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Agreement on CMB workers' retirement benefits reached

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The management and staff representatives of the China Motor Bus (CMB) Company have reached an agreement on workers' retirement benefits at a resumed meeting tonight (Saturday). The Special Conciliation Officer, Mrs Chan Mak Kit-ling, and Senior Labour officer of the Labour Department, Mr Stephen Leung Mak-kwan, also attended the meeting.

The meeting started at 8.10 pm and lasted for about two and a half hours.

Mrs Chan welcomed the agreement. She said that the trade dispute between the management of the bus company and its employees was settled through frank and sincere negotiation.

A draft agreement covering the terms of settlements has been initialled by the two parties immediately after the meeting. A formal agreement will be signed next week.

End

Announcement of regulations on labour exportation welcomed

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The Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mr Joseph W P Wong today (Saturday) welcomed the announcement made by China's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation (MOFTEC) on a series of new regulations on the control and monitoring of contract workers exported from China to Hong Kong.

"This comprehensive series of regulations set out clear guidelines covering aspects like selection of personnel, labour service fees, contract-signing, contract obligations, penalties, registration of labour service companies under Hong Kong law, and prohibition of the use of 'middleman'. This will increase the transparency and effectiveness of the control procedures of labour exportation and reinforce the safeguards against abuses under Hong Kong's labour importation schemes," Mr Wong said.

"The Hong Kong Government is committed to protecting the rights and benefits of workers imported under our labour importation schemes. The Government has, through its liaison efforts, built up a close rapport with authorities of the labour exporting countries over the regulation of the labour exportation activities, so that any problems can be resolved promptly through co-operation." He added.

End

HK-Guangdong talks on boundaries of administration

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Further discussions on matters relating to the boundaries of administration between Hong Kong and Guangdong will take place in Guangzhou on November 12 and 13 between the Hong Kong Government and the Guangdong provincial authorities, a Government spokesman said today (Saturday).

The Deputy Political Adviser, Mr John Ashton, will lead the Hong Kong team.

Mr Xiao Jinzhe, Deputy Director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Guangdong Provincial Government, will lead the Guangdong team.

End

Public invited to join "enjoy safe hiking campaign" contests

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Members of the community are invited to take part in two competitions under the Enjoy Safe Hiking Campaign organised by the Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) which is now in full swing.

An AFD spokesman said today (Saturday) that participants were welcome to join either one or both competitions which were to test their innovations. The first is the warning sign design contest and the other is slogan invention competition.

For the warning sign competition, entrants are required to design a two-colour sign informing hikers the steep and slippery path ahead. Entries should be made on an A4 size cardboard.

On the second competition, the spokesman said a slogan of no more than 20 words promoting the message of hiking safety should be created.

Each entry should be accompanied or completed with an application form, and submitted to AFD's Education Section, Room 319, Canton Road Government Offices, Kowloon not later than February 28 next year.

Each competition will be divided into two groups, junior (aged 15 or under) and senior (over 15). The overall winner of each group will be awarded a $1,500 cash prize and a trophy.

The spokesman said the winning design or slogan might be used for the department's publicity and educational purposes in the future.

Turning to the four-month long safety campaign, he said that a number of activities were being held with the main objective of enhancing public awareness on hiking safety.

Apart from the above competitions, a round-the-territory exhibition on the hiking safety theme is being staged on Sundays in shopping malls of public housing estates.

Tomorrow (Sunday), the exhibition will be staged at the shopping arcade in Shek Kip Mei Estate. It will be followed in successive Sundays at public housing estates in Lei Cheng Uk (November 17), Yiu Tung (podium near car park No 1, November 24), Tai Wo (Phase I podium, December 1), Cheung Wah (near shop No 107, December 8), Chuk Yuen (December 15) and Butterfly (December 22).

The campaign is sponsored by the Lions Clubs International District 303 Hong Kong and Macau.

Enquiries on the two competitions or the activities of the campaign can be directed to AFD's Education Section on 2733 2121.

End

Fresh water cut in northern New Territories

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Fresh water supply to some premises in Fanling, Ta Kwu Leng and Sha Tau Kok will be suspended from 10 pm on November 12 (Tuesday) to 6 am the following day for watermains connections.

The suspension will affect:

* villages along Sha Tau Kok Road between Lung Yuek Tau and Sha Tau Kok, including Burma Lines, Ma Liu Shui San Tsuen, Ko Po, Hung Leng Tsuen, Kan Tau Tsuen,Tan Chuk Hang Tsuen, Hok Tau Tsuen, San Uk Tsai, Sze Tau Leng, Ma Mei Ha, Ta Tong Wu, Loi Tung, Man Uk Bin, Wo Hang, Au Ha, Ma Tseuk Leng, Yim Tso Ha, Wu Shek Kok, Muk Min Tau, Tam Shui Hang, Kong Ha and Sha Tau Kok Market;

* villages along Lau Shui Heung Road, including Tong Po and Lau Shui Heung Tsuen;

* villages along Ping Che Road, including Hung Leng Tsuen, Ping Che, Shui Lau Hang, Sham Kai Wat, Tai Po Tin, Ping Yeung, Lei Uk, Tong Fong, Fung Wong Wu, Chau Tin Tsuen, Kan Tau Wai and Ta Kwu Leng;

* villages along Luk Keng Road, including Nam Chung, Luk Keng; Kat Kuk Shu Ha; and

* villages along Lin Ma Hang Road, including Chuk Yuen, Tsung Yuen Ha, Heung Yuen Wai and Ta Kwu Leng.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change ($ million)
Opening balance in the account	3,100	09:30	- 200
Closing balance in the account	2,370	10:00	- 200
Change attributable to:		11:00	- 200
Money market activity	- 200	11:30	- 200
LAF today	- 530		

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.4 *-0.1* 9.11.96

End

Transcript of Governor's media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session given by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, at the LegCo Building this (Sunday) afternoon:

I thought I would save you the trek to Kai Tak again by saying something about my trip at lunch-time and giving you the opportunity to ask any questions.

I am away until Friday. I am going to the United Kingdom for a day to address the Confederation of British Industry Annual Conference on Asia and Hong Kong, then I am going to Paris for about 24 hours and Bonn for about 24 hours, before flying back from Germany on Thursday.

The main purpose of my visit is to go to Paris and Bonn, albeit extremely briefly. I will be meeting Chancellor Kohl, the French and German Foreign Ministers, and other political leaders in both countries. I am also making speeches to two think-tanks, one in Paris and one - the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung or Academy, in Bonn.

What I will be doing, obviously, is briefing people on the latest state of play in the transition. I will be encouraging them to recognise that the European Union has a considerable stake in a successful transition here in Hong Kong. But above all, I will be pressing them to ensure that there is the easiest possible access for people with passports from Hong Kong to travel after 1997.

Now that raises, in particular, the question of SAR passport holders. I think that the main issue there as far as France and Germany are concerned, is to try to ensure that the question of entry by SAR passport holders to member states of the European Union is a matter for national decision and that the SAR passport is not placed on what is called the Common Visa List which would mean that there was then no distinction between the SAR passport and the PRC passport.

It is an extremely important matter for us to ensure that individual countries can make up their own minds - as Britain has done - rather than have a European Union-wide decision which would be against our interests. So I will be making that point extremely strongly in France and Germany. Both those are countries which at present have very tough visa regimes and I think that whether you are talking about somebody travelling with a BNO passport or somebody travelling with an SAR passport, it is quite difficult to imagine them changing their overall regime but it will be a success if we can persuade them that the SAR passport should not - repeat not - be placed on the Common Visa List.

Question: Governor, Director Lu Ping will come to Hong Kong on Friday, so will you plan to have a meeting with him after you come back to Hong Kong?

Governor: It depends how long he is here. I get back from Germany at about, I should think, half-past-six on Friday evening and I go straight to the Royal Hong Kong Police Beating the Retreat. But if Director Lu wishes to see me or to see the Chief Secretary, Anson Chan, then we would be happy to see him if it was possible. But I repeat, my diary, unless we could meet in mid-air, seems to make it rather difficult.

Question: Would you not clear a space in your diary to meet Director Lu?

Governor: Yes, but if I cleared a space in my diary, it would be a space at about 30,000 feet because on Friday I will be actually flying back from Frankfurt.

Question: Would you rather change your diary to meet him?

Governor: I can't change my return now, but if he would like to stay on for a few hours I would be delighted to see him. But you know this has become a ritual. You know perfectly well what the position of the Hong Kong Government is, you know perfectly well how courteous and open we have been in our invitations to Director Lu. The whole community knows where the problem lies.

Question: What about Mr Qian Qichen, are you going to meet him?

Governor: The position is identical. If he has time to meet either the Chief Secretary or me, we would be delighted to see him.

Question: And it is purely a coincidence then you are unable to meet him?

Governor: If you look back in your own newspaper files you will discover that the announcement about my trip to Europe preceded by some time any announcement of Mr Qian Qichen's visit to Hong Kong. But I understand Mr Qian will be coming on future occasions as well and anytime Mr Qian Qichen would like to see the Governor or the Chief Secretary of Hong Kong we would be delighted to see him.

I repeat, you should not be putting these questions to us, you should be putting these questions to Chinese officials. And you know perfectly well what the answer you would get would be. This becomes a ridiculous ritual. We are prepared to behave in a sensible and adult and constructive way.

Question: Mr Patten, on the Remembrance Day Ceremony for next year, would you expect the government will be represented?

Governor: That will be a matter for my successor but I think that it would be surprising if there was not some government representation. After all, what we are remembering is those who sacrificed their lives, not least to defend Hong Kong and its freedoms, and those who sacrificed their lives included very many brave local Chinese.

Question: Mr Patten, how will you persuade ... during your trip to Europe ... about free entry for SAR passport holders?

Governor: If you look back at your notes you will see that I gave a fairly extensive reply to that, pointing out that the main issue as far as Paris and Bonn is concerned is a question of whether or not SAR passports are placed on the Common Visa List. The first thing we have to do is to ensure that they are not placed on the Common Visa List.

Question: How confident is that you can successfully persuade them to ...?

Governor: We have had some hopeful earlier exploratory discussions at official level and I think that people in the European Union now understand our position much better and understand the importance of this issue to us, so I hope that I will be able to capitalise on that increase in understanding. The European Union, which has such a large stake in Hong Kong, must understand the importance to Hong Kong of the easiest possible travel and of the easiest possible access for our people with our passports to their countries.

Question: Are you going to organise any orientation programme for the Chief Executive Designate?

Governor: Any orientation programme?

Question: Yes.

Governor: I think the Chief Executive Designate will have his own ideas about what sort of briefing he wants - now we know it is going to be a he - and we will be happy to provide that briefing in the sort of way the Chief Executive would like. Clearly, there are one or two areas where it is important for us to ensure that briefing is as comprehensive as possible.

There seems to be some misunderstanding about our position on the garrison and the law after 1997. The position that we have put to the Legislative Panel is absolutely clear. We think that any civil cases, any cases involving a tort, should be dealt with in Hong Kong's courts. So far as criminal cases are concerned, we accept that where something is done on duty it should be dealt with under military law by the PRC but where it is off-duty we think it should be dealt with in Hong Kong courts. There is not very much difference, I don't think, between ourselves and Chinese officials on that second point, although we do want to be a little clearer about what on-duty and off-duty mean. We would like the definitions to be the same, roughly speaking, as they are today.

The real issue and the real point of difference between us is over the question of torts or civil cases. If you have a bump in a car with a PLA lorry, we think that should be dealt with in a Hong Kong court under Hong Kong law, not under Mainland law in a military court. And I think that is a very clear point, I think it is rather an important point for Hong Kong, and I hope that all those who are responsible for the future or may be responsible for the future administration of Hong Kong will recognise it.

Question: The Chief Executive Designate has come out in endorsement ...?

Governor: It did not seem to me that their endorsement reflected as full an understanding of the Hong Kong Government's position as I would have wished but I hope that I have now made the point clear.

Question: The Chinese side has stressed that the garrison law is the responsibility of the Chinese Government, not the Hong Kong Government. Can you say something about that?

Governor: But the Basic Law is perfectly clear on the position of the garrison and I would have hoped that the military law passed by the PRC would be in line with the letter and of course the spirit of the Basic Law on these matters. What we are talking about is important practical issues of day to day life and of course they relate to one or two fundamental principles, but I think the point that I have just enunciated would be accepted as fair by most people in this community and by most people in other communities. Thank you very much indeed.

End

Guidelines to help children adjust to local education

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Subject guidelines have been issued to schools to help children recently arriving in Hong Kong from various parts of China adjust to the education provided in local schools.

The Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Department has produced two booklets on Chinese Language and English Language for teachers' use and reference.

The booklets give suggestions and directions on how to help students from China adjust to local school education.

A series of half-day seminars will be conducted in December to explain the concepts and strategies suggested for English Language.

School heads who wish to nominate teachers to attend the seminars should return completed nomination form to the Principal Inspector of the English Unit of the Education Department's Curriculum Development Institute by fax 2573 5299 or by mail to Room 1318, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai on or before November 23.

Enquiries on the booklets should be directed to the Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Department on 2892 5876 or 2892 5893 for Chinese Language and 2892 5888 or 2892 5873 for English Language.

Meanwhile, the department has prepared two course outlines on Mathematics and social adjustment for the institutions and tutors who wish to conduct induction programmes for Mathematics and social adjustment.

End

District festival should be widely promoted: DHA

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District festival activities have led to greater community involvement by residents and they should be widely encouraged, the Director of Home Affairs, Mrs Shelley Lau, said today (Sunday).

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Wong Tai Sin District Festival '96, Mrs Lau said district festivals had encouraged residents' participation in district affairs and strengthened their sense of belonging.

With this aim in mind, the Wong Tai Sin district has organised its biggest district festival ever this year with more than 30 events, including family fun days, carnivals, day camps, exhibitions, concerts, feasts for the elderly and essay and photo competitions.

Mrs Lau said this year's Wong Tai Sin District Festival had a special meaning as this year also marked the 15th anniversary of the introduction of district administration.

She called on residents to actively participate in the district festival activities to help promote the theme - share the fun and participate in building a better Wong Tai Sin.

The district festival, which lasts until December 1, is organised by the Wong Tai Sin District Board with the assistance of the District Office.

Mrs Lau also officiated at the kicking-off ceremony of a parade of ten festooned buses, which toured the district today to help publicise the festival.

Also at the opening ceremony are the Chairman of the Urban Council, Dr Ronald Leung; the Wong Tai Sin District Officer, Miss Diane Wong; and the Chairman of the Wong Tai Sin District Board, Mr Chan Kam-man.

End

First hiking practice trail opens

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The territory's first hiking practice trail, where visitors can do hill walking in a maintained path and at the same time learn more about skills and safety hints in hiking, is officially open for public use today (Sunday).

The one-kilometre trail is at Tai Mo Shan Country Park with its entrance located near the Rotary Garden, Tsuen Kam Au, Route Twisk.

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) said the trail was suitable for people who had limited knowledge and skills in hiking but want to pursue this activity in a safe manner.

He pointed out that information provided along the trail could help visitors of all ages get a better understanding on basic and practical knowledge, skills and safety features in hiking activities.

With 18 check points, the trail takes about only 30 minutes for a return trip.

"After all, this trail is good for hiking beginners," the spokesman said, adding that it would be included as an itinerary under AFD's country park guided tours in future.

To introduce the new hiking facility, a new leaflet has been published for distribution at the country park visitor centres in Plover Cove, Aberdeen, Tai Mo Shan, Clear Water Bay, Shing Mun and the Lions Nature Education Centre, Sai Kung.

Apart from having a map of the trail, there are 10 major points on hiking knowledge and techniques in the leaflet. An itinerary planner listing major reminders for hikers before journeys is also included.

"The leaflet is particularly useful if it can be referenced together with the hiking safety booklet produced earlier in the year by the department,"

"The two publications are also good reference materials for hiking leaders in their training," the spokesman added.

He also thanked the Lions Clubs International District 303 Hong Kong and Macau for sponsoring the printing cost and the Hong Kong Scout Association for providing the expert information for the leaflet.

This morning's opening and trial run on the trail is one of the activities organised for the "Enjoy Safe Hiking" Campaign launched last month.

Officiating at the opening ceremony were the Chairman of Country and Marine Parks Board's Country Parks Committee Dr Tam Wing-kun and an AFD assistant director, Mr Wong Fook-yee.

End

Slope maintenance exhibition opens at Luk Yeung Sun Chuen

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An exhibition on slope safety and maintenance will begin tomorrow (Monday) at Luk Yeung Sun Chuen in Tsuen Wan.

Organised by the Civil Engineering Department, the exhibition will be open daily between 10 am and 10 pm until November 17 at the exhibition square of Luk Yeung Sun Chuen Shopping Arcade. Admission is free.

It is the third of a series of roving exhibitions organised to promote public awareness of slope safety and the importance of slope maintenance.

"The two exhibitions held in China Hong Kong City in Tsim Sha Tsui and Heng Fa Chuen in Chai Wan were well received and attracted hundreds of visitors," a spokesman for the department said today (Sunday).

The exhibition will feature various aspects of proper slope maintenance through display of colourful illustrations and photographs.

Information on landslip warning messages, warning signs, evidence of landslip danger and precautionary measures to take when the landslip warning is in force, will also be displayed. Leaflets on slope safety and maintenance will also be available free for collection by the public.

A promotional video on slope maintenance will be shown at the exhibition venue.

A similar exhibition will be staged at Cheung Fat Estate in Tsing Yi between December 2 and 8.

End

Curriculum Development Council delegation visits Europe

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A seven-member delegation of the Curriculum Development Council has left for a seven-day visit to the Netherlands and Belgium in Europe.

The Chairman of the Council, Dr Cheng Hon-kwan, said before departure on Saturday (November 9) that the objective of the delegation was two-fold.

"The trip is to share experience on how to enhance the professionalism and productivity of a curriculum development agency," he said.

"It also aims to exchange views on how the curriculum can be more responsive to the fast changing needs of the community.

"We will visit the ministry of education and curriculum development organisations in the Netherlands and Belgium.

"Discussions with officials and educators will be held to exchange ideas and share experience on curriculum development matters with a view to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Curriculum Development Council."

End

38 new building plans approved in September

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The Buildings Department approved 38 building plans in September this year.

Of the plans, 12 are for Hong Kong Island, five for Kowloon and 21 for the New Territories.

The approved plans include 14 for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, 11 for commercial developments, three for factory and industrial developments, and 10 for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for work to start on 55 building projects, which involve 219,937 square metres of usable domestic floor area and 241,129 square metres of usable non-domestic floor area.

During the same period, the department also issued 24 occupation permits - seven for Hong Kong Island, six for Kowloon and 11 for the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation in the month, the usable floor areas for domestic and non-domestic uses are 21,854 square metres and 103,657 square metres respectively.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in the month totalled about $2,769 million.

In addition, 20 demolition consents involving 37 buildings and structures were issued.

In September, the Buildings Department's Control and Enforcement Division received 842 complaints of unauthorised building works, and issued 309 removal orders on unauthorised works.

End

Fresh water cut in Kowloon East

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The fresh water supply to some premises in Kowloon East will be temporarily suspended from 10 pm on Wednesday (November 13) to 6 am the following day for repair work on watermains.

The suspension will affect Kung Lok Road, Hong Lee Road, a section of Hong Ning Road between Hip Wo Street and Kung Lok Road, Lok Wah North Estate, Lok Wah South Estate, Sau Mau Ping police station, Ngau Tau Kok Upper Estate, Lok Nga Court, Shun Lee Estate, Shun Tin Estate, Shun On Estate and the staff quarters of United Christian Hospital.

End