



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Governor's media session

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Following is a transcript of the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten's question-and-answer session after his speech at the Peat Marwick Conference today (Monday):

Question: Governor, what is your reaction - the British Home Secretary has rejected your suggestion for granting passports to three million people in Hong Kong - what do you have to say?

Governor: I'm not very surprised. He set out his views courteously and firmly. I think the Labour Party have expressed similar views. The British Government's and the Labour Party's position seems to have remained the same. Our position has been the same. For example, we had a debate in the Legislative Council last October and the Secretary for Security on that occasion set out the Government's policy. The three official members - because we then had votes in the Legislative Council - voted in favour of the motion on the subject and I repeated the same thoughts on Friday.

Question: But will you be pushing hard for it?

Governor: Well, for several years under my predecessor and under my governorship we've had quite a long agenda of nationality issues of which obviously the basic one since David Wilson first put it forward has been about BDTC passport holders. But there have been others as well, including the position of war widows, and the position of the ethnic minorities, and those are on the agenda whenever we have the relevant meetings, either in London or here.

Question: Mr Patten, for those who say it would change the nature of British society to allow three-and-a-half-million Hong Kong Chinese the right of abode in Britain, what do you say to people like that?

Governor: I say, listen to what I said last Friday and what others have said. I set out what has been consistently the Hong Kong Government's position and it would be, I guess, surprising if I didn't do so. I think people would have been more surprised if, last Friday, I'd announced a U-turn, but I guess that it was a slow news week-end.

Question: Were you surprised by the virulence of the response of some sections of British politics to your comments?

Governor: I was surprised that nobody seemed to know that had been the Hong Kong Government's position for the last six years, since we've stated it often enough and usually stated it without it getting the gratifying degree of attention which it received over the week-end. Nobody, I think, believes that because citizens of the European Union could go and live in the United Kingdom that 260 million are going to arrive there next Monday morning. But those are all arguments that we've had out before. It's for me to go on putting Hong Kong's case as Governor of Hong Kong and I'll continue to do so. But I think all of us recognise the arguments that are put on the other side.

Question: But do you think your suggestion will only give an unrealistic hope to Hong Kong people?

Governor: I think it would have been regarded by the Hong Kong people as pretty odd if at this stage in 1995, after six years in which we've been putting this argument, we suddenly dropped it. I think the Hong Kong people are pretty realistic about the prospects. All of us are pretty realistic about the prospects but it doesn't mean that we can simply walk away from the argument.

Question: Would you describe statements like 'having travelling Chinamen in Britain' as racist and have these reactions by Members of Parliament even surprised you in Britain?

Governor: I've been in politics long enough not to be surprised by anything.

Question: At the time when you go back to England will you voice the same opinions?

Governor: Well, I've voiced them consistently when I've been back to England since 1992. On most of my visits, not all, but on most of my visits we've had on the agenda issues involving nationality, particularly of course the question of the war widows and the question of ethnic minorities. And we made some progress on the war widows - not as much as Jack Edwards would have liked - we made a bit of progress on that. And I hope we can make progress on other matters and we will continue to argue them.

Question: Do you think your suggestion will make the meetings between Mr Qian Qichen and Mr Major more difficult?

Governor: No. I'm sure Mr Qian Qichen is well briefed and knows what the policy of the Hong Kong Government is.

Question: Just for the record, Governor, could you restate and clarify exactly what your position is please?

Governor: My position is exactly the same as the position of the Hong Kong Government has been since 1989 which was set out very clearly in the Legislative Council last autumn.

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Hong Kong's future is optimistic: Governor

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It is hugely in China's interest that Hong Kong should continue to succeed, the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, said today (Monday).

Speaking at the Peat Marwick Conference and stressing that he was optimistic about Hong Kong's future, Mr Patten pointed out that China was now the biggest investor in the territory, with investments probably equal to around US\$20 billion. "So China wants Hong Kong to succeed in strictly commercial and financial terms," he said.

It also wanted Hong Kong to succeed so that it could demonstrate to the world that it was perfectly capable of running Hong Kong as successfully as it had run by Britain, he added.

"But above all, I'm optimistic about Hong Kong because of the people of Hong Kong, extraordinarily resilient people who had to take a great deal in their stride in the last 45 - 50 years and I'm sure will manage 1997 without too much difficulty," said the Governor.

On the Legislative Council elections which took place on September 17, Mr Patten said the Government was committed to co-operating, hopefully constructively, with the new LegCo.

"It will involve a good deal of give-and-take but we are looking forward to the challenge," he said, adding that he was of the view the vote cast at the elections was a vote for Hong Kong.

"It was a vote for Hong Kong's way of life, the way of life of an open, free society," said the Governor.

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Hong Kong-Japan Partnership promotion launched

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The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, today (Monday) launched the Hong Kong-Japan partnership promotion in Tokyo with a non-stop round of appointments, including a meeting with the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Tomiichi Murayama.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister reconfirmed Japan's interest in Hong Kong.

Mrs Chan said later that Mr Murayama and his other ministerial colleagues were obviously concerned about the preparations for the transition. She was able to brief him on the latest developments in Hong Kong, including the results of the Legislative Council elections held 10 days ago.

The Chief Secretary said she was confident that Hong Kong's present way of life would continue much the same after the transition in 1997 because of the commitments given by Britain and China to implementing the Joint Declaration and Basic Law.

Mrs Chan also called on the Minister for Construction, Mr Yoshiro Mori, the Minister for Finance, Mr Masayoshi Takemura, and the Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Yasuo Fukuda.

Earlier in the day, she had a meeting with Mr Toshiki Kaifu, who is president of the New Frontier Party, one of the main opposition parties in the Japanese parliament the Diet.

At a breakfast meeting with about 50 leading Japanese and Hong Kong businessmen and officials, Mrs Chan reiterated her confidence in Hong Kong's future.

She briefed the businessmen on Hong Kong's economy, the political situation, Hong Kong's relations with China and the measures being implemented to pave the way for a smooth transition to Chinese sovereignty.

The Chief Secretary noted that the first questions raised by the businessmen concerned the impact on Hong Kong of the change in sovereignty in 1997.

However, she firmly believed that if all the necessary legal and administrative measures were put in place, to provide a high degree of autonomy as promised in the Joint Declaration and Basic Law, then there would be a smooth transition.

She said in the remaining 600 or so days of the transition there would be close co-operation between Britain, China and Hong Kong on outstanding issues.

Already several key problems had been resolved in recent months, such as the establishment of the Court of Final Appeal and the financing agreement for the new airport. There has also been an increasing exchange of views on the civil service and other major transitional matters.

Mrs Chan told the businessmen that while there had been a recent slow down in the economy, Hong Kong's economic fundamentals remained strong and the gross domestic products growth in the medium term should be around five per cent for the year.

Outside in the streets of Tokyo, the Hong Kong-Japan Partnership promotion got off to a colourful start with streamers, banners and balloons popping on stage for the opening of the Hong Kong Wonders exhibition at Sony Plaza.

And in another typical Hong Kong scene-setter, a lion dance coupled with the traditional Japanese ceremony of breaking the wooden barrel, opened the Hong Kong architecture exhibition.

The exhibition - which is being held in the architecturally striking forum of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Buildings - features models, maps, designs and plans of some of Hong Kong's outstanding projects for the future.

Tomorrow, the business sessions get under way in Tokyo with major seminars co-sponsored with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and workshop session in the afternoon covering specialised areas including Hong Kong's financial services, the new airport and other infrastructure projects, tourism and Hong Kong's high tech manufacturing.

The Chief Secretary will give a keynote speech at a luncheon following the morning plenary session and later will address the Japan National Press Club.

The delegation will fly to Osaka later in the evening.

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Active HK participation in economic meeting in Beijing

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Hong Kong will actively participate in the 11th General Meeting of the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC XI) to be held on September 27 - 29 in Beijing.

The theme of the PECC XI is "Asia-Pacific Initiatives for Global Prosperity: Trade Liberalisation and Development Co-operation".

Leading the Hong Kong delegation is the Chairman of the Hong Kong Committee for Pacific Economic Co-operation (HKCPEC), Mr William Fung, Group Managing Director of Li & Fung Limited.

Also attending the meeting will be the Secretary-General of the HKCPEC and Assistant Director-General of Trade, Mrs Rebecca Lai, as well as 30 other participants from the business, academic and government sectors.

Speakers from Hong Kong to the PECC XI include Managing Director of Bankers Trust Company, Dr William Overholt; Director of Research and Planning of the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Ltd, Mr Matthew Harrison; Managing Director of Varitronix International Limited, Dr York Liao; Director of Dah Chong Hong Ltd, Mr Chu Hon-fai; Project Manager of Rabobank Hong Kong Branch, Mr Roger Bradshaw; Dean of Faculty of Business of City University of Hong Kong, Professor Richard Ho; and Senior Assistant Director (Regulatory) of the Office of the Telecommunications Authority, Mr Anthony Wong.

The PECC XI will be preceded by a Standing Committee meeting to be held tomorrow (September 26), and a Co-ordinating Group meeting today (Monday) which discusses the policy issues and determines the work program of the PECC respectively.

PECC is a non-governmental organisation set up in 1980 with the purpose of developing closer co-operation among economies in the region in trade and economic policy issues.

Currently, PECC has a membership of 22 member committees representing the economies of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the US, the Pacific Island Nations and Vietnam. Hong Kong became a member of the PECC in May 1991.

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China visit useful and meaningful

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A Labour Department delegation, led by the Commissioner for Labour, Mr Stephen Ip, returned to Hong Kong last (Sunday) night after a seven-day visit to China.

The delegation, comprising senior officers from Labour Department's employment, labour relations, factory inspectorate and employees' compensation divisions, met China's Vice-minister, Ministry of Labour, Mr Zhu Jiazhen, and other senior labour ministry officials during their visit in Beijing early last week.

They then visited Shanghai where they met a group of senior officials from the Shanghai Municipal Labour Bureau, led by its Deputy Director, Mr Xu Huqing.

Describing the trip as very useful and meaningful, the Commissioner for Labour said views on various labour matters were exchanged during the visit to Beijing and Shanghai.

"We are glad to have been invited by the Chinese Government to visit China. It is a good thing to have regular contacts with our counterparts in China to keep each other briefed on the latest labour situations and to share experience on labour issues," Mr Ip said.

Other delegation members from the Labour Department included Assistant Commissioner, Mr William Siu, Chief Labour Officer, Mr James Yeung, Deputy Chief Factory Inspector, Mr Mak Hung-kae and Senior Labour Officer, Ms Jennie Chor.

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Environmental study report for Route 5

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The Government is proposing to complete the remaining section of Route 5 from Shek Wai Kok to Chai Wan Kok and will take into accounts the noise impact on the nearby environment.

The works include the construction of a dual 2-lane carriageway trunk road from Tsuen Kam Interchange to Castle Peak Road at its junction with Tsuen King Circuit, and the upgrading of a section of Castle Peak Road between Tsuen King Circuit and Tuen Mun Road to a dual 4-lane trunk road carriageway.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) had conducted an Environmental Review for the project in 1992 and recommended that an Environmental Impact Assessment Study should be carried out to provide information on the extent of the ecological, noise, air quality, water quality and visual impacts resulting from the proposed road works and to recommend practical mitigation measures to minimise the potential impacts.

The Study was started in September 1993 and completed in March this year. It had identified that about 4,300 dwellings and two schools will be affected by traffic noise to an unacceptance level once the road extension is in use.

To ameliorate the future traffic noise problem, a package of direct technical remedies costing \$266 Million in the form of open-textured road surface, road enclosures, partial enclosures and noise barriers will be incorporated in the project proposal.

The final report and executive summary have been issued. The reports can be seen at the five public reference libraries of the Urban and Regional councils.

The report, at \$500 a copy, and the summary, free of charge, are also available at the Major Works Project Management Office of Highways Department, third floor, Ho Man Tin Government Offices, 88 Chung Hau Street, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon.

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GEO publishes guide to slope maintenance

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The Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department has published a guide to slope maintenance entitled Geoguide 5.

Geoguide 5 presents a recommended standard of good practice for the maintenance of man-made slopes and retaining walls in Hong Kong.

Standards for the maintenance of slopes were given in the Geotechnical Manual for Slopes, the second edition of which was published in 1984. Experience gained over the intervening years has shown the need for revision. Thus, the main changes are embodied in chapters 3 and 4 of Geoguide 5.

The acting Principal Government Geotechnical Engineer, Mr John Massey, said: "The Geoguide is aimed at professional geotechnical engineers, although it will also be useful to the general public, many of whom carry responsibility for slope maintenance as owners of property.

"The general public may refer to an abridged version of this Geoguide: Layman's Guide to Slope Maintenance, to be published by the GEO next month to provide simplified guidance on matters related to slope maintenance.

"To ensure that the Geoguide would be considered a consensus document by interested parties in Hong Kong, the draft versions were widely circulated to professional bodies, property management companies, property development firms, consulting engineers, contractors, academics and Government departments for public comments in April 1994 and April 1995.

"Many individuals and organisations made very useful comments, which have been adopted to a large extent in finalising this Geoguide," he added.

Mr Massey reminded the public of the importance of slope maintenance.

"If a slope or retaining wall is not maintained, it will deteriorate and a landslip may occur. This could result in injury to persons or damage to property. If this happens, suffering and hardship may result and great expense may be incurred in reinstating the ground and making it safe," he said.

Geoguide 5 is now available at the Government Publications Centre at \$30 per copy. The Layman's Guide to Slope Maintenance will be available free of charge at the District Offices from mid-October 1995.

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No wage increase for foreign domestic helpers

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The Government announced today (Monday) that there would be no change in the minimum wage requirement for the employment of foreign domestic helpers.

"After studying the relevant statistics of the wage movements of local workers, we consider that the minimum allowable wage for foreign domestic helpers of \$3,750 a month remains appropriate, and that there is no case for an increase in the immediate future. We shall, however, continue to monitor the wage trend", said a government spokesman.

At present there are more than 152,000 foreign domestic helpers working in Hong Kong, mostly from the Philippines.

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1993 annual economic surveys reports now on sale

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The following five reports on the 1993 annual economic surveys have recently been published by the Census and Statistics Department and are now on sale:

- * Report on 1993 Survey of Industrial Production(\$48);
- * Report on 1993 Survey of Building, Construction and Real Estate Sectors (\$34);
- * Report on 1993 Survey of Wholesale, Retail and Import and Export Trades, Restaurants and Hotels (\$51);
- * Report on 1993 Survey of Transport and Related Services (\$30); and
- * Report on 1993 Survey of Storage, Communication, Financing, Insurance and Business Services (\$42).

These reports are bilingual publications in English and Chinese. They contain a wide range of statistics on the structural and operating characteristics of various economic activities for the reference year 1993, based on data collected from establishments engaged in those activities.

Examples of statistical items included in the reports are:

- * number of establishments, number of persons engaged;
- * compensation of employees;
- * gross output, sales of goods, business receipts and other income;
- * value added (a measure of contribution to gross domestic product);
- * purchases of goods and materials;
- * other operating expenses; and
- * gross additions to fixed assets;

Apart from statistics relating to the year 1993, the reports also contain summary statistics for the year 1991 and 1992 to facilitate comparison in recent years.

The statistics contain in the reports are useful to both the Government and the private sector in formulating policies and making decisions.

Copies of the reports may be purchased at the Government Publications Centre of the Information Services Department, Low Block, ground floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong; and the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th Floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

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Field workers recruitment for 1996 Population By-census

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Data on the population of Hong Kong to be collected in the 1996 Population By-census next March were vital to the planning of services of the Government, the Assistant Commissioner for Census and Statistics, Dr C M Luk, said at a luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club of Victoria today (Monday).

The 1996 Population By-census will be conducted from March 16 to 24 next year. About one-seventh of all households in Hong Kong will be selected for enumeration.

Some 7,800 temporary field workers will be mobilised to carry out the field work. The recruitment programme, which has already begun and will run till mid-October, is targeted at school teachers, Secondary 6 and post-secondary institutes students.

To facilitate teachers and Secondary 6 students to participate in the work, the Education Department has recommended the inclusion of by-census holidays in both primary and secondary schools.

"The work is interesting and highly meaningful. For those who participate in the operation of the by-census, the work will certainly enrich their inter-personal skills through working with their counterparts for the project, boost their confidence in communication through interviews, enhance their understanding of society, and above all, enable them to serve the community," Dr Luk said.

During the nine-day by-census operation period, enumerators will visit selected households throughout the territory to obtain from each household member information including age, sex, marital status, place of birth, educational attainment, occupation, income and place of study or place of work.

Dr Luk assured that information collected in the by-census which related to any individual persons or households would be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the stipulations in the Census and Statistics Ordinance.

Enquiries about details of the recruitment can be directed to the Census and Statistics Department on 2590 8761 or 2590 8910.

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Water storage figure

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Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 95.3 per cent of capacity or 558.617 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 574.729 million cubic metres of water, representing 98.1 per cent of capacity.

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,396	0930	+603
Closing balance in the account	2,017	1000	+603
Change attributable to :		1100	+603
Money market activity	+1001	1200	+573
LAF today	-380	1500	+1006
		1600	+1001

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 122.2 *+0.0* 25.9.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.76	2 years	2708	6.06	100.16	6.05
1 month	5.74	3 years	3807	6.16	99.70	6.37
3 months	5.70	5 years	5009	6.95	100.03	7.06
6 months	5.73	5 years	M501	7.90	102.17	7.47
12 months	5.77					

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$30,767 million

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