



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

Monday, April 10, 1995

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Drug trafficking ordinance to be amended

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The Drug Trafficking (Recovery of Proceeds) Ordinance is to be tightened up to provide more effective enforcement and better compliance with international standards.

A Bill to amend the Ordinance will be published in the Gazette on Thursday (April 13).

The intention to introduce legislative amendments was announced by the Governor at his summit meeting on drugs held on March 6.

The Commissioner for Narcotics, Mr Alasdair Sinclair, said: "The proposed amendments will help prevent convicted criminals from retaining their drug proceeds.

"Operational experience has revealed some areas where the Ordinance needs to be rewarded," he added.

The Commissioner cited several examples of gaps in the current law:

- * If a defendant absconds or dies before conviction, the proceeds of his drug trafficking cannot be confiscated.
- * If additional proceeds are discovered after a confiscation order has been made, the prosecutor cannot apply to have the amount of the order increased.
- * Production orders only apply to information that is already in existence, meaning that a fresh order has to be obtained whenever updated information is required.
- * It is not clear at present whether a drug trafficker can be charged with money laundering in relation to his own proceeds.

Mr Sinclair said under the proposed amendments it would still be necessary to prove beyond reasonable doubt that a person was guilty of a drug trafficking offence.

"However, once his guilt has been established, it is proposed that the amount by which he has benefited should be determined on the standard of proof applicable to civil proceedings, as is the practice in the United Kingdom," he said.

The Commissioner noted that legislation in Hong Kong already met many of the international requirements in this area but it was necessary to bring it up to date.

"International standards are evolving quickly and we need to keep in step," he said.

Amendments proposed for this purpose include the establishing of a criminal offence of dealing in property, knowing that it represents the proceeds of drug trafficking,

The Bill also introduces powers for authorised officers to seize specified property being imported into or exported from Hong Kong which represents the proceeds of drug trafficking.

"Hong Kong is committed to depriving criminals of their ill-gotten gains and preventing money laundering," Mr Sinclair said.

Relevant professional associations in the legal and financial sectors have been consulted on the Bill.

"Where appropriate their suggestions have been accepted and relevant changes made to the Bill," the Commissioner said.

Many provisions in the Organised and Serious Crimes Ordinance are modelled closely on the Drug Trafficking (Recovery of Proceeds) Ordinance. To maintain the correspondence, it is proposed to amend these in parallel.

The two Bills will be introduced into the Legislative Council on April 26.

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Initial report on HK under the Convention Against Torture now available

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The initial report on Hong Kong under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Degrading or Inhuman Treatment or Punishment will be tabled at the Legislative Council on April 19.

The report covers the legislative, administrative, judicial and other measures that have been taken by the Hong Kong Government to prevent any acts of torture, as defined in article 1 of the Convention, from being committed in Hong Kong.

"The Convention which was ratified by the United Kingdom Government in 1988, was extended to Hong Kong in December 1992," a Government spokesman said.

To give effect in Hong Kong to provisions of the Convention, the Crimes (Torture) Ordinance was enacted in January 1993. It creates and defines the offence of torture, and provides for a maximum penalty of life imprisonment for a person convicted of the crime. It also provides the legal channels for the extradition of torturers and suspected torturers.

Other measures taken include: ensuring our interrogation rules and instructions are compatible with the Convention; providing adequate and reliable complaints channels and machinery for inspection and supervision of custodial arrangements; and ensuring in the legal system that the victim of an act of torture obtains redress and has an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation.

Under Article 19 of the Convention, States Parties are required to submit to the United Nations Committee Against Torture periodic reports on the measures they have taken to give effect to their undertakings under the Convention.

"We were formally notified by the United Kingdom Government on March 29, 1995 that the initial report on Hong Kong was submitted by the United Kingdom Government to the United Nations late last month," the spokesman said.

"Copies of the report on Hong Kong and the text of the Convention, in both Chinese and English, are available at the Marketing Office of the Government Information Services at the 17th Floor, Siu On Centre, 176-192 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong," he said.

"The report will be issued again in the form of a booklet in May and copies will be made available in public libraries and District Offices for public information then," he added.

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FS to visit Shenzhen

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The Financial Secretary, Sir Hamish Macleod, will visit the city of Shenzhen at the invitation of the Shenzhen Municipal Government on Thursday (April 13).

Sir Hamish will visit various infrastructural developments in Shenzhen such as the port facilities at Yantian and the airport. He will also visit the Shenzhen Stock Exchange.

He will be accompanied by the Secretary for Economic Services, Mr Gordon Siu, and Chairman of the Securities and Futures Commission, Mr Anthony Neoh.

Attention News Editors:

Arrangements will be made for the media to cover the return of the Financial Secretary at Lok Ma Chau on Thursday.

Media members covering the event are requested to register for a border permit. They should telephone the Secretariat Press Office (Finance and Transport) on tel 2810 2116 or 2810 2977, giving their names and identity card numbers, by 3 pm Wednesday (April 12).

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HK combines high densities and quality environment

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Hong Kong has undergone a remarkable three-dimensional transformation that has established the territory as a world leader in the field of urban design and architecture, the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands, Mr Tony Eason, said today (Monday).

Speaking at the opening ceremony of an exhibition entitled "Hong Kong - City of Vision", Mr Eason said Hong Kong had been able to demonstrate convincingly that high densities and a high quality environment could be successfully combined.

"And, in the process, other significant benefits can be produced, as illustrated by the efficiency with which our city generally functions.

"All this is testimony to the vision, skill, dedication and hard work of our business entrepreneurs, planners, architects, engineers, contractors and all those who are involved in Hong Kong's progressive physical transformation," he said.

The exhibition in the 46th floor Sky Lobby of Central Plaza is open to public between 8.30 am and 7.30 pm until April 30. Admission is free.

It features building models, designs and photographs of notable architectural and development projects in the territory.

Apart from giving an overview of the different development patterns of Hong Kong, the exhibition highlights the planning of various activities including commerce, industry, transport, housing, community, education, recreation and preservation.

It also features seven projects of vision which include Bank of China Tower, Shun Tak Centre, Central Plaza, HongkongBank headquarters, the new airport passenger terminal building in Chek Lap Kok, south east Kowloon development and harbour reclamation.

In conjunction with the exhibition, lectures will be given by the Director of Planning, Dr Peter K S Pun, and two Hong Kong architects, Dr Simon Kwan and Mr Anthony H H Ng, at 6 pm on April 25 in the Rayson Huang Theatre of the University of Hong Kong.

Dr Pun will speak on "Land for Urban Growth". Topics of Dr Kwan and Mr Ng's lectures will be "The Application of Chinese Art Theory in Architecture" and "Architecture and the Environment" respectively.

The exhibition is jointly presented by the Planning Department, Architectural Services Department, and Information Services Department. The venue is sponsored by Sino Group, Sun Hung Kai Properties Group, Ryoden Group and Central Plaza Management Co Ltd.

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Eligible electors of old functional constituencies urged to register

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) today (Monday) urged all eligible electors of the 20 old functional constituencies of the Legislative Council to register as electors.

This is part of the overall campaign to appeal to eligible electors to register for the September Legislative Council elections.

A spokesman for the REO said the franchise of most of the 20 functional constituencies had been expanded.

Under the new franchise, corporate electors are replaced by individual electors in the capacity of "relevant persons" of the eligible corporations. They include company directors, sole proprietors, partners, management and executive committee members, and trade union officers.

The right to register as electors is given to a maximum of four officers in respect of each eligible trade union, and six "relevant persons" in respect of each eligible corporation other than a trade union.

There will no longer be any appointment of authorised representatives by corporations to vote on their behalf.

The REO has written to the relevant corporations in these old functional constituencies to obtain the list of their "relevant persons."

Based on the information so obtained, the REO is issuing letters to the individual "relevant persons", inviting them to register in their respective functional constituency.

The spokesman said all the "relevant persons" had to do is to complete the registration form sent to them and return it to the REO.

They may call an REO hotline 2827 9175 for enquiries or additional copies of the registration form.

"For these old functional constituencies where there is a quota of 'relevant persons' who can register as electors in respect of each eligible corporation, the applications for registration received by the REO before May 1 will be considered first," he said.

Those who are eligible to vote in an old functional constituency by virtue of their individual qualifications will soon receive application forms.

The spokesman noted that all applications for registration, including those for the geographical constituency, the old and the new functional constituencies, must reach the office by June 1 for inclusion in this year's Final Register of Electors.

"To ensure you are eligible to vote in the September Legislative Council elections, you must return your voter registration form to us before that date.

"We appeal to you not to forego your right to register to vote," he said.

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Second quarter rates due on April 29

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Rates for the second quarter of this year are payable on or before April 29, a spokesman for the Treasury said.

Payment can be made using the Payment by Phone Service or by post addressed to the Director of Accounting Services, P.O. Box 8000, GPO, Hong Kong, or in person at any of the following offices:

The Treasury Headquarters Collection and Payment Office, Immigration Tower, first Floor, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong;

The Central Sub-Treasury, Central Government Offices (West Wing), 11 Ice House Street, Hong Kong;

The North Point Sub-Treasury, Max Share Centre, first Floor, 373 King's Road, North Point, Hong Kong;

The Sai Wan Ho Sub-Treasury, Eastern Law Courts Building, Ground Floor, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho, Hong Kong;

The Yau Ma Tei Sub-Treasury, Kowloon Government Offices, fourth Floor, 405 Nathan Road, Kowloon;

The Kowloon City Sub-Treasury, Man Sang Commercial Building, first Floor, 348-352 Prince Edward Road, Kowloon;

The District Office at Sai Kung, Sha Tin, Tai Po, North, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan or Kwai Tsing.

The spokesman said ratepayers who had not received their demand notes should bring along those for any previous quarter to any of the Treasury collection offices.

Duplicate demand notes will be issued to them, he said.

If they cannot produce demand notes for any previous quarter, they should inquire at the Treasury Rates Section, Immigration Tower, 30th Floor, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Non-receipt of the demand note does not alter the requirement that the rates must be paid on or before April 29 and unless so paid, ratepayers may be subject to a surcharge of five per cent under section 22 of the Rating Ordinance.

A further surcharge of 10 per cent may be levied on the outstanding amount (including the five per cent surcharge) which remain unpaid six months after the due date.

Ratepayers who have submitted a valid direct debit authorisation should note that if the wording "Payment to Be Made By Autopay" is shown, payment will be made by direct debit to their bank accounts on April 29.

They should then ensure that their bank accounts contain the necessary funds on that date.

If the above wording is not shown, they should pay according to the instructions as set out in the demand notes.

Rates are payable on vacant properties but are refundable under the conditions as specified in section 30 of the Ordinance.

Under sections 30(1A) and (2A), however, no refunds will be made in the case of vacant tenement last used or intended to be used wholly or primarily for domestic purposes or for the parking of vehicles (unless vacant by reason of an order of the Government).

To save queuing time, the spokesman urged ratepayers to use the Payment by Phone Service, or pay by post using cheques or cashier orders, or by early personal attendance at any of the collection offices.

"However, the most convenient payment method is autopay," he said.

Applications for autopay are obtainable from Treasury collection offices, District Offices and all major banks in Hong Kong or by telephoning 2829 5019.

For additional information regarding the Payment by Phone Service, please call 1702 22329.

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Water storage figure

Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 66.5 per cent of capacity or 389.780 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 391.677 million cubic metres of water, representing 68.8 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	1,491	0930	+1,223
Closing balance in the account	2,504	1000	+1,223
Change attributable to :		1100	+1,223
Money market activity	+1,223	1200	+1,223
LAF today	-210	1500	+1,223
		1600	+1,223

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 118.5 *-0.3* 10.4.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/Hong Kong Government bonds				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.21	14 months	2605	6.35	100.29	6.16
1 month	5.23	23 months	2702	7.50	101.71	6.61
3 months	5.44	28 months	3707	6.95	100.49	6.82
6 months	5.69	34 months	3801	8.00	102.63	7.06
12 months	6.09	60 months	5003	7.75	101.10	7.62

Total turnover of bills and bonds - \$12,942 million

Closed April 10, 1995

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