



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BRITAIN'S DECISION ON PASSPORTS WELCOMED

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION LAST DECEMBER TO GRANT PASSPORTS TO 50,000 HONG KONG FAMILIES HAS BEEN WELCOMED IN THE TERRITORY, THE HONG KONG COMMISSIONER IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, MR JOHN YAXLEY, SAID RECENTLY.

SPEAKING AT THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE, HE SAID THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE WAS NOT TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO COME TO BRITAIN, BUT TO GIVE THEM SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE TO STAY IN HONG KONG AND MAKE IT WORK.

"THE HEADS OF THESE 50,000 FAMILIES ARE THE KEY PLAYERS IN HONG KONG'S SUCCESS STORY. IF NOTHING WAS DONE TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAY THEN MANY, PROBABLY MOST OF THEM, WOULD EMIGRATE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS WITH CATASTROPHIC EFFECT FOR HONG KONG'S ECONOMY."

IT WAS AN INSURANCE AND A CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE, HE SAID, AND IT WAS GRATIFYING TO SEE THAT THE BRITISH SENSE OF FAIR PLAY AND JUSTICE PREVAILED IN THIS LAST MAJOR EXERCISE OF IMPERIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

ANOTHER CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE WAS THE CURRENT EFFORT BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CONVINCING THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT THAT THE BASIC LAW SHOULD ENSHRINE THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG REGARDING DEMOCRACY, HE SAID.

MR YAXLEY TOLD HIS AUDIENCE THAT THERE WAS MOUNTING PRESSURE FOR A MORE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND, IN PARTICULAR, A PROGRESSIVE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DIRECTLY ELECTED SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE.

"IT IS THEREFORE A MATTER OF GREAT INTEREST AT THIS TIME AS TO WHAT ARRANGEMENTS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE FOR THE 1991 AND 1995 ELECTIONS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, ARRANGEMENTS FOR WHICH IT REMAINS RESPONSIBLE."

MR YAXLEY WAS CRITICAL OF AMERICA'S STAND OVER THE QUESTION OF THE MANDATORY REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT POLITICAL REFUGEES.

HE SAID AMERICA'S DECISION TO DECLINE THE MANDATORY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME WAS DISAPPOINTING FOR HONG KONG, "AND I MIGHT SAY, NOT A LITTLE HYPOCRITICAL, BEARING IN MIND WHAT THE AMERICANS DO WITH SOME OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO ENTER THEIR COUNTRY ILLEGALLY."

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT FORCING PEOPLE ON TO BOATS AND AEROPLANES AT GUNPOINT. THIS DID NOT HAPPEN WHEN THE FIRST MANDATORY REPATRIATION EXERCISE TOOK PLACE.

THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE THE SAME AS THOSE APPLIED IN ANY CIVILISED COUNTRY FOR DEPORTATION. THE SORT OF ARRANGEMENTS THAT APPLY ALMOST DAILY AT HEATHROW AIRPORT WHEN AN IMMIGRANT ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE UNITED KINGDOM ILLEGALLY.

/MR YAXLEY

MR YAXLEY ALSO SPOKE ABOUT HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC MIRACLE AND HOW IT HAD MADE THE TERRITORY THE 11TH LARGEST TRADING ENTITY IN THE WORLD, THE LARGEST EXPORTER OF GARMENTS, TOYS, WATCHES AND FROCKS, AND THE WORLD'S THIRD INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE, WHICH ALSO HAD THE LARGEST CONTAINER TERMINAL IN THE WORLD.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE JOINT DECLARATION WOULD BE ADHERED TO, AND EXPLAINED THAT CHINA HAD A GOOD RECORD IN ABIDING BY INTERNATIONAL TREATIES IT HAD SIGNED.

HONG KONG PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN CHINA'S LIBERALISED ECONOMY, AND ACTED AS A GO-BETWEEN FOR THE MAINLAND AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. IT ALSO PROVIDED SOUTHERN CHINA WITH THE WORLD'S FINEST HARBOUR IN THE REGION AND A RANGE OF SERVICES THAT WERE UNPARALLELED.

IN ADDITION TO THESE IMPORTANT BENEFITS, MR YAXLEY EXPLAINED THAT HONG KONG WAS CHINA'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER AND THEIR LARGEST SINGLE MARKET. HONG KONG WAS ALSO CHINA'S LARGEST EXTERNAL INVESTOR ACCOUNTING FOR OVER 60 PER CENT OF ALL FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS.

MEANWHILE, CHINA ALSO HAD A GROWING STAKE IN HONG KONG'S ECONOMY. CHINA'S INVESTMENT IN BANKING, PROPERTY, MANUFACTURING AND RETAILING WERE GROWING FAST; AND HAD INVESTED IN MANY HONG KONG COMPANIES RANGING FROM CATHAY PACIFIC AIRLINES TO THE TELEPHONE COMPANY.

"THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE 'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS' CONCEPT ARE NOT, THEREFORE, POLITICAL ABSTRACTIONS. THEY ARE FIRMLY ROOTED IN A REAL NEED TO PRESERVE A RELATIONSHIP THAT IS OF GREAT PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE TO CHINA AS WELL AS TO HONG KONG," MR YAXLEY SAID.

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SAI KUNG DISTRICT FESTIVAL BEGINS

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THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT FESTIVAL, FEATURING A VARIETY OF CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST EVENTS IN THE DISTRICT AND WILL MAKE THE LUNAR NEW YEAR EVEN MORE JOYFUL, THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR FREDERICK TONG, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) EVENING.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 1990 SAI KUNG DISTRICT FESTIVAL.

MR TONG HOPED THAT LOCAL RESIDENTS WOULD GET TO KNOW SAI KUNG BETTER BY TAKING PART IN THE FESTIVAL, THUS ENHANCING THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.

"EVERY YEAR, THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DISTRICT FESTIVAL VARY GREATLY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT FIELDS AND OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS.

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"FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE HAVE INVITED A CHINESE DANCE AND DRAMA TROUPE TO PERFORM, PROVIDING SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE RESIDENTS.

"IN ADDITION, THE ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN ARRANGED TO TAKE PLACE IN BOTH SAI KUNG AND TSEUNG KWAN O, SO THAT PEOPLE IN THE TWO AREAS WILL BE ABLE TO SHARE IN THE FUN," MR TONG SAID.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT THE CEREMONY WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD, MR WILLIAM WAN; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, MR TANG PUI-TAT; THE PRESIDENT OF THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT FESTIVAL, MR PONG TING-YUEN; AND LOCAL DIGNITARY, MR LEE YUN-SAU.

MR TANG ALSO PRESENTED PRIZES TO THE WINNERS OF THE NEW YEAR FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT, WHICH WAS ORGANISED IN SUPPORT OF THE FESTIVAL.

ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 500 GUESTS AND RESIDENTS, THE OPENING CEREMONY WAS FOLLOWED BY A VARIETY SHOW BY THE RENOWNED GUANGDONG DANCE AND DRAMA TROUPE.

THE PROGRAMME INCLUDED CHINESE PLAYS, TRADITIONAL DANCES, HAKKA SONGS AND AN INSTRUMENTAL RECITAL.

THE 1990 SAI KUNG DISTRICT FESTIVAL HAS BEEN ORGANISED BY A PREPARATORY COMMITTEE TO FORGE THE RESIDENTS' SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES.

OTHER PROGRAMMES SUCH AS CANTONESE OPERA AND SPORTS EVENTS ARE TO BE HELD IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

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CHANNELS AVAILABLE TO REPORT WEIGHING MALPRACTICES

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THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT HAS REMINDED CONSUMERS TO MAKE USE OF THE AVAILABLE CHANNELS TO REPORT MALPRACTICES CONCERNING INACCURATE WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS.

IF ANY PERSONS WISH TO MAKE ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT MALPRACTICES IN RESPECT OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, THEY MAY CONTACT EITHER THE TRADING STANDARDS INVESTIGATION BUREAU OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT (TEL. 7146146) OR THE CONSUMER COUNCIL.

COMPLAINTS MAY ALSO BE MADE TO THE DUTY OFFICERS OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT ON 8523185 AFTER NORMAL OFFICE HOURS.

THE REMINDER FOLLOWED A COURT CASE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN WHICH A FRUIT RETAILER WAS FINED \$2,500 AT THE TSUEN WAN MAGISTRACY AFTER SHE PLEADED GUILTY TO A CHARGE OF USING INACCURATE WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS.

/THE CASE

THE CASE WAS BROUGHT TO THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION AFTER A COMPLAINT HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC.

THE DEFENDANT, LAM YUK-MUI, WHO OPERATED A FRUIT STALL AT THE TAK WAH STREET TEMPORARY MARKET IN TSUEN WAN, WAS PROSECUTED BY THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT UNDER THE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ORDINANCE WHICH CAME INTO EFFECT ON JANUARY 1 LAST YEAR.

THE COURT HEARD THAT OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT CARRIED OUT AN INSPECTION AT THE DEFENDANT'S STALL ON OCTOBER 3 LAST YEAR.

A PRELIMINARY CHECK OF THREE SPRING BALANCES USED IN THE SELLING OF FRUIT REVEALED THAT THE WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS WERE INACCURATE.

THE SPRING BALANCES WERE LATER SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT LABORATORY FOR EXAMINATION AND TEST RESULTS SHOWED THAT THE HIGHEST ERRORS OF THE WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS WERE IN THE RANGE OF 10.71 PER CENT TO 20.24 PER CENT IN EXCESS OF THE ACTUAL WEIGHT.

THE CHIEF TRADE CONTROLS OFFICER OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT, MR ANDREW WONG, SAID THE DEPARTMENT HAD RECEIVED A TOTAL OF 94 COMPLAINTS ABOUT WEIGHTS AND MEASURES IN THE 12 MONTHS FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ORDINANCE.

"OF THESE COMPLAINTS, 45 ARE NOT SUBSTANTIATED, 33 ARE SUBSTANTIATED AND 16 OTHERS ARE STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION.

"AS FOR THE COMPLAINTS WHICH ARE SUBSTANTIATED, WRITTEN WARNINGS HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO 20 TRADERS, 11 TRADERS HAVE BEEN PROSECUTED AND TWO OTHER CASES ARE EXPECTED TO BE BROUGHT TO COURT SHORTLY," HE SAID.

"THE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ORDINANCE CARRIES A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$20,000 PLUS SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT," MR WONG POINTED OUT.

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APPLICATIONS INVITED FOR AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMME

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APPLICATIONS ARE NOW INVITED FROM FAMILIES WISHING TO TAKE PART IN AN AFTER SCHOOL CARE PILOT SCHEME WHICH PROVIDES HALF-DAY CARE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN FIVE DISTRICTS.

THE DISTRICTS ARE EASTERN, KWUN TONG, SHAM SHUI PO, SHA TIN AND TSUEN WAN/KWAI TSING.

A SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE TARGET GROUP FOR THIS SERVICE WOULD BE FAMILIES WITH SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL NEEDS WHICH WERE VULNERABLE AND LACKING ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO BUY SUCH A SERVICE.

"THE AIM OF THE \$3 MILLION PILOT SCHEME IS TO TEST THE DEMAND FROM THESE FAMILIES AS WELL AS SETTING UP A MORE SYSTEMATIC AND STANDARDISED OPERATIONAL MODEL," HE SAID.

"THE SERVICE WILL BE PROVIDED AT A SELECTED CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRE IN ONE OF THE DISTRICTS OF EACH SWD ADMINISTRATIVE REGION.

"THE FIVE DISTRICTS ARE SELECTED BECAUSE OF THEIR RELATIVELY HIGHER NUMBER OF KNOWN CASES OF SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES AND OF CHILDREN LIVING IN FOUR-PERSON HOUSEHOLDS WITH A MONTHLY INCOME BELOW \$4,000."

THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT CHILDREN BETWEEN SIX AND 12 YEARS OLD FROM THE FOLLOWING FAMILY BACKGROUND ARE CLASSIFIED AS HAVING SOCIAL NEEDS:

- * PARENTS WITH ILL HEALTH, DISABILITY, LONG TERM HOSPITALISATION;
- * SINGLE WORKING PARENTS;
- * PARENTS SERVING PRISON SENTENCES;
- * PARENTS WITH DRUG ABUSE PROBLEMS;
- * NEW IMMIGRANTS WITH ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS;
- * CHILDREN WHO ARE VICTIMS IN REPORTED CHILD ABUSE CASES.

AS TO FINANCIAL NEEDS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THESE WERE DEFINED ACCORDING TO THE EXISTING SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME.

HE NOTED THAT EACH CHILDREN AND YOUTH CENTRE WOULD HAVE THE CAPACITY OF 30 CHILDREN FOR EACH HALF-DAY SESSION, BENEFITTING A TOTAL OF 60 CHILDREN A DAY.

"IT WILL BE OPERATED FIVE TO SIX DAYS PER WEEK, WITH FOUR TO FIVE HOURS PER SESSION.

"NORMALLY THE MORNING SESSION WILL BE FROM 8 AM TO 1 PM AND THE AFTERNOON SESSION FROM 1 PM TO 6 PM," HE SAID.

THE PROGRAMME FOR EACH HALF-DAY SESSION WOULD INCLUDE HOME WORK GUIDANCE, MEAL AND PLAY, GROUP ACTIVITIES, INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

"THE EXPERIMENT WILL BE TRIED OUT FOR 20 MONTHS, AND A REVIEW WILL BE CONDUCTED AFTER 12 MONTHS OF OPERATION," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"INFORMATION SHEETS ON THE SERVICES HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO DISTRICT OFFICES, PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WITHIN THE FIVE TARGET DISTRICTS TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO MAKE USE OF THE SERVICE," HE ADDED.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON THE SWD HOTLINE, 3432255.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN WESTERN, WAN CHAI

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT TO FACILITATE TRAM TRACK RENEWAL WORKS, SAI WOO LANE IN WESTERN WILL BE TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 2) FOR TWO WEEKS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE EASTBOUND KERBSIDE LANE OF DES VOEUX ROAD WEST FROM HOUSE NO. 147 TO HOUSE NO. 119 WILL BE DESIGNATED AN URBAN CLEARWAY 24 HOURS DAILY FOR TWO WEEKS.

THE SECTION OF EASTERN STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH DES VOEUX ROAD WEST TO A POINT ABOUT 15 METRES TO THE NORTH AND THE WESTERN KERBSIDE LANE OF EASTERN STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH DES VOEUX ROAD WEST TO A POINT ABOUT 15 METRES TO THE SOUTH WILL BE DESIGNATED AN URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY FOR TWO WEEKS.

WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREA, ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES AND THOSE WITH PERMITS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM STOPPING FOR PASSENGERS AND GOODS.

IN WAN CHAI, THE TEMPORARY URBAN CLEARWAYS ON THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF ROADS WILL BE EXTENDED FOR EIGHT WEEKS TO FACILITATE LAYING OF WATER MAINS:

- THE NORTHERN KERBSIDE LANE OF JAFFE ROAD FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH TONNOCHY ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT FIVE METRES WEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION, AND
- THE WESTERN KERBSIDE LANE OF TONNOCHY ROAD FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH JAFFE ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 10 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION.

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LONG VEHICLE BAN IN TUEN MUN

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 2), VEHICLES EXCEEDING 12 METRES IN LENGTH WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER A ROAD SECTION OPPOSITE CHUNG UK TSUEN IN TUEN MUN.

THE LONG VEHICLE BAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE ACCESS ROAD OPPOSITE CHUNG UK TSUEN BETWEEN ITS JUNCTION WITH CASTLE PEAK ROAD (HUNG SHUI KIU) AND A POINT ABOUT 15 METRES NORTHWEST OF THE SAME JUNCTION.

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