



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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IMPACT ON HONG KONG RECOGNISED; GOVERNOR

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, BELIEVES THAT HE HAS MANAGED TO ENSURE THAT THE IMPACT ON HONG KONG IS RECOGNISED WHEN THE UNITED STATES IS CONSIDERING ITS POLICY ON RENEWING CHINA'S MFN STATUS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AT THE AIRPORT THIS (SUNDAY) EVENING UPON HIS RETURN FROM THE UNITED STATES, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "I THINK THAT OUR ARGUMENTS, BOTH OUR ARGUMENTS IN PRINCIPLE AND OUR ARGUMENTS IN TERMS OF THE IMPACT ON HONG KONG, WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT OVER THE LAST DAYS AND WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT DURING THE NEXT WEEKS WHEN THE U.S. IS CONSIDERING ITS POLICY.

"I AM SURE THAT THE VISIT OF WINSTON LORD TO PEKING SHORTLY WILL BE ANOTHER DECISIVE IMPACT IN THE EVOLUTION OF POLICY."

DESCRIBING HIS TRIP AS EFFECTIVE AND USEFUL, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "IT GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY OF SETTING OUT HONG KONG'S CASE ON TRADE AND IN PARTICULAR ON MFN RENEWAL AT A TIME WHEN THE UNITED STATES IS CONSIDERING ITS FUTURE POLICY ON THOSE MATTERS.

"SO I THINK THE TIME COULDN'T BE BETTER IN GETTING OUR CASE, OUR POSITION, OUR ARGUMENTS, OUR CONCERNS ON THE U.S. AGENDA.

"I AM SURE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE ABLE TO PUT ACROSS OUR CASE IN WASHINGTON AND UNITED STATES FREQUENTLY AND VIGOROUSLY BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. THAT IS WHAT WE INTEND TO GO ON DOING."

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REVISED COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ADMISSION CRITERIA

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IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS THAT THE REVISED ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WOULD LOWER THE STANDARD OF INTAKE, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REASSURED THE PUBLIC THAT THE MINIMUM ADMISSION CRITERIA REMAINED UNCHANGED.

THAT IS TO SAY, CANDIDATES MUST HAVE AT LEAST SIX SUBJECTS AT GRADE E OR ABOVE IN THE HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION (HKCEE) (CERTIFIED BY THE HKEA) OR EQUIVALENT, AND MUST HAVE A TOTAL OF 11 POINTS OR ABOVE IN THE BEST SIX SUBJECTS.

THE FLEXIBILITY BUILT INTO THE REVISED SYSTEM IS THAT THE SIX SUBJECTS MAY BE OBTAINED IN NOT MORE THAN TWO SITTINGS WITH AT LEAST FOUR SUBJECTS IN EITHER ONE SITTING.

THIS IS TO ALLOW FOR CANDIDATES WHO MAY HAVE GOOD OVERALL POTENTIAL BUT HAVE SLIPPED IN THE FIRST ATTEMPT OF THE HKCEE THROUGH FACTORS BEYOND THEIR CONTROL.

THIS CONCEPT OF FLEXIBILITY IS IN LINE WITH THE PRACTICE IN OTHER TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, BOTH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT THE SUCCESS RATE OF STUDENTS WITH PASSES ACCUMULATED OVER ONE OR TWO SITTINGS IS LESS FAVOURABLE THAN THOSE WHO ACHIEVED PASSES IN ONE SITTING.

THE MINIMUM OF 11 POINTS IS IDENTICAL TO PREVIOUS REQUIREMENTS, EXCEPT THAT THE USE OF AGGREGATE SCORE ALLOWS FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THE COMBINATION OF GRADINGS THAN THE RIGID REQUIREMENT IN PREVIOUS YEARS THAT TWO SUBJECTS MUST BE AT GRADE C, ONE AT GRADE D AND THREE AT GRADE E.

BASED ON THE 1992 COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ADMISSION EXERCISE AND IF THE SAME FLEXIBILITY HAD BEEN INTRODUCED, AN ADDITIONAL 1,077 QUALIFIED CANDIDATES WOULD HAVE BEEN ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE THREE-YEAR COURSE.

THESE CANDIDATES HAD GENERAL STANDARDS EITHER EQUIVALENT TO OR HIGHER THAN THOSE CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE UNDER THE OLD RIGID SYSTEM.

THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE REVISED CRITERIA WOULD HAVE WIDENED THE POOL OF CANDIDATES TO BE SELECTED FOR THE THREE-YEAR COURSE FROM FIVE CANDIDATES PER PLACE TO ABOUT SEVEN CANDIDATES PER PLACE.

THERE IS NO REASON WHY THE STANDARD OF CANDIDATES ADMITTED SHOULD BE LOWERED.

SIMILARLY, ANOTHER ADDITIONAL 587 CANDIDATES WITH THE REQUIRED ADVANCED LEVEL SUBJECTS WOULD HAVE BEEN ELIGIBLE FOR THE TWO-YEAR COURSE.

THIS WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN MORE SECONDARY SEVEN LEAVERS BEING ADMITTED INTO THE TWO-YEAR COURSE.

THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED AGAIN THAT CANDIDATES WITH FOUR PASSES AT THE HKCEE WOULD NOT BE ADMITTED UNDER THE FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENT.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL MONITOR THE ADMISSION EXERCISE THIS YEAR TO ENSURE THAT THE FLEXIBILITY WOULD NOT LOWER THE ACADEMIC STANDARD.

IN ADDITION, THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WOULD CONTINUE TO BE MONITORED THROUGH CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS, PROJECT WORK AND PRACTICAL TEACHING BEFORE STUDENTS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO GRADUATE.

A SURVEY CONDUCTED IN 1991 OF THE PERFORMANCE OF NEW GRADUATES FROM THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION COVERING 527 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVEALED THAT THE SCHOOL HEADS CONSIDERED THESE TEACHERS COMPETENT AND WERE OF HIGH QUALITY.

THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN CLAIMS THAT THE CHANGE WOULD JEOPARDISE THE TEACHING PROFESSION'S PAY IN FUTURE REVIEW OF SALARIES BY THE STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

"CIVIL SERVICE PAY IS BASED ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS. ENTRY QUALIFICATION TO ANY GRADE IS OF COURSE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR BUT IN THE CASE OF CERTIFICATED MASTER/MISTRESS, IT IS THE CERTIFICATE AWARDED BY A COLLEGE OF EDUCATION THAT MATTERS AND NOT THE ENTRY REQUIREMENT FOR TRAINING," THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE FLEXIBLE ENTRY REQUIREMENT WOULD NOT ALTER THE VALUE OF THE CERTIFICATE.

"WE ARE NOT REDUCING THE DURATION OF TRAINING, NOR ARE WE LOWERING THE STANDARD OF THE COURSES OFFERED AT THE COLLEGES," HE STRESSED.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT APPLICATION FORMS FOR ADMISSION TO THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SEPTEMBER WOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM WEDNESDAY (MAY 12) AT:

- * EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS,
WU CHUNG HOUSE,
213 QUEEN'S ROAD EAST,
15TH FLOOR,
WAN CHAI,
HONG KONG.
- * EDUCATION DEPARTMENT KOWLOON SUB-OFFICE,
KOWLOON GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
405 NATHAN ROAD,
SEVENTH FLOOR,
KOWLOON.
- * NORTHCOTE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
21 SASSOON ROAD,
POKFULAM,
HONG KONG.
- * GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
42 GASCOIGNE ROAD,
KOWLOON.
- * SIR ROBERT BLACK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
6 CALDECOTT ROAD,
PIPER'S HILL,
KOWLOON.
- * HONG KONG TECHNICAL TEACHERS' COLLEGE,
373 QUEEN'S ROAD EAST,
WAN CHAI,
HONG KONG.

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RESEARCH PROJECT ON EDUCATION FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

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THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB HAS DONATED \$2.5 MILLION FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT TO IDENTIFY ACADEMICALLY GIFTED CHILDREN IN LOCAL SCHOOLS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID THE EDUCATION COMMISSION, IN ITS REPORT NO. 4, RECOGNISED THE LACK OF IDENTIFICATION TOOLS, AND DATA ON AVAILABLE PROGRAMMES FOR THE GIFTED CHILDREN.

"IT IS HOPED THAT THROUGH THIS RESEARCH PROJECT, INFORMATION AND DATA ON THE DISTRIBUTION PATTERN AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF OUR ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS COULD BE GATHERED," HE SAID.

THE RESEARCH WORK WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN THE 1993/94 SCHOOL YEAR.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE WOULD BE FORMED WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE EDUCATION AND MANPOWER BRANCH AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT.

"AT PRESENT, THERE IS A RESEARCH PROJECT ON ADAPTING ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED CHILDREN. THIS WAS ALSO MADE POSSIBLE BY A DONATION OF \$1.16 MILLION FROM THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB LAST YEAR.

"THE PROJECT IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY A TERTIARY INSTITUTE AND IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY 1994," HE SAID.

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PLACEMENT SERVICE FOR TEACHERS

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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S PLACEMENT SERVICE TO HELP REDUNDANT TEACHERS IN AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS OBTAIN NEW TEACHING POSTS WILL START TOMORROW (MONDAY).

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED THAT THE TEACHERS WERE USUALLY MADE REDUNDANT BY THE DROP IN SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN THEIR SCHOOLS DUE TO PEOPLE MOVING FROM URBAN AREAS TO NEW TOWNS.

THE PLACEMENT SERVICE UNIT HAD HELPED SOME 6,700 SUCH TEACHERS IN SECURING NEW TEACHING POSTS OVER THE PAST YEARS.

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE THEM FULL ASSISTANCE AGAIN THIS YEAR. OUR 100 PER CENT SUCCESS RATE OVER THE PAST YEARS OWES MUCH TO THE SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION OF SCHOOL HEADS AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES FOR WHICH THE DEPARTMENT IS MOST GRATEFUL," SAID SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER MR WOO HON-HANG, WHO HEADS THE UNIT.

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NEW DISTRICT OFFICER FOR TSUEN WAN

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MR THOMAS CHOW TAT-MING WILL TAKE UP THE POST OF DISTRICT OFFICER OF TSUEN WAN TOMORROW (MONDAY).

MR CHOW, AGED 32, JOINED THE GOVERNMENT AS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN 1984 AND WAS PROMOTED TO SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER LAST APRIL.

HE HAS SERVED IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE GENERAL DUTIES BRANCH, AND HAS BEEN WITH THE MONETARY AFFAIRS BRANCH FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS.

HE WAS ALSO A FORMER ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER OF YUEN LONG.

HIS PREVIOUS POSTING WAS ASSISTANT PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR.

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SPECIAL INSPECTION CAMPAIGN ON FACTORIES

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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL LAUNCH A SPECIAL INSPECTION CAMPAIGN ON FACTORIES TOMORROW (MONDAY) AS PART OF ITS CONTINUED EFFORTS TO PROMOTE SAFETY AWARENESS AMONG EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES AND TO FURTHER IMPROVE WORKPLACE SAFETY IN FACTORIES.

"THE TERRITORY-WIDE SPECIAL INSPECTION OPERATION WILL FOCUS ON FACTORIES WITH UNSATISFACTORY SAFETY PERFORMANCE RECORDS, PROBLEMATIC PLANTS OR WITH HIGH-RISK WORK PROCESSES," DEPUTY CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR, MR KAN HON-SANG, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY).

DURING THE CAMPAIGN, EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES WILL BE ADVISED OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMPLYING WITH THE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE LAW.

IN ADDITION, FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL CONCENTRATE THEIR ATTENTION ON HIGH-RISK PLANTS AND PROCESSES IN FACTORIES, AND ALSO SAFETY PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE IN HOUSEKEEPING, MEANS OF ESCAPE, USE OF CHEMICALS AND FIRE HAZARDS.

"RIGOROUS ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST FACTORIES WITH UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO CAUSE ACCIDENTS," HE SAID.

"PROSECUTIONS WILL BE TAKEN OUT BY OUR FACTORY INSPECTORS, WITHOUT HESITATION, AGAINST BLATANT OFFENDERS WHO REPEATEDLY TURNED A BLIND EYE TO THE REQUIRED SAFETY MEASURES," HE ADDED.

MR KAN POINTED OUT THAT SIMILAR INSPECTION CAMPAIGN HELD LAST YEAR HAD PROVED TO BE EFFECTIVE IN IMPROVING SAFETY IN FACTORIES.

"ABOUT 800 FACTORIES HAD BEEN INSPECTED IN A SIMILAR CAMPAIGN LAST YEAR, AND 152 SUMMONSES WERE TAKEN OUT," HE SAID.

"IT IS ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT THE NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR HAS GONE DOWN BY 17 PER CENT IN THE PAST YEAR," HE ADDED.

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