



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Governor's media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session given by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after visiting PS 33 of the Hong Kong Christian Service, this (Thursday) afternoon:

Governor: Good afternoon. I'm delighted to have been able to visit PS 33 run by the Hong Kong Christian Service today. It's one of the major providers of counselling services for those who are abusing psychotropic substances and that has unfortunately been a growing problem among young people in Hong Kong. It's one of the more damaging parts of the drug problem that we are trying to address and that we have been trying to address more vigorously since my drug summit last March. We think the job that PS 33 is doing is a first-class one. We'll be providing them with more resources in 1996-97 to do their job and we'll be opening a centre in the western New Territories for counselling psychotropic substance abusers. So I think that underlines our commitment to help this extremely important work. Today, we are publishing the third quarterly report on the progress that we've made with the schemes that we launched at my drug summit last year. And you'll see from that the very substantial achievements that we've notched up so far. But obviously there are still much to do. So we'll be holding a further drug summit in May, on May 23, when we can review progress during the first year, when we can see what we've achieved and when we can look at other things that are required and that the community will expect us to give priority to. Before then, we'll be going to the Finance Committee of LegCo with a bid for \$350 million for our beat-drugs fund to support a range of new projects and development of existing projects which can all play a part in the campaign to beat drugs. It remains one of our foremost priorities. As I've said before, we want to stop Hong Kong being hit in the same way that other communities have been. We've got a difficult problem at the moment, but it's containable, and what we need to do is to drive the figures down and to make sure that everybody is united in trying to beat drugs. It's one of the most important things that we can do to ensure our young generation doesn't suffer in the way that the young are suffering in other communities.

Question: Legislators have complained that the meeting between them and John Major will be held behind closed doors. They're saying that it should be held in open. What is your comment...?

Governor: I don't think that many legislators have made that complaint. Which ones are you thinking of?

Question: There are several referred to.

Governor: Well. I think that one or two may have said that. But I think overwhelmingly legislators are delighted that the Prime Minister is coming to Hong Kong and very pleased that he's quite properly giving them a good deal of his time while he's in Hong Kong, to listen to what they've got to say and to answer their questions. The Foreign Secretary is the departmental minister with direct responsibility for Hong Kong. He therefore thought it was right to go down to the Legislative Council and I think for the first time to answer their questions in the open. I think that was an important development. Prime Minister is in a different situation. But he'll of course be holding a press conference so that all of you can ask him questions with your usual severity.

Question: Was Mr Major taking precautions against any potential embarrassment that occurred in Rifkind's appearance in LegCo...?

Governor: I don't think there was any embarrassment. If, as happens with any British Prime Minister, you spend two question times every week answering questions from members of parliament, I can assure you that the last thing you're concerned about is appearing in front of legislators.

Question: What do you hope Major's visit will achieve? Do you think it is mainly symbolic...? Or perhaps we can get some clarifications on matters such as right of abode...?

Governor: I very much hope first of all that it will give Mr Major the opportunity of updating himself on what we've achieved in Hong Kong and what we still need to achieve. He'll of course have been from the previous couple of days at the summit in Bangkok at which European Union leaders and Asian leaders will be discussing the future relationship between Europe and Asia and I'm sure that he'll take to that meeting some pretty firm views about Hong Kong and that he'll want to tell people when he comes to Hong Kong some of the things which have been said about the overall Asia-Europe relationship at that meeting. I think he will also want to hear for himself the views of people in Hong Kong on issues like visa-free access for SAR passport holders. He'll want to address Hong Kong on some of the economic problems that we've got to tackle and some of the challenges that lie ahead. He'll want to talk about Hong Kong in the context of what's happening in the region as a whole and I'm sure that he'll regard his days in Hong Kong as being well spent and as having contributed to his experience because the British Government will have to continue taking decisions about Hong Kong over the next 500 days. But I'm sure that he will also want to make it absolutely clear that his interest and the British Government's interest in Hong Kong doesn't end on the June 30, 1997, but continues into the indefinite future.

Question: Will Mr Major bring along any presents to the community with the message that the Cabinet will grant visa-free to SAR passports as taking the lead?

Governor: I said in reply to an earlier question that I'm sure he'll want to hear the views of the community on that issue. You know what my views are, I've told him what my views are. I very much hope that the British Government takes my views, those of legislators, those of businessmen, and those of the whole community very seriously.

Question: Mr Governor, returning to the Pat Sin Leng fire disaster. The whole community is closely concerned about the progress of the treatment to those injured students. But, today there has been reporting concerning the misco-ordination between the two teaching hospitals. The Queen Mary Hospital has a huge reserve of skin-bank, but at the same time, the Prince of Wales Hospital is urging the public to donate skin to those students and the students are suffering unnecessary pain and suffering with the transplanting of their own skin to cover those wounds. How would the Government monitor about that?

Governor: Well, neither you nor I are medical experts. And I would be reluctant to be as explicit as you've just been about the treatment which patients are receiving. Clearly all of us want to ensure that the patients get the best possible treatment over the coming days and weeks and months. And I can assure you that the Hospital Authority and the Secretary for Health and Welfare and the Director of Health will be doing all that they can to ensure that the resources available to the health service in Hong Kong are focused on ensuring that those young people get the support which the community expects them to receive, and which their families deserve. I would just add one other thing. Clearly there are issues of legitimate public interest in what happened last weekend. My own greatest concern is that the families of those who suffered and those who suffered and are now in hospital should not be caused unnecessary worry and anguish by the pressure which is put on some of them, by those who want to find out more about what's been going on. I'll be restrained at that point and won't go any further. But I do hope that everybody will remember that all our principal concern should be with the recovery of the patients and the well-being, mental and physical as well as financial, of their families.

Question: Can Government reassure those sad families of the injured that there will be proper management about the medical treatment given to the students and there won't be any mismanagement?

Governor: Of course.

Question: ... Should Mr Major meet the legislators in public?

Governor: I've answered that question which is not one of very considerable public controversy or interest in Hong Kong. I've answered it at least twice. And I don't think I've got anything else to add. I'm delighted that Mr Major will be spending an hour or more with legislators. I think it's entirely appropriate to do it in the way that he is proposed. I don't believe it is an issue of substantial controversy in the Legislative Council. I've heard Legislative Councillors themselves say that the most important thing is that he's talking to the Legislative Councillors and answering Legislative Councillors' questions. And I really think it's probably important to get on and talk about real issues rather than to make up controversies where they don't exist.

Question: With five hundred days to go to the change of sovereignty, do you think we should approach certain things in a different way? Is there anything we should do?

Governor: I've been in Hong Kong, we've worked it out, for almost three times as long as there is still to go until June 30, 1997. I've been here I think just over 1,300 days and I think that the messages which are appropriate to the next 500 days are rather similar to the ones that I've been uttering and others have been uttering for the last 1,300. I'm sure that Hong Kong's system will survive so long as people in Hong Kong want it to survive, so long as we're true to ourselves and true to our values and true to all those things that have created the way of life here which is at one on the same time successful, stable and decent. So long as we do those things, Hong Kong will be a success story after 1997 and even greater success story than it is today. So in that spirit, I wish you all a very happy 500 days. More particularly I wish you a very happy year of the Rat during which I trust that you'll have an enjoyable time and that Hong Kong will have an enjoyable time as well. Thank you very much indeed.

Question: Governor, will Mr Major meet any Chinese officials in Hong Kong during his visit?

Governor: I don't think that arrangements for his visit have been finalised. But I don't think there're any particular intentions. He will be wanting to spend as much time as possible meeting Executive Councillors, Legislative Councillors, business and community leaders and seeing as much of Hong Kong as he can.

Question: Do you think he may have met some Chinese officials to talk about Hong Kong while he is in Bangkok?

Governor: Well, I think you better probably address that question either to number 10 Downing Street or the Foreign Office. Well, I'm sure you'll have a very full, comprehensive, honest, straight forward answer. Thank you.

End

#### Report on Fei Tsui Road landslide released

\* \* \* \* \*

The Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) today (Thursday) released a report on the investigation into the landslide which occurred at Fei Tsui Road, Chai Wan, on August 13 last year.

Elaborating on details of the investigation, head of GEO, Dr Andrew Malone, said the landslide was caused by the presence of an extensive clay seam and a rise of groundwater pressure on the layer following a prolonged period of heavy rainfall.

The report, comprising Volume I and Volume II, contains respectively the views and observations of an independent reviewer, Sir John Knill, and the findings of a comprehensive investigation by GEO into the incident.

"The contents of Volume II was reviewed and agreed by Sir John," Dr Malone noted.

Dr Malone said he agreed with Sir John's view on the need to recognise adverse geological structures in volcanic rock cuttings.

"Although this matter was already referred to in GEO guidance documents, greater attention to such adverse geology was essential," he said.

Dr Malone also pointed out that tests had been undertaken to detect possible leakage from the salt water service reservoir and the water mains at the crest of slope to the west of the landslide site.

"Although there were signs of contamination of the ground and groundwater by chloride, indicating some long term leakage, there was no evidence of gross leakage having contributed to the triggering of the landslide.

"The Government is mindful of the potential adverse effects of leakage from water-carrying services and the Works Branch has formed an inter-departmental committee to look into measures of reducing this risk," he said.

Copies of the report are available at the Reception Counter of the Civil Engineering Department, ground floor, Civil Engineering Building, 101 Princess Margaret Road, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon.

End

#### Package tour accident contingency fund scheme

\* \* \* \* \*

Outbound travellers on package tours (and/or their representatives) who were killed or injured in accidents while touring abroad will be provided with financial assistance under a package tour accident contingency fund scheme with effect from tomorrow (Friday).

The Chairman of the Travel Industry Compensation Fund (TICF) Management Board, Dr James Kung, today (Thursday) announced that the Management Board had made rules to provide for the setting up of the scheme.

The Management Board, appointed by the Governor to hold, manage and apply the Fund, has agreed that the ambit of TICF should be widened to cover the funding of the scheme.

The rules made pursuant to section 32G of the Travel Agents Ordinance are Travel Industry Compensation Fund (Amount of Ex gratia Payments and Financial Penalty) (Amendment) Rules 1996 and Travel Industry Compensation Fund (Procedure for Ex gratia Payments) (Amendment) Rules 1996.

The purpose of the contingency fund scheme is to provide financial assistance in the form of ex gratia payments to outbound travellers on package tours (and/or their representatives) who were killed or injured in accidents while touring abroad.

In order to be eligible for assistance under the scheme, travellers have to produce franked outbound fare receipts to show payment of the fund levy. Outbound travellers are therefore advised to leave their original receipts with relatives in Hong Kong and bring along photocopies of the receipts with them.

The ex gratia payments will cover medical expenses reasonably incurred in the relevant territory, trip expenses of victims' representatives, and expenses for cremation or returning the dead body or ashes in a case where the accident results in the death of the outbound traveller.

The maximum amount payable to an outbound traveller (and/or his representative) is \$180,000.

As at January 31, the Fund has accumulated \$192 million assets. The assessment is that it should be adequate to meet its liabilities arising from defaults of travel agents and the projected outlay under the contingency fund scheme.

Dr Kung said: "the provision of ex-gratia payments to outbound travellers under the contingency fund scheme is expected to complement, but not replace, insurance coverage for both outbound travellers and the travel agents.

"Both outbound travellers and travel agents are still encouraged to take out their own insurance policies to protect themselves.

"Having consulted the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong and the Advisory Committee on Travel Agents, the Management Board has agreed that all activities in a package tour including those which are of dangerous nature should be covered by the contingency fund scheme.

"In the event of a package tour accident happened abroad, the travel agent concerned will provide emergency services to its clients and then co-ordinate applications of its clients for assistance from the TICF.

"The Government will process the applications submitted by outbound travellers. It is hoped that clients of travel agents will be afforded better protection after the implementation of scheme."

The Amendment Rules will come into effect upon its gazettal on February 16.

End

Access code to be extended

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government today (Thursday) announced that a further 18 branches and departments would come under the Code on Access to Information on February 26.

This will bring to a total of 75 out of the 90 government agencies covered by the Code.

A spokesman for the Efficiency Unit of the Government Secretariat reiterated that the Administration remained committed to extend the Code to all branches and departments by the end of this year.

He said: "The full text of the Code is now published on the Internet, together with the full internal guidelines to departments on how they should interpret and apply the Code, and contact details for all departmental Access to Information Officers.

"Anyone who wishes to see this material can do so at the World-Wide Web Government Information Centre on <http://www.info.gov.hk>. The 'Access to Government Information' pages can be found by clicking on 'Topical Information' on the Government Information Centre front page."

Since the Code was first introduced on a trial basis last March, there has been a total of 652 requests for access to information. Of these, 24 have been rejected, and 18 partially declined.

Three complaints of non-compliance have been made to the Commissioner for Administrative Complaints, of which one was found to be unsubstantiated and the investigation of another was discontinued when the agency concerned decided of its own volition to release the information at issue. The remaining complaint is still under investigation.

The 18 Government agencies to be added to the Code are:

- Civil Aviation Department
- Economic Services Branch
- Education and Manpower Branch
- Electrical and Mechanical Services Department
- Finance Branch
- Health and Welfare Branch
- Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Housing Department  
Inland Revenue Department  
Intellectual Property Department  
Registries of all Courts and Tribunals within the  
Judiciary and the Judiciary Administrator's Office  
Labour Department  
Legal Aid Department  
New Airport Project Co-ordination Office  
Office of the Commission of Insurance  
Planning, Environment and Lands Branch  
Security Branch  
University Grants Committee Secretariat

End

Government statement on unauthorised building works in NT

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government broadly agrees with the conclusions of the report of the Office of the Commissioner for Administrative Complaints (COMAC) on unauthorised building works in New Territories Exempted Houses.

The Administration would nevertheless need to study the report and examine the implications in detail, particularly on staff resources, of implementing the recommendations.

Unauthorised building works in the New Territories are not neglected. The Lands Department is responsible for lease enforcement work and the Director of Land accords equal priority to dealing with unauthorised building works in New Territories Exempted Houses and unauthorised building works in multi-storey buildings and takes lease enforcement work against misuse of buildings in the New Territories. The Buildings Department is responsible for enforcement action on breaches of the Building Ordinance and serious cases of unauthorised building works.

The Government agrees with COMAC that villagers in the New Territories should have a clearer understanding of the government policy of non-tolerance of unauthorised building works in New Territories Exempted Houses and will step up publicity in this regard accordingly.

End

Substantial progress on anti-drug actions

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government has made good progress on the two anti-drug action plans which resulted from the Governor's Summit Meeting on Drugs in March last year, the third quarterly progress report, covering the period from October 1 to December 31, revealed today (Thursday).

The major achievements in the quarter covered by the report are:

- \* the Customs and Excise Department has set up a new team to implement controls on precursor chemicals(used in the illicit manufacture of drugs). The new control system commenced on January 1;
- \* Education Department has revised and improved the assistance package to every residential drug treatment agency to provide education for their clients;
- \* the video targeted at parents on the handling of drug problems among their children has been produced; and
- \* the new team of six specially trained social workers to help young abusers has started operation in October last year as scheduled.

End

Domestic export statistics by industrial origin

\* \* \* \* \*

The four major industries of textiles; wearing apparel; machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components; and consumer electrical and electronic products together accounted for 69% of Hong Kong's total domestic exports of manufactured goods in 1995, according to statistics released today (Thursday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

In 1995, domestic exports of machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components increased significantly, by 24% over a year earlier to \$39.6 billion. Those of wearing apparel increased by 3% to \$42.3 billion.

On the other hand, domestic exports of textiles and consumer electrical and electronic products both decreased by 3% to \$45.7 billion and \$31.6 billion respectively.

As for other industries, significant absolute increases in the value of domestic exports were also recorded for chemicals and chemical products (+839 million or +11%); professional and optical equipment (+\$797 million or +5%); basic metals and fabricated metal products (+\$774 million or +9%); and paper and paper products (+\$643 million or +8%).

For the industry of petroleum and coal products, although the change in absolute value was not as large, a marked percentage increase of 37% was recorded.

On the other hand, a notable absolute decrease in the value of domestic exports was recorded for non-metallic mineral products (-\$222 million or -31%).

For the industry of footwear, although the change in absolute value was not as large, a marked percentage decrease of 59% was recorded.

The above statistics of domestic exports classified by industrial origin are derived by re-grouping the merchandise export items originally grouped under the external trade classification system according to the industries in which these merchandise items are normally produced. Transactions in gold and specie are excluded.

The industrial classification used is the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC). HSIC is to be distinguished from the United Nations Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) used in the regular trade statistics reports.

In comparison, HSIC is more related to production processes whereas SITC is more geared to end uses of products.

Caution should be taken when referring to these domestic export statistics classified by industrial origin. There may be several intermediate processing stages in the production of certain merchandise export items.

In compiling the above statistics, the total value of such an item has however been wholly related to the industry in which the item is finally produced. The above domestic export statistics of a particular industry may include products which are secondary products by establishments of other industries.

Further details of merchandise domestic export statistics classified by industrial origin may be found in the attached table which is obtainable from the General Economic Surveys Section of the Census and Statistics Department, Tel 2805 6642.

A table showing more detailed breakdowns of similar statistics for major manufacturing industries is also included in the report "Hong Kong External Trade, December 1995"

Domestic exports of manufactured goods classified by industrial origin for 1995

\$ million

Industrial origin of the commodities exported	Merchandise domestic exports			
	1995	1994	Value change	% change
Food	2,770.0	2,507.7	+262.3	+10.5
Beverages	718.7	641.4	+77.2	+12.0
Tobacco manufactures	2,214.5	2,393.7	-179.2	-7.5
Textiles (including knitting)	45,716.7	47,130.6	-1,413.9	-3.0
Wearing apparel, except footwear	42,265.2	41,144.2	+1,121.1	+2.7
Leather and leather products, except footwear and wearing apparel	1,630.3	1,493.4	+136.8	+9.2
Footwear, except rubber, plastic and wooden footwear	75.1	182.7	-107.6	-58.9
Wood and cork products, furniture and fixtures	351.5	377.2	-25.7	-6.8
Paper and paper products, printing and publishing	8,448.6	7,805.7	+642.8	+8.2
Chemicals and chemical products	8,375.0	7,535.7	+839.3	+11.1
Products of petroleum and coal	23.0	16.8	+6.3	+37.4
Rubber products	72.9	110.9	-38.0	-34.3
Plastic products	4,803.2	4,921.8	-118.6	-2.4
Non-metallic mineral products, except products of petroleum and coal	493.2	714.9	-221.8	-31.0
Basic metals and fabricated metal products	9,858.1	9,084.5	+773.6	+8.5
Machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components	39,647.3	32,098.7	+7,548.6	+23.5
Consumer electrical and electronic products	31,567.6	32,519.4	-951.8	-2.9
Transport equipment	84.5	83.7	+0.9	+1.0
Professional and optical equipment	16,803.0	16,005.8	+797.3	+5.0
Other manufacturing industries	13,290.6	13,881.8	-591.3	-4.3
Total	229,208.9	220,650.6	+8,558.3	+3.9

Notes : 1. Individual entries of a column may not add up exactly to the corresponding total due to rounding. All percentage changes are calculated from unrounded figures.

2. The statistics presented in the above table are derived by re-grouping the merchandise export items (except gold and specie) under the external trade classification system according to the industries in which these items are normally produced. As from 1992, the Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 3 (SITC R3) has been adopted in place of the Revision 2 (SITC R2) for the classification of trade statistics. The above statistics may not be strictly comparable with those published for earlier years due to the change in trade classification.

General Economic Surveys Section,  
Census & Statistics Department,  
Hong Kong.

Tel. : 2805 6642

February 1996

End

Study on inner harbour waves commissioned

\* \* \* \* \*

The Civil Engineering Department (CED) today (Thursday) signed a \$4.2 million consultancy agreement to commission the University of Hong Kong to conduct a study on inner harbour waves and their reduction.

The consultancy aims to assess the wave conditions in Victoria Harbour and examine types of wave energy dissipating seawalls that can be adopted in Hong Kong, a spokesman for CED said.

"As part of a three-phase study to address the wave agitation problem in the Victoria Harbour, the consultancy study will also identify other short-term and long-term engineering solutions which could effectively ease the problem.

"The second and third phase of the study will entail monitoring and testing on the recommended wave energy dissipating seawalls and detailed design of the seawalls," he added.

Victoria Harbour is in general well sheltered. Under normal weather conditions, wind-generated waves and swells are low and pose no significant problems to the operations of vessels.

However, in recent years, cargo handling, berthing and similar marine activities have become more difficult, and passage of small vessels has become less comfortable in certain parts of the harbour.

"The main cause of the confused sea state was the ship waves generated by the increase of marine traffic. The situation is aggravated by waves reflected from solid vertical seawalls around the harbour," the spokesman said.

Managed by the Civil Engineering Office of CED, the consultancy will commence this month for completion in 12 months.

The consultancy agreement was signed by the Government Civil Engineer, CED, Mr Tam Wing-kwong, and Professor Allen Chwang of the University of Hong Kong.

End

Works contract for explosives complex awarded

\* \* \* \* \*

A \$190-million contract for the building, mechanical and electrical works of an explosives complex at Kau Shat Wan, Lantau Island, was awarded to Aoki Corporation today (Thursday).

The complex, comprising underground rock caverns for the storage of explosives, will replace the existing facilities on Stonecutters Island, said acting Government Civil Engineer (Project Management), Mr Tin Hon-wai, after signing the contract.

"The works will include the construction of buildings and magazines for the storage of explosives, provision of mechanical and electrical facilities and a security system as well as roads and landscaping works.

"Works will commence at the end of this month for completion in mid-1997," he said.

Mr Tin said the construction of the complex had been divided into two contracts: the civil works contract and the building, mechanical and electrical contract.

The civil works contract had been awarded in December 1994. Works are proceeding smoothly and will be completed in mid-1996.

Upon completion, the explosives complex will be managed by the Civil Engineering Department.

End

Third District Board by-election scheduled

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A by-election to fill a seat of the Kam Ping constituency of the Eastern District Board will be held on March 31 (Sunday).

This is the third district board by-election scheduled in March.

The two other by-elections, for the Tin King and the Siu Hei constituencies of the Tuen Mun District Board, will be held, also on Sundays, on March 3 and 24 respectively.

The office of Mr Chiang Yu-tui, the district board member of the Kam Ping constituency had been declared vacant in a gazette notice published on February 9 in accordance with section 14 (1) of the District Boards Ordinance. His office became vacant on January 29.

Nomination period for the by-election will be from tomorrow (Friday) to March 1.

Nomination forms are now available at Eastern District Office, 11th floor, Eastern Law Courts Building, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho, and the Registration and Electoral Office (REO), 10th floor, Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

The Kam Ping constituency, comprising 20 buildings including Metropole Building, Kam Ming Yuen, Ming Yuen Mansion and Kam Ping Building, has an electorate of 8,855.

Poll will be held unless the seat is uncontested.

Meanwhile, REO will send out poll cards today (Thursday) to 8,387 electors of the Tin King constituency reminding them the by-election date.

Those who do not receive the poll cards by February 26 may call the REO hotline on 2827 1122.

End

#### Tender for second issue of 7-Year exchange fund notes

\* \* \* \* \*

Tender for the second issue of 7-year exchange fund notes will be held on February 26 for settlement on February 27, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announces today (Thursday).

An amount of \$500 million 7-year notes will be offered while another \$100 million will be held as reserve by HKMA for supply to market makers in the secondary market.

The notes will mature on February 27, 2003, and will carry interest at the rate of 6.02% per annum payable semi-annually in arrears. Terms and conditions of the issue are described fully in the Information Memorandum.

Members of the public who wish to tender for the notes may do so through any of the market makers or recognised dealers on the published list which can be obtained from HKMA at 30th floor, 3 Garden Road, Hong Kong, or on 2878 8150.

Each tender must be for an amount of \$50,000 or integral multiples thereof.

Following is the tender information for the second issue of 7-Year exchange fund notes:

Issue number	: 7302
Tender date and time	: Monday February 26, 1996, 9.30 am to 10.30 am
Issue and settlement date	: Tuesday February 27, 1996
Amount on offer	: \$500 million plus an additional \$100 million as reserve stock for the Monetary Authority
Maturity	: Seven years
Maturity date	: February 27, 2003
Interest rate	: 6.02% per annum payable semi annually in arrears
Interest payment dates	: Aug 27, 1996, Feb 27, 1997, Aug 27, 1997, Feb 27, 1998, Aug 27, 1998, Feb 26, 1999, Aug 27, 1999, Feb 28, 2000, Aug 28, 2000, Feb 27, 2001, Aug 27, 2001, Feb 27, 2002, Aug 27, 2002, Feb 27, 2003

Tender amount : Each tender must be for an amount of \$50,000 or integral multiples thereof. Members of the public who wish to tender for the notes may approach market makers or recognised dealers on the published list

Other details : Please see Information Memorandum published or approach market makers or recognised dealers

End

#### Importation of fireworks warned

\* \* \* \* \*

Members of the public are reminded not to bring any fireworks into Hong Kong.

Anyone found in possession of fireworks would be charged under the Dangerous Goods Ordinance, a spokesman of the Customs and Excise Department said today (Thursday).

In the past week, customs officers at control points had found a total of 13.2 Kg of assorted fireworks from incoming lorries and passengers. Two drivers were arrested.

The spokesman pointed out that the maximum penalty for committing the offence under the Dangerous Goods Ordinance is a fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In 1995, Customs had seized over 7,600 Kilogrammes of fireworks, valued at about \$480,000.

End

Tunnels to remain open during Lunar New Year holiday

\* \* \* \* \*

The Transport Department announces today (Thursday) that the five Government tunnels will remain fully open during the coming Lunar New Year holiday periods.

They are the Aberdeen Tunnel, Lion Rock Tunnel, Airport Tunnel, Shing Mun Tunnels and Tseung Kwan O Tunnel.

A spokesman for the department said from February 18 to 22, no tube of any of the tunnels will be closed for maintenance, and the radio broadcast of safety messages would be stepped up.

Furthermore, there will be additional control and safety measures on tunnel operations during the holidays, he said.

Likewise, the spokesman said, operators of the three private tunnels - Cross Harbour Tunnel, Tate's Cairn Tunnel and Eastern Harbour Crossing - would take the same measures as far as they possibly could.

He said motorists also had a part to play in avoiding accidents inside tunnels by observing the following safety guidelines:

- \* Do not follow too close to the vehicle in front. Leave a two-second gap for safety;
- \* Observe the speed limit;
- \* Keep in lane;
- \* Observe traffic ahead;
- \* Use dipped headlights;
- \* Avoid wearing earphones or using mobile telephones when driving and
- \* Do not drink any alcohol before and/or when driving.

The spokesman urged motorists to drive with care and patience no matter they were driving inside the tunnels or on open roads.

End

Welfare payment arrangement for Lunar New Year holidays

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Recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance under the bank payment system may receive their payments on Saturday (February 17) if their pay-days fall on the coming Lunar New Year holidays (February 18 to February 21).

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department said today (Thursday) that special payment arrangements would also be made for recipients of Social Security Allowance whose pay-days fell on February 18 to February 21.

Those who have bank accounts in Hong Kong Bank or Hang Seng Bank will receive their payments on Saturday (February 17) whereas those with accounts in other banks will receive their payments next Thursday (February 22).

In case of doubt, recipients are advised to contact their respective social security field units.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

\* \* \* \* \*

	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
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Opening balance in the account	2,651	0930	+149
Closing balance in the account	2,381	1000	+149
Change attributable to :		1100	+152
Money market activity	+152	1200	+152
LAF today	-422	1500	+152
		1600	+152

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 123.3 \*-0.1\* 15.2.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.60	2 years	2802	5.16	100.35	5.04
1 month	4.83	3 years	3901	5.57	101.13	5.22
3 months	4.90	5 years	5012	6.38	102.80	5.79
6 months	4.89	7 years	7211	6.82	104.26	6.13
12 months	4.89	5 years	M502	7.30	105.33	6.08

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$24,028 million

Closed February 15, 1996

End