



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of Governor's media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after attending the ICFTU International Conference this (Saturday) morning:

Question: (on the meeting between CS and Mr Lu Ping)

Governor: I spoke a couple of times in the telephone to the Chief Secretary yesterday evening. I was pleased that she'd had a good meeting with Director Lu. She'll be obviously making a fuller report when she comes back and I'm looking forward to having a meeting with her early on Monday morning to find out exactly what was said and discussed in detail. But obviously I think the whole community will have been reasonably pleased by the confirmation by Director Lu that he wants to ensure the civil service has as smooth a transition through 1997 as possible. And I think that the community will have been pleased as well to hear Director Lu repeating what Malcolm Rifkind heard from Mr Qian Qichen last week, namely that there's no question of the Chinese side trying to set up a second power centre, as it's called, before the 30th June 1997. We're interested of course to hear Director Lu's comments on the second runway for the airport which I think will be one of the next important infrastructure developments here in Hong Kong. And I'm pleased that he's going to have a look at the question of franchises for mobile phones. The wrangle over that has been going on for far too long. It's an issue which goes right to the heart of Hong Kong's autonomy in commercial and economic matters and the sooner it can be resolved the better.

Question: Do you think there will be more frequent meetings between Mr Lu Ping and Mrs Anson Chan instead of you?

Governor: I think the whole community is pleased that there are meetings whether they're with Mrs Chan or other senior members of the civil service, though I think most of the polls suggest that the community thinks that it would be sensible for Director Lu to implement the agreement in the Memorandum of Understanding on the airport and see the Governor. I don't think anybody is in any doubt who the Governor is. If you read the united front newspapers day after day, they don't think to be under any illusion of who the Governor is.

Question: What do you think about the plan to transform Government House into a museum of colonialism and the triumph for liberation in 1997?

Governor: I thought the architectural plans unveiled the other day were interestingly ambitious, I think that's a euphemistic way of describing them. I'm not sure that the Chief Executive would actually need a house four times as large as the one that I rattle around in order to do his or her job, and I would have thought that the Legislative Council after 1997, however it is composed, would have cause to reflect on the costs of a Chief Executive residence of that size. As for the future for Government House, well, that 's a matter for the Chief Executive to decide. It is a great historical monument in Hong Kong and I'm sure that if in due course it's turned into a museum, among the things it will be able to celebrate in the items on show will be the contribution that the rule of law and political as well as economic freedom made in this city to ensure that hundreds of thousands of refugees were able to carve out for themselves here a decent and civilised life.

Question: Are you still holding a firm stand on the provisional legislature?

Governor: Yes, of course.

Question: There is no provisional legislature before 1997.

Governor: No.

Question: But Anson Chan said that she is willing to accept such differences....

Governor: We recognise that the, I'm putting the point mildly, that the Chinese side don't agree with us on that, but our position has been clear, is clear, will continue to be clear, full stop.

Question: Do we now know more about how Preparatory Committee would like to make use of the RTHK to promote this ... and how can the Government ensure that ...?

Governor: Well, there is a statutory basis to RTHK's editorial independence. I listen to RTHK every day. I hear people occasionally saying things I prefer not to hear. But that's what happens in a free society, and I would defend to the death, which I hope doesn't prove necessary, RTHK's editorial independence. It is an important part of life in Hong Kong. So whereas I'm sure it's important for us to have more information about the Preparatory Committee, I don't think that anybody who is a member of the Preparatory Committee, who has read the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law could possibly think that the Preparatory Committee's work could trample over the editorial independence of RTHK. One more.

Question: What is the Government going to do with the ten demands?

Governor: What it's going to do with the ten demands? Answer them. But can I just say a word about the nomenclature. How can you talk if you're discussing cooperation about demands? If you want a cooperative atmosphere, if you want cooperation, you discuss things with people. We have some views about things the Preparatory Committee could do that would help to increase reassurance and help to increase a spirit of cooperation. We don't put those as demands, we put them politely. Mrs Chan puts them with her usual eloquence and politeness and courtesy. And if everybody was as polite and courteous as that, Hong Kong would have an even brighter future. Thank you very much. Have a nice weekend.

End

Transcript of remarks by Chief Secretary

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Following is the transcript of the remarks (English) by the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, on returning from Beijing this (Saturday) evening:

CS: I just come back from a short visit to Beijing. Before I left, I also called on the British Ambassador in Beijing. I wasn't expecting any spectacular breakthrough on this visit, but I see this as another useful building block in establishing a more trusting relationship with Director Lu Ping and hopefully with other Chinese leaders. This is clearly very important if we are to co-operate and resolve the many important transitional issues that still face us. I'm particular glad that on this occasion Director Lu and I agreed that we should set aside our differences and discuss areas where we can and should co-operate. We will of course be following up on all the issues that we have discussed. I particularly hope that very very soon the Chinese will be able to approve the six mobile telephone licences. In the days to come we will continue to defend Hong Kong's interests. We'll co-operate whole heartedly with the Chinese so that together we can make a reality of the "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" concepts.

Question: (on RTHK's air time)

CS: The question of use of air time is of course governed by a well established system and there are established rules for this. We will be considering the Preparatory Committee's request for air time in accordance with that system and in accordance with the laid down rules. I don't see any particular problem in this.

End

HK hosts PECC meetings for the first time

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Hong Kong this week played host to, and actively participated in, a series of four meetings of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) which started on Thursday and concluded today (Saturday).

This was the first time that PECC meetings were held in Hong Kong since Hong Kong became a member in May 1991.

The Chairman of the Hong Kong Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (HKCPEC) and Managing Director of Li & Fung Limited, Mr William Fung, represented Hong Kong at the PECC Standing Committee meeting today.

The other three PECC meetings held in the last two days were the Transportation, Telecommunications and Tourism (Triple-T) Task Force Meeting, the Financial Markets Development (FMD) Project Meeting and the Coordinating Group Meeting.

HKCPEC was represented by Mr Willy Lin, Member of HKCPEC and Managing Director of Milo's Manufacturing Company Ltd. in the Triple-T Task Force Meeting to discuss its work programmes. The meeting was followed by a visit to the Chek Lap Kok New Airport site.

Members of the FMD Hong Kong Committee also attended the FMD Project Meeting which witnessed the presentations of a number of FMD projects by different member committees with strong support from the private sector.

Mr Guillermo le-Fort, Head of International Division, Central Bank of Chile, gave a presentation at a luncheon on April 25 which was sponsored by the Banco Sud Americano. Mr Roger Luk, Managing Director and Deputy Chief Executive of Hang Seng Bank gave a speech at a luncheon on April 26 which was sponsored by Hang Seng Bank.

The Secretary General of HKCPEC and Assistant Director-General of Trade, Ms Doris Cheung, represented Hong Kong at the Coordinating Group Meeting.

Last night, the HKCPEC hosted a welcome reception and dinner for all participants attending the current series of PECC meetings in Hong Kong. During the occasion, the Director-General of Trade, Mr Tony Miller, extended a very warm welcome to PECC members on behalf of Hong Kong.

PECC is an organisation for regional economic co-operation comprising representatives from the business, academic and government sectors. It has a membership of 22 member economies, including Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States, Vietnam and the Pacific Island Nations.

End

Grant from Disaster Relief Fund

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The Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee has approved a grant of \$1.5 million to the Hong Kong Red Cross as a contribution to their post-flood relief work to assist people facing severe food shortage in North Korea. A spokesman for the Government said today (Saturday) that the Advisory Committee was concerned at the continuing hardship brought by the serious flooding in North Korea last summer.

"This is the second grant approved by the Committee for flood relief operations in that country. In October 1995, a grant of \$1.7 million was made to the Medecins Sans Frontieres," he said.

To ensure that the money will be used for the purpose designated, the Hong Kong Government will require the Hong Kong Red Cross to submit an evaluation report and an audited account on the use of the grant.

The spokesman added that public donations and appropriations from general revenue were the main sources of the fund.

"Members of the public are welcome to donate to the fund for general relief purposes," he said.

Enquiries can be made to the secretary to the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee in Room 553, East Wing, Central Government Offices or on 2810 3503.

The Advisory Committee is chaired by the Chief Secretary. Other members are Dr Raymond Ch'ien, Mr J D McGregor, Mr Cheung Hon-chung, Mr Lau Chin-shek, the Secretary for Health and Welfare, and the Secretary for the Treasury.

End

\$105 million paid to traffic accident victims

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The Social Welfare Department (SWD) paid out more than \$105 million from the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) Fund to traffic accident victims or their dependants in 1994/95.

According to the 1994/95 TAVA Fund annual report, a total of 5,740 applications were received during the period, representing a slight decrease of 0.9 per cent compared with 5,791 applications in 1993/94.

The TAVA scheme, operating since 1979, is one of the social security schemes administered by the SWD.

"It aims to provide speedy financial assistance to traffic accident victims or their dependants, regardless of the means of the family or the element of fault in causing the accident," a spokesman for the department said today (Saturday). During 1994/95, the SWD handled 31 cases of serious traffic accidents in which heavy casualties were involved.

The accident resulting in the largest number of casualties occurred on December 12, 1994 when a double deck Citybus overturned at Shek Pai Wan Road, Aberdeen, killing one person and injuring 45 others.

Up to the end of March 1995, a total amount of \$112,303 have been paid to 27 victims who were found eligible for assistance from this accident.

"To be eligible for assistance, an application must be made within the six months of the accident which must have been reported to the police," the spokesman said.

He said staff from the SWD's TAVA Section would, in major traffic accidents, take the initiative to contact victims or their dependants immediately to help them apply at an early date.

"In the case of injury not causing death, an applicant must obtain a certificate from a registered doctor requiring at least three days of sick leave.

"Beneficiaries under the scheme still retain the right to make claims for legal damages or compensation from other sources in the usual way," he said.

"However, those who receive compensation in respect of the same traffic accident are required to repay the amount of assistance they have received from the TAVA scheme.

"But in any case the amount to be repaid shall not exceed the amount of compensation awarded," he added.

Applications under the TAVA scheme can be made either in person or by post.

Application forms may be obtained at the Accident Investigation Units of Regional Police Headquarters, District Offices of the Home Affairs Department and SWD's TAVA Section at room 942, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai. Enquiries can be made on telephone 2834 7472.

End

Elderly people urged to watch out for tricksters

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The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (Saturday) urged members of the public, elderly people in particular, to watch out for tricksters.

"The SWD has received a number of reports recently alleging that unruly elements, posing as staff of the Social Welfare Department, approached some Senior Citizen Card holders by telephone and tried to obtain their personal particulars including that of their children," a spokesman for the department said.

These elderly people made enquiries to the SWD although no loss was reported.

"We urge members of the public to be on guard against unruly elements."

In case of doubt, members of the public should call the Senior Citizen Card Office on 2961 7580 or the SWD hotline 2343 2255.

End

Hong Kong School Drama Festival 1995-96

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The outstanding actor and actress at the Public Performance Phase of the Hong Kong School Drama Festival 1995-96 will be awarded a scholarship rendered by the Mountview Theater School to attend a two-week summer course on drama in England. This is the first time such prizes be awarded. The travel expense is sponsored by the Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon.

A total of 4,227 students from 145 secondary schools and 42 primary schools participated in the festival.

The winning teams at the school performance phase will be awarded for the best overall performance, best stage effect, script originality, actors, actresses and directors.

The prize presentation ceremony will be held at the Theatre, Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre, 111 Shau Kei Wan Road, Sai Wan Ho at 3 pm on Monday (April 29).

End

Firing practice in May

Firing practice will take place at the Ha Tsuen/Castle Peak Range on 11 days next month. The public is advised not to enter the area when red flags are hoisted.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
May 3 (Friday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 6 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 7 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 8 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 9 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 14 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 16 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 20 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 21 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 22 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
May 23 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ Million</u>	<u>Time</u> <u>(Hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>Change</u> <u>(\$ Million)</u>
Opening Balance in the account	2,928	09:30	-320
Closing Balance in the account	1,905	10:00	-280
Change Attributable to:		11:00	-280
Money Market Activity	-280	11:30	-280
Laf Today	-743		

Laf Rate 4% Bid/6% Offer TWI 123.7 *-0.3* 27.4.96

End

Hong Kong's third harbour crossing reaches major milestone

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A major milestone is set to be reached tomorrow (Monday) on Hong Kong's third and biggest cross-harbour road tunnel, the Western Harbour Crossing.

The immersed tube of the Western Harbour Crossing will be completed when the twelfth and last unit of the crossing, set to be towed to the harbour tomorrow morning, is lowered onto the seabed. The lowering operation is due to begin at noon tomorrow and is expected to be completed by the following afternoon (Tuesday).

The Director of the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office, Mr Billy Lam, said he was delighted with the rapid progress on construction of this major link in the Airport Core Programme (ACP).

"Construction of the Western Harbour Crossing is progressing extremely well with more than 80 per cent of the work completed so far. The project itself is expected to be completed in March next year, about three months ahead of schedule.

"The Government is now considering the possibility of an early opening in March provided that the other connecting road projects and supporting facilities are also completed by then.

"An early opening will be good news as it will help ease traffic congestion in West Kowloon and in the two existing cross-harbour tunnels," Mr Lam said.

The Director said that overall, at the end of March, the ACP was 55 per cent complete while progress on just the seven Government projects had reached the 84 per cent mark.

The two-kilometre Western Harbour Crossing will run from West Kowloon to Sai Ying Pun in the Western District.

The immersed tube section of the tunnel comprises 12 massive pre-cast concrete units each weighing 35,000 tonnes and measuring about 113 metres long, 33.5 metres wide and 8.5 metres high.

The units were cast in batches at a specially built casting basin in Shek O quarry, with each batch consisting of four units and taking about six months to construct.

When the units had been cast, the quarry basin was flooded and the units floated out to sea and towed to temporary moorings at Tseung Kwan O in preparation for the operation to lower them onto the seabed in the harbour.

Tomorrow's operation will begin in the morning when the last unit is towed out to the harbour from Tseung Kwan O.

The six-lane tunnel is expected to carry more than 75,000 vehicles a day when it opens. Its maximum capacity will be 180,000, far greater than that of the first two cross-harbour tunnels, which are four-lane only.

Following completion of the immersed tube, work will continue on electrical and mechanical installations, including ventilation, lighting, communications, utilities, control and surveillance systems. Work on extension to the approach roads, interchange, toll plaza and the administration building will also be continuing.

Nishimatsu Kumagai Joint Venture is building the tunnel for the Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited under a 30-year "build, operate and transfer" franchise agreement with the Government.

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Kam Tin Bypass EIA Report released

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The report of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study on Kam Tin Bypass is now available.

The study was carried out on the Government's proposal to construct Kam Tin Bypass, a new route of about 1.3 kilometres running to the north of Kam Tin Town and connecting Kam Tin Road at the east and west of the Town. The proposed road will be a dual two-lane carriageway with provision of footpaths and cycle tracks.

The EIA Study which was carried out in June 1995 aimed to identify the potential environmental impacts and to recommend mitigation measures for the chosen design.

Completed in March, the Study recommends a series of mitigation measures for impacts including noise, visual, ecological, air and water quality to be anticipated during the construction and operational phases of the bypass.

The EIA final report and its Environmental Monitoring and Audit Manual are now available for sale at \$300 and \$100 respectively at the Major Works Project Management Office of the Highways Department, third floor, Ho Man Tin Government Offices, 88 Chung Hau Street, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon. Its Executive Summary is also available free of charge there.

All of these copies can also be seen at the City Hall Library, the Kowloon Central Library as well as the reference libraries of the Regional Central Libraries in Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin and Tuen Mun.

End

Fund-raising schedule for May

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Fourteen organisations have been granted permission to raise funds next month (May), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department said today (Sunday).

They will either sell flags, tokens or similar items, or place donation boxes in designated public places.

Members of the public can call the Department's hotline 2343 2255 in case of doubt.

Any organisation planning to hold activities involving collection of money or sale or exchange for donation of badges, tokens or similar articles in a public place for charitable purposes should apply for a public subscription permit from the Social Welfare Department.

The spokesman appealed to organisers to take precautions against any possible fraud.

"Sellers should display the permit or carry copies of the permit for inspection upon request if the fund-raising is mobile," he said.

The spokesman also advised them to prepare guidelines for sellers, setting out the places and the times for selling and the collection points for bags.

"Organisers should inform the Police in case of loss of property, and seek their help when fraudulent acts, such as tampering of collection bags or making unauthorised selling, are found," he added. Permits are given to the following organisations for raising funds next month:

Flag Day

<u>Event Date</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
May 4	Breakthrough Ltd.
May 11	Christian Family Service Centre
May 18	United Christian Medical Service
May 25	Wu Oi Christian Centre Ltd.

Subscription

<u>Event Day</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
May 1 to 7	The Community Chest of Hong Kong
May 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 & 19	Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education & Services
May 4 & 5	Hong Kong United Youth Association
May 4, 11 & 25	Shepherd Community Church
May 4, 18 & 25	Land of Virtue Centre Ltd.
May 5, 12, 19 & 26	Jesus is Lord School of Ministry (HK) Ltd.
May 11	Sowers Action
May 12	Oxfam Hong Kong
May 18 & 19	Children's Cancer Foundation
May 27	The Hong Kong Buddhist Association

End