Mr P C Luk, announced today (Monday).

The conference, to be held between July 29 and August 3 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, is organised by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to provide a forum for representatives from social welfare organisations world-wide to discuss issues of social welfare and social development.

The Post Office will not issue any philatelic product on this occasion, but a special postmark will be made available for hand-back service on July 29 at the following eight philatelic offices for any privately-made covers bearing an indication of the event:

Airport Post Office
General Post Office
Granville Road Post Office
Harcourt Road Post Office
Peak Post Office
Sha Tin Central Post Office
Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office
Tsuen Wan Post Office

End

Maths education determines technological development

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The level of mathematics education in a community determined the quality of its scientific research and technological development, the Director of Education, Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu, said today (Monday).

"This, in turn, has a direct impact on economic growth and survival," she said at the opening of the first Po Leung Kuk Asian Cities Primary Mathematics Contest 1996.

"Hong Kong is a major centre of commerce and finance, service and technology in southern China. Our managers, administrators and technical personnel are expected to have good grasp of mathematical training; and such experts will be in steadily increasing demand."

The Contest, organised by Po Leung Kuk, helps to stimulate students' interest in learning mathematics and to enhance mathematics education in Hong Kong.

Contestants have gone through rigorous training and many rounds of competitions before they can represent their cities in the contest.

Apart from the rounds of competition, the Organising Committee has arranged various social and educational events for the participants.

Contestants will be visiting the Space Museum and the Ocean Park. These trips aim to facilitate cultural exchange and promote mutual understanding, which is another major objective of this contest.

Mrs Yu hoped that lasting friendship would be cultivated among the participants during these few days and that the young talents from different Asian cities would carry away fond memories of Hong Kong and its community.

End

Figures by Companies Registry show mixed results

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Figures released by the acting Registrar of Companies, Mr A H Patel, today (Monday) indicated mixed results for the first six months of the calendar year 1996 compared with the same period of 1995.

The Companies Registry figures showed that the total number of companies registered under the Companies Ordinance at the end of June 1996 was 476,418, an increase of 0.96% over the position at December 31, 1995.

The number of new companies registered during the first six months of 1996 was 20,371, 3,056 more than the corresponding period of 1995.

The total number of overseas companies which had established a place of business in Hong Kong under Part XI of the Companies Ordinance at the end of June 1996 was 4,523, an increase of 4.8% over the total number at the end of December 1995.

The number of new overseas companies registered during the first six months of 1996 was 324, an increase of 12.1% compared with the first six months of 1995.

The number of charges on the assets of companies registered in the first six months of 1996 decreased by 0.5% from 14,838 to 14,764 compared with the first six months of 1995; and the amount secured by those charges decreased by 12.8% from \$35,629 million to \$31,058 million.

The number of Certificates of Satisfaction, issued when charges are repaid, amounted to 9,605 in the first half year of 1996, an increase of 9.1% from the same period last year, while the amount of indebtedness released, showed a rise of 20.5% to \$6,638 million.

During the period a total of 99 prospectuses, including 40 in respect of mutual funds, were registered compared with 80 prospectuses, including 45 in respect of mutual funds, during the corresponding period in 1995.

The number of documents received for filing during the first six months of 1996 compared with that for the same period in 1995 increased by 9.7% from 651,313 to 714,415 and the number of searches made by the public during the first six months of 1996 compared with that for the same period in 1995 decreased by 4.1% from 942,016 to 903,353.

The total number of summonses issued by the Registrar of Companies against companies and their directors for breaches of the Companies Ordinance, mainly for late filing of documents in the first six months of 1996 was 124, compared with 118 during the same period in 1995. 126 convictions were obtained in the period compared with 81 in the same period of 1995 and 16 cases remain to be heard by the court (47 in the same period of 1995).

The total amount of fines imposed for convictions in the first half year of 1996 was \$2,421,285, compared with \$1,301,760 in the corresponding period in 1995.

End

Data on business firms available for public retrieval

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A comprehensive database containing up-to-date particulars of about 350,000 active business establishments in Hong Kong is available for retrieval by members of the public from the central register of establishments of the Census and Statistics Department.

The register serves mainly as the sampling frame for various economic surveys conducted by the department. A sample listing containing 20 per cent of non-confidential records randomly selected from the Register is accessible by prospective users.

The records of the Register is now widely used by many government departments and private organisations in their publicity, business promotion, survey and research work.

Application for the supply of information such as the name, address, major type of business activity and employment size class of all or part of the listed records can be made to the Central Register of Establishments Section of the department. Records kept in the Register is updated on a quarterly basis and information for the first quarter of 1996 is now available.

Information can be supplied in the form of photocopies or specially-run magnetic tapes with a service charge to be levied at the following rates:

- * \$5.6 per page of photocopy for the first 20 pages and \$1.3 for each additional page thereafter; or
- * a charge of about \$1,000 for a job requiring special computer run (exact amount depending on the complexity of the job concerned); and
- * if the information is required on magnetic tapes, the magnetic tape can be provided by the applicant, or by the department at a charge of \$143 per tape.

Further details can be obtained from the Central Register of Establishments Section on 2582 4760.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	22 July 1996
Paper on offer	EF notes
Issue number	3,907
Issue date	23 July 1996
Maturity date	23 July 1999
Coupon	6.80 PCT
Amount applied	HK\$6,670 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$500 MN
Average price accepted (yield)	100.27 (6.81 PCT)
Lowest price accepted (yield)	100.27 (6.81 PCT)
Pro rata ratio	About 15 PCT
Average tender price (yield)	100.23 (6.83 PCT)

End

Water cut in Sheung Shui

The fresh and flushing water supply to some premises in Sheung Shui will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Thursday (July 25) to 6 am the following day for waste detection work on watermains to be carried out.

The suspension will affect Tin Ping Shan, Sheung Shui Wa Shan and Shek Wu San Tsuen.

End

Water storage figure

Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 93.5 per cent of capacity or 547.766 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 448.329 million cubic metres of water, representing 76.5 per cent of capacity.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,868	0930	+93
Closing balance in the account	1,791	1000	+93
Change attributable to :		1100	+93
Money market activity	+93	1200	+93
LAF today	-170	1500	+93
		1600	+93

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.0 *+0.0* 22.7.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.06	2 years	2805	6.30	100.08	6.34
1 month	5.10	3 years	3904	6.30	99.19	6.73
3 months	5.26	5 years	5106	7.23	99.90	7.38
6 months	5.45	7 years	7305	7.60	100.26	7.69
12 months	5.85	5 years	M502	7.30	99.57	7.55

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$6,377 million

Closed July 22, 1996

End