



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 2842 8777

Tuesday, January 30, 1996

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Transcript of the 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 visiting the Extension of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre this (Tuesday) afternoon:

Governor: I think it is a stunning project. It is going to be one of the greatest buildings not just in Asia, but I think one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, set in this incomparable position in the middle of our harbour. I think the architects, the engineers -- all those involved in the construction -- have done a really wonderful job. It is a very difficult project and there are obviously still some challenges and problems ahead. But I am sure that all involved will complete the project in time so that it can be used in 1997 for example for the IMF and World Bank Meetings that year. I think there'll be a great deal of international attention focused on the building, not just what goes on here, but what a beautiful building it is and what a tribute to this to Hong Kong, to the vision of Hong Kong, to the ability of Hong Kong to get things done and to Hong Kong's vision of itself as an international finance and business centre for the future, because this is going to give Hong Kong pretty much the best convention centre in Asia, not quite the largest; there is one which is a little bit larger in Tokyo. But it is certainly the largest in this part of Asia and one of the largest in the world. So I've been delighted to see it today and I'm looking forward to see its completion over the next 18 months. It is a big and expensive project. It is going to cost all in all about four billion Hong Kong. But I'm sure it's a very good investment. The business community were pressing us for it for years and I'm sure they'll be as delighted as everybody else at the progress that's being made.

Question: Governor, the Government has just announced that it is going to extend the Chief Justice's term for eight months. Why ...?

Governor: We talked to the Chief Justice and agreed that the Chinese New Year next year would be about the sensible time for his term to be extended to. He's done a very distinguished job and I think a few more months will suit everybody and should suit everybody. By the early part of next year, we'll all be looking to the future and beyond 1997 and I hope we'll be able to have a smoother transition for the administration of justice and the judiciary.

Question: Anything specific that ... to get done in this extra time?

Governor: I'm sure he'll continue the work of helping to prepare the way for the Court of Final Appeal, helping to work with the localisation of the Judiciary, helping with the introduction of the use of the Chinese in the courts which is an initiative which he's been very much associated with. And there're a lot of administration of justice issues which need to be carried forward and I'm sure they'll receive excellent leadership from the CJ.

Question: Why does it only last for eight months? Is it because he is not the one who is accepted by both the Chinese and British Governments for transition?

Governor: He's accepted an extension for eight months because that's what suited him and that's what suited us.

Question: (on reports about the Governor visiting the States in May)

Governor: If I were to go the United States in May, it wouldn't be an unusual move on my part because I went to the United States in May in 1993 and I think that was generally regarded as a successful visit. We were at the time lobbying and lobbying hard for the extension, renewal of MFN and we lobbied successfully for that. So if I were to go again, it would have a similar purpose. I think it's important for senior officials in the Hong Kong Government to go to the United States and to our other friends from time to time to tell them of our confidence in the future, to tell them what Hong Kong is going to be able to achieve in the future. There's the extra reason for going to the United States because of MFN which is important to Hong Kong as it is important to the US and China.

Question: I'm sure you read a lot of news about the PLA who is going to be stationed in Hong Kong after 1997. What is your initial impression?

Governor: My initial feeling is that nobody has ever in three and a half years asked me, so far as I can recall, a single question about the British garrison, which I take to be a very good sign and I hope that nobody has to ask me or the Chief Executive questions about the garrison in future. The position is made explicit and clear in the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law under which the sovereign has of course the right to have a garrison in Hong Kong. That is made abundantly plain that that garrison doesn't interfere with local affairs and that its members are subject to Hong Kong laws like everybody else. So the confirmation of that doesn't come to us as a surprise. We would be surprised if anything else was going to be happening. It's also worth recalling that when we agreed on the future of defence lands in 1994, there was an explicit statement in that agreement that those defence lands used by the garrison after 1997 rather than returned for development to the Government and people of Hong Kong would be used solely for defence purposes. So to have that reaffirmed is again an important factor this week. I'm sure that if there're any concerns and doubts, and some have been expressed, that Chinese officials and the PLA will want to move to deal with them and to ensure maximum confidence because people do want to be satisfied that just as today they don't have to ask the Governor questions about the garrison so in future they don't feel under any obligation to ask the Chief Executive questions about the garrison.

Question: The extension for eight months for T L Yang. Is it ... to allow you and the SAR Chief Executive Designate to discuss the replacement for Sir T L?

Governor: It's because as I said earlier the extension of that period of time suits the administration and suits the Chief Justice. I'm sure that the Chief Executive Designate of the SAR will be as concerned as I am and the rest of my administration is to have the best possible person as Chief Justice today and in the future. But since there isn't a Chief Executive Designate yet, though there is I notice much speculation, there is nobody with whom one could discuss the issue at the moment.

Question: Will you talk to he or she when this is appointed?

Governor: I'll talk to him or her, or her or him, and I think I have covered all the possibilities there, about a whole range of issues. It would be surprising if the administration of justice, the establishment for example of the Court of Final Appeal wasn't one of the issues on our agenda. As we get closer to 1997, one of the questions which business here, business internationally and people here are going to be asking about is will the rule of law stay the same in the future as it has been in the past. Whatever the arguments there may have been about other things, I think there is agreement that it is important to give assurance on that issue. So the administration of justice will be a very important issue for the Chief Executive Designate and his or her team, just as it is an important matter for me. One last question.

Question: Who will replace him after eight months? Is it possible that T. L. Yang will continue his terms?

Governor: That hasn't been decided yet.

Question: Governor, going back to the PLA drill. Do you think that the drill itself will reassure the Hong Kong people's confidence, first? Second, why do you think if Chinese garrison commits a crime, it will subject to Hong Kong law?

Governor: Because that's what the Basic Law says.

Question: The first question, do you think it will reassure the Hong Kong people's confidence?

Governor: I very much hope that when people see their televisions and I think there was a huge amount on the television last night about the PLA. Though I think there were rather different reports on Chinese language channels to those on English language channels for doubtless editorial reasons, I am sure when people see those pictures they want to be reassured about the future and I hope they are reassured.

Question: About your visit today, sir. Well, a lot of people said that this place is going to be the place that the handover ceremony will be held here. Is it an symbolic action for you to come here to show your willingness to join the handover ceremony?

Governor: No. Though that's an ingenious question. I've said before it's rather like those tiresome and boring questions about whether the Governor of Hong Kong will be here until June 30, 1997 and that's you all now know, there is a standing fine payable to the Hong Kong Journalists Association for anybody who asks that question. So equally, there should be a standing fine for anybody who repeats the boring trivial and the totally unnecessary question about whether the Governor of Hong Kong will be there as part of the British team at the handover ceremony. That's a matter for Britain to decide. I think it would be extremely surprising if the British Government didn't decide that the representative of the Queen would be present at the handover ceremony. So as far as I am concerned, there is no point in going on asking that question because you'll get exactly the same answer and there are much more important questions for us all to talk about -- livelihood issues, the rule of law, the economy, the completion of this project. I'll tell you why I came here today. I came here today, because there is a huge Hong Kong stake in this project. Not just there four billion Hong Kong to bring to reality a dream which many people including many of the business community had for years, but also a stake in the sense that, I think that this building exemplifies, reflects the sort of role which Hong Kong sees for itself in the next generation. One of the greatest financial and business centres in the world, the leading business and financial centre in this part of Asia, with the ability in this fantastic, stunning new conference centre to hold the best sort of conferences, the best sort of exhibitions, to act as a focus for the economies of East Asia. So I came here today to see the progress that's been made on this project because I want to see the project completed on time and everybody who's involved in the project wants to see it completed on time. That's why I came, and I am delighted as I am sure you have been to see that the project is everything that we've expected. It's quite spectacular and I am looking forward to seeing its completion before the middle of 1997. Final one.

Question: (on labour disputes)

Governor: Well, I think we're dealing with the consequences of some past abuses and I'd like to say straight away that some of the things which the unions and union representatives drew to our attention are proved to be in many respects correct. And we've been working to deal with them. And I think that all of us -- employers, government and unions -- should now, I hope, get on with the job of completing these great projects in Hong Kong in a way which is fair to those who work on the projects and make them possible. What we want to ensure is that everybody who works in Hong Kong gets a fair deal, gets the pay they've been promised and is able to work within the regulations and laws which we specify in order to ensure a decent working environment here in Hong Kong. I think that all those who've drawn attention to abuses, should I hope, feel confident that the government is reacting promptly to those abuses, what none of us want to see is past controversies about the abuse of our labour laws becoming a reason why we don't complete projects which will help to improve the well-being of Hong Kong, which will help to increase the livelihood of the people of Hong Kong and which will keep our economy growing.

End

Transcript of CS's media session

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Following is the transcript of the remarks (English) made to the media by the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, after opening the Home-School Co-operation Drug Education Roving Exhibition this (Tuesday) afternoon:

Question: How do you react to the Chief Justice ...?

CS: Of course I'm very happy that the Chief Justice has agreed to extend the service by eight months. This is agreed between him and the Governor and I'm happy that he is willing to extend the service.

Question: Is it because it is difficult to find the right candidate to fill this post?

CS: No.

Question: (inaudible)

CS: I've just said that all appointments within the civil service between now and June 30, 1997 is of course a matter for the Hong Kong Government. After July 1, 1997, the filling of all principal official posts of which the Attorney General is one, the nominations will have to be made by the Chief Executive Designate and the nominations will have to be notified to the Central Government of China.

Question: How do you react to ... PLA?

CS: I would just reiterate that the stationing of PLA in Hong Kong is of course governed by the Basic Law. It is quite clearly stated there that the garrison that will be stationed here will comply with Hong Kong laws, will not interfere in the internal affairs of the Special Administrative Region. But at the specific request of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, if necessary, the garrison will provide assistance and help the civilian authorities in Hong Kong.

Question: (inaudible)

CS: For example, in the case of an emergency.

Question: How do you define emergency?

CS: For example if there are natural disasters, if it is necessary, if we feel that the civilian authorities need assistance, then we may request the garrison to help. Thank you.

End

JLG to meet in February

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The 35th meeting of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group will take place in Hong Kong on February 6, 7 and 9, 1996.

The British team will be led by the British Senior Representative, Mr Hugh Davies. The other members of the British team will be Mr Alan Paul (Counsellor, Office of the British Senior Representative, Sino-British Joint Liaison Group), Mr Nicholas Ng (Secretary for Constitutional Affairs, Hong Kong Government), Mr Robert Peirce (Political Adviser, Hong Kong Government), and Mr Sherard Cowper-Coles (Head of Hong Kong Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

End

Chief Justice's term of office extended

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) that the service of the Chief Justice, Sir Ti Liang Yang, will be extended for eight months until February 28, 1997.

Sir Ti Liang, whose present term expires on June 29, was appointed Chief Justice of Hong Kong on March 15, 1988.

Born on June 30, 1929, in Shanghai, he was educated at Soochow University Law School, Shanghai, from 1946 to 1949. He continued his education in Hong Kong University and University College, London. He obtained his LL B (Hon) in 1953 and was called to the Bar in 1954.

Sir Ti Liang's career in the public service began with his appointment as a magistrate in 1956. He was appointed Senior Magistrate in 1963 and promoted to District Judge in 1968.

He was elevated to the High Court in 1975. In 1980, he was appointed Justice of Appeal, becoming Vice-President of that Court in 1987.

End

CJ's statement on extension of term of office

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The following is a statement by the Chief Justice, Sir Ti Liang Yang:

"I am please with the extension which will enable me to see through some of the projects started by the Judiciary. I will continue to do my best to serve the people of Hong Kong.

"A fair and just judicial system is the cornerstone of Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. The Judiciary is committed to maintaining an independent, effective and efficient judicial system in Hong Kong."

End

FS to attend economic summit in Switzerland

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The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, will depart for Davos, Switzerland, at 11.30 pm tomorrow (Wednesday) night to attend the World Economic Forum Annual Summit, an annual gathering of world leaders from business, government, academia, culture and the media.

Mr Tsang will be accompanied by the Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue; Executive Director of the Securities and Futures Commission, Mrs Laura Cha; Managing Director of China Dyeing Holdings Limited, Mr Victor Cha; Chairman of Hang Lung Development Company Limited, Mr Ronnie Chan; Chief Executive of Hong Kong Telecommunications Limited, Mr Linus Cheung; Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited, Mr Raymond Kwok; and Chairman of Dah Sing Financial Holdings Limited, Mr David Wong.

On Friday (February 2), Mr Tsang will attend a breakfast seminar to be followed by a panel discussion on "World Class: An Agenda for Local Action in a Global World". He will be one of the panellists and will talk about the past experience and future prospects of Hong Kong.

While in Davos, Mr Tsang will attend two informal dinners hosted by the Hong Kong Team on February 2 and 4 and to meet with senior government officials, chief executive officers, bankers and academics from all over the world.

On Saturday (February 3), he will address a business lunch to be attended by about 100 international business leaders. He will talk about Hong Kong's economic strengths and prospects.

After further informal meetings with world and regional leaders, Mr Tsang will return to Hong Kong on February 6 (Tuesday).

The World Economic Forum was established in Switzerland in 1971 as an independent, international, non-profit and non-partisan organisation to bring world leaders together in a global partnership.

End

Citybus and CMB fare increase endorsed

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At the meeting held this (Tuesday) afternoon, the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) endorsed a 9.5 per cent fare increase for Citybus's Hong Kong Island routes, and a 10.7 per cent fare increase for China Motor Bus's (CMB) Hong Kong Island routes.

The recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Council for consideration. The new fares are to take effect in March.

As most cross harbour routes are jointly operated by CMB, Citybus and Kowloon Motor Bus, it is necessary to maintain a common fare scale to avoid confusion to the travelling public.

TAC has endorsed a weighted average fare increase of 10 per cent for all cross harbour routes with effect from March.

CMB and Citybus last increased the fares of their Hong Kong Island routes in July 1994 and September 1994 respectively. Without a fare increase, both companies would suffer sizeable losses in 1996 and 1997.

The recommended increase would give Citybus a reasonable level of return in the next two years as an incentive for further investment to improve its service.

As for CMB, with the recommended fares, the company will earn a small profit this year but incur a loss in 1997.

The recommended fares would mean that 78 per cent of Citybus passengers would pay no more than 40 cents more per trip. Over half of CMB passengers would pay only 20 to 40 cents more per trip.

The proposed fare increases for both Citybus and CMB are well below the forecast inflation rates between their last fare increases and March when the recommended new fares come into effect.

End

ACP Exhibition Centre open to public

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Members of the public who want to find out more about how the 10 major infrastructure projects in the Airport Core Programme (ACP) are rapidly reshaping the face of Hong Kong can now visit a new exhibition centre at Ting Kau.

The ACP Exhibition Centre, set up by the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office (NAPCO), is located on Castle Peak Road where it faces the main span of the Tsing Ma Bridge, the world's longest suspension bridge carrying both road and rail traffic.

On display at the centre will be the latest information on the physical progress of the 10 projects, illustrated by photographs, models and video presentations.

There is also a viewing platform and roof top equipped with telescopes to provide visitors with views of the Tsing Ma and Kap Shui Mun bridges.

It is an ideal location to view construction progress of the Tsing Ma Bridge, and to appreciate a new major landmark in Hong Kong after its completion.

The centre was officially opened today (Tuesday) by the Chairman of the Consultative Committee on the New Airport and Related Projects, Mr Hu Fa-kuang.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mr Hu said growing public interest had prompted NAPCO to consider setting up a place where the public could have a better understanding of the Airport Core Programme.

He said there had already been considerable public interest in ACP.

"An exhibition centre was thus conceived, and it has now come into existence," he said.

"While ACP works areas are closed to the general public, the exhibits at the centre will give the public a good understanding of the ACP and its latest progress.

"I am sure that the centre will soon become a popular tourist spot for both local and overseas visitors."

Describing ACP as Hong Kong's "massive investment into the future", Mr Hu said work was now at an advanced stage and excellent progress was being made on all of the 10 ACP projects.

At the end of 1995, ACP as a whole was 48 per cent complete while the government ACP projects had reached the 78 per cent completion mark.

In about 17 months' time, the ACP projects, with the exception of the new airport and the airport railway, will be opened to the public for use.

"You will then be able to see the significant benefits the ACP projects will bring to all of us," said Mr Hu.

After his speech, Mr Hu joined the Director of NAPCO, Mr Billy Lam, in declaring the ACP Exhibition Centre open by performing a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The centre has been converted from Homi Villa, an old government quarter. The main building was constructed by Mr Jehangir H Ruttonjee in 1930 as a country home to oversee the construction of the brewery at Sham Tseng.

It is located at 401 Castle Peak Road, Ting Kau, and is open to the public from 10 am to 5 pm from Tuesday to Friday, and from 10 am to 6.30 pm on Saturday and Sunday. It closes on Monday and public holidays. Admission is free.

NAPCO will organise guided tours of the centre for primary and secondary schools and other organisations. Enquiries should be made to NAPCO's Community Relations Division on 2829 6282 or fax 2827 8446.

End

Job Matching Programme now open to all ages

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The Labour Department will remove the age requirement for joining the Job Matching Programme (JMP) from February 1 (Thursday) to tie in with the implementation of the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS).

"Since the SLS requires employers applying for imported workers to participate in the JMP and forward relevant vacancies for job matching, it is necessary to remove the age requirement to enable unemployed locals of all ages to apply," Assistant Commissioner for Labour, Mrs Jennie Chor, said.

The encouraging results of JMP since its implementation and the increasing number of unemployed persons under 30 also prompted the extension of the programme, she added.

JMP was jointly launched with the Employees Retraining Board in April last year to help unemployed persons aged 30 or above to find jobs. Initially, it was only available in five Local Employment Service offices but was extended to all nine in August 1995.

Mrs Chor disclosed that as at January 24, the programme had registered 5,995 job-seekers and successfully obtained 4,268 job offers, representing a success rate of 71 per cent.

End

Companies Registry commits to provide better service

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A left-partial company name search facility and a touch-screen information system have been introduced to improve the quality of service of the Companies Registry, the Registrar of Companies, Mr Gordon Jones, said today (Tuesday).

Outlining the department's progress over the past year and plans for the future, Mr Jones stressed that, since the Companies Registry had become trading funded in August 1993, it remained committed to improving the facilities and services to its customers.

He said when the Control Book and Documents Index System was first introduced, it only covered documents submitted on or after December 1, 1994, but now it covered all documents filed with the Registry.

Furthermore, he said, the department had just introduced a left-partial company name search facility and a touch-screen information system, in addition to an exact company name search service to assist customers searching for corporate information.

"We recognise the significance of providing customers with a remote on-line search facility and are working towards this goal," said Mr Jones.

He said the department was also working in partnership with RNR International Marketing Group (Hong Kong) Ltd to offer the customers an interim remote service.

"Today marks the launch of this service," he said, adding that the Registry had downloaded both the company names and document indices onto CD-ROM to enable users to request registered company details remotely by facsimile transmission.

Mr Jones said with the completion of the extensive refurbishment of its public search area, customers of the department could now make use of the much bigger and brighter search hall with enhanced facilities.

These include a public computer terminal room with more than 50 terminals and the new microfiche reading room.

"These improvements constitute the final stage of a series of office improvements introduced to provide a better and more user-friendly environment for customers and staff alike," he said.

End

Symposium to stimulate discussion on service industry

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The Government and the business community will join hands in organising a symposium on services promotion to be held on March 12 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

An organising committee, under the chairmanship of the Director of Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, Mr I A Christie, has been set up to plan the event.

It comprises representatives from major trade and industrial organisations, government departments and policy branches, including the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, the Hong Kong Coalition of Services Industries, Trade and Industry Branch, Financial Services Branch and Industry Department.

The symposium, to be opened by the Governor, will be attended by businessmen, industrialists, representatives from the services sector, government officials and academics.

It aims to stimulate debates in the community, and in particular among the services sector, on the way forward for the further development of Hong Kong's services.

The symposium will cover a wide range of issues on service industry as well as issues facing a number of individual service sectors, such as financial services, the 'trading' sectors (import/export, wholesale and retail), and information technology.

Speakers include local and overseas experts in specific areas and Government officials.

End

Protecting HK's environment a difficult task

* * * * *

The Director of Environmental Protection, Dr Stuart Reed, today (Tuesday) likened the job of looking after Hong Kong's environment to the trials of Hercules and the punishment meted out to Sisyphus to labour vainly rolling a block of marble uphill from whence it always rolled down again.

Speaking at a luncheon meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce, Dr Reed said there was a more or less directly proportional relationship between the growth of gross domestic product (GDP) and pressure on the environment, adding that the amount of garbage Hong Kong generated increased proportionately with GDP.

"The over 1,000 per cent increase in GDP in the past 20 years has therefore meant an equivalent scale of increase in pressure on the environment. So it has often been a case for us of 'running hard just to stand still'," he said.

Despite all the difficulties, Dr Reed said he still had some good news as to where Hong Kong had got to in environmental terms.

Among them was a complete transformation in the priority allocated to the "Cinderellas" of Public Works Programmes - sewerage and garbage disposal, from less than \$300 million per annum spent on these in 1986 to \$3,900 million in the present financial year and a further \$6,400 million in the coming financial year.

Other good news included the introduction and enforcement of comprehensive legislation to deal with air and water pollution, wastes management, and the control of noise and of ozone layer depleting substances. The latest addition was the gazettal of the Environmental Impact Assessment Bill, he said.

Another piece of good news highlighted by Dr Reed was the creation of a body of professional and technical staff able to deal with environmental protection work.

"In the past two decades, environmental protection has become a well established field of professional activity in Hong Kong, with large numbers of well qualified and well experienced staff in both the public and private sectors, and an array of professional institutions and associations to support their work," he said.

While it was necessary to recruit environmental professionals overseas when the Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) was established in 1977, Dr Reed said he was happy to see the number of professional staff grow from five in the original EPU to the present 393, with the percentage of local staff increasing from zero to more than 94 per cent over the same time period.

On the problems still facing Hong Kong's environment, Dr Reed said the most pressing one was exhaust emissions from diesel-engined motor vehicles.

While Hong Kong has less sulphur dioxide, less oxides of nitrogen and less carbon monoxide in the air than places like New York and London, it has more small particles than most other cities, and these originate mainly from diesel vehicles.

He reiterated that the "diesel to petrol" scheme, together with other measures in the pipeline, would solve the problem.

He disagreed with assertions that better maintenance for diesel vehicles on its own would be an alternative because a pristine diesel engine straight off the production line gave out large quantities of small particles and the amount increased substantially with age.

Neither did Dr Reed agree that the maintenance of petrol driven vehicles would be ruinously expensive as compared with the cost of properly maintaining diesel vehicles, which he said did not happen at present in Hong Kong.

"You will see that I feel very strongly that a more constructive attitude is needed by those who are currently obstructing the scheme, if indeed they are sincerely concerned, as they claim to be, about the health of the community in Hong Kong," he said.

As for other issues for the future, Dr Reed said one was the need to reduce the amount of solid wastes so as to extend the life of the three strategic landfills.

"The quickest and simplest way of doing this is to introduce charging for disposal at landfills so that contractors are encouraged to divert construction wastes to more appropriate uses than filling-up valuable and possibly irreplaceable landfill space," he said.

"And finally for the future, we need to build on our already excellent and long standing relationships with our opposite numbers in Guangdong and Shenzhen so that our inevitable mutual concerns on cross border environmental matters can be addressed effectively in the interests of all concerned," Dr Reed said.

End

HIV/AIDS situation in 1995

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A total of 122 persons were found to be positive for the HIV antibody test in 1995, the Department of Health announced today (Tuesday).

This brings the number of HIV-infected persons in Hong Kong to 642.

Forty-five new AIDS cases were reported last year. The total number of confirmed AIDS cases is 175.

Of the 642 HIV-infected, 220 acquired the infection through homosexual or bisexual sex and 292 through heterosexual sex, 13 were injecting drug users, three were a mother-to-child transmission around the time of birth and 66 got it through contaminated blood or blood products before 1985 when HIV antibody test and safe heat treated clotting concentrates were not available.

As for the remaining 48, the information available was inadequate for classification.

The department today also launched a new Home Page on Internet specifically created for the AIDS Unit to better communicate with the local and international community on all aspects of AIDS prevention, care and control.

The Home Page composed of the following sections: health services, community programmes, HIV/AIDS surveillance, publications, HIV/AIDS report form, secretariat to Advisory Council on AIDS, coming activities and what's new.

The address is <http://www.info.gov.hk/health/aids>.

End

Drug education exhibition begins

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Students, teachers, parents and members the public will get to know more about the dangers of drug abuse from a roving exhibition which starts today (Tuesday) at Tsim Sha Tsui.

To mark the launching of the exhibition, the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan; the Director of Education, Mrs Helen C P Lai Yu; and the Chairman of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation, Mr Tik Chi-yuen, were invited to officiate at the opening ceremony at New World Plaza in Tsim Sha Tsui.

The display on drug education is organised by the Committee on Home-School Co-operation in response to the recommendations made at the Governor's anti-drug summit meeting held last March.

A total of 15 schools participate in it and 87 panels are on show.

Young people are one of the principal targets of the exhibition which aims at inculcating in them a healthy and positive attitude to life and encouraging them to resist the temptation to take drugs.

It is also targeting at parents and teachers by keeping them better informed so they will be able to handle the problem and help youngsters to stay away from drugs.

Members of the public are encouraged to visit the exhibition which will be staged over a 12-day period at the following shopping arcades:

- January 30 - February 1 : New World Plaza, Salisbury Road,
Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon
- February 2 - 4 : Marina Square West Wing,
South Horizons, Ap Lei Chau, Hong Kong
- February 5 - 7 : Lok Fu Shopping Centre Exhibition Hall,
Lok Fu Estate Phase 1, Kowloon
- February 8 - 10 : Tin Yiu Shopping Centre, Tin Yiu Estate,
Tin Shui Wai, New Territories.

End

Fifth nomination received for DB by-election

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One more nomination was received today (Tuesday) for the Tuen Mun District Board by-election in respect of Tin King constituency to be held on March 3.

The candidate is Mr Lee Yiu-hung, a 32-year-old master degree student of the University of Hong Kong.

Mr Lee can be contacted on 2467 6321 (daytime) and pager 71109138-907 (night-time.)

So far, five nominations were received since the nomination period started on January 19. Nomination will close until February 1.

End

Primary schools invited to join extensive reading scheme

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Primary schools are invited to participate in Phase II of the Hong Kong Extensive Reading Scheme in English in September 1996.

A spokesman for the Education Department said today (Tuesday) that 40 schools would be selected to join the scheme.

"The scheme was first introduced in last September in public sector primary schools and was well received by both teachers and students," the spokesman said.

"At present, 41 schools have taken part in Phase I of the scheme."

The scheme is a curriculum project for upper primary pupils. It is aimed at helping upper primary students develop a reading habit in English and improving their English proficiency through reading good quality English books.

Through a well organised reading programme, pupils will eventually be able to improve their writing abilities and other skills.

Participating schools will be provided with a complete resource package consisting of one set of 300 books graded into six different levels accompanied by reading and teaching aids.

Specialist support including seminars and induction courses will be offered to schools before implementing the scheme.

Schools interested in participating in Phase II of the scheme are requested to send their application to the English Section of Education Department's Advisory Inspectorate, Room 304 Advisory Inspectorate Teaching and Resources Centre, 19 Hok Yuen Street, Hung Hom before February 9.

Further enquiries can be made to the section on 2333 8477 or 2892 6573.

End

Sludge dewatering upgrading works contract signed

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The Drainage Services Department has started works to upgrade the sewage sludge dewatering facilities of four major secondary sewage treatment plants in the New Territories.

A \$109.8 million contract for upgrading the facilities at sewage treatment plants in Tai Po, Shek Wu Hui, Yuen Long and Sai Kung was signed today (Tuesday) by the department's Assistant Director (Electrical and Mechanical), Mr Ivan D'Souza, and a representative of the contractor, Ryoden Engineering Company Limited.

Speaking after signing the contract, Mr D'Souza said upgrading of the facilities was necessary in order to achieve the latest sludge landfill disposal requirement by the Environmental Protection Department.

"It is required that by mid-1997, all sludge disposed of at the three strategic landfills should have a dry solids content of 30 per cent by weight.

"In order to achieve this new requirement, it is necessary to install new sludge dewatering facilities which will be able to produce drier sludge.

"Moreover, with the installation of new sludge dewatering facilities, the volume of the dewatered sludge to be disposed of to the landfills will be drastically reduced. Waste water production by the disposing sludge in the landfills will also be lowered," he explained.

Mr D'Souza pointed out that the existing sludge dewatering facilities at sewage treatment plants in Tai Po, Shek Wu Hui and Yuen Long were commissioned in mid-1980s.

"They will come near the end of their economic life by 1997, and therefore replacement of the facilities is necessary," he said.

Works under the contract include demolishing all existing sludge dewatering facilities in the four sewage treatment works and replacing them by membrane filter presses.

The contract also includes provision of all civil works including pipeworks, sludge coagulation tanks, sludge flocculation tanks and relining of concrete holding tanks.

The works has already begun on January 15 and are scheduled to complete in mid-1997.

End

Contract awarded for North Point government building

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The Architectural Services Department today (Tuesday) signed a \$968 million contract for the design and construction of a new government building in North Point.

The 25-storey office complex, covering a total floor area of 66,000 square metres, will be located at Java Road next to the North Point Police Station.

Construction is expected to start next month and scheduled for completion in February 1998.

On completion, it is expected to provide office accommodation for the Rating and Valuation Department, the Lands Department and the Civil Service Training Centre.

End

Fresh water cut in Fanling

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Fresh water supply to some premises in Fanling will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Friday (February 2) to 6 am the following day to facilitate water main leakage detection.

All premises along Sha Tau Kok Road (Lung Yeuk Tau section), Luen On Street, Wo Tai Street and Luen Fat Street, including Luen Wo Market and Luen Wo San Tsuen, will be affected.

End

Salt water cut in Aberdeen and Wong Chuk Hang districts

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Flushing water supply to all premises in Aberdeen, Tin Wan, Shum Wan, Wong Chuk Hang and Shouson Hill will be temporarily suspended from 10 pm on Wednesday (January 31) to 6 am the following day to facilitate watermain works.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

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Tender date	30 Jan 96	30 Jan 96
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q605	H657
Issue date	31 Jan 96	31 Jan 96
Maturity date	1 May 96	31 Jul 96
Coupon	---	---
Amount applied	HK\$6,030 MN	HK\$6,300 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN	HK\$800 MN
Average yield accepted	5.36 PCT	5.30 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.36 PCT	5.30 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 90 PCT	About 25 PCT
Average tender yield	5.38 PCT	5.31 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning February 5, 1996

Tender date	6 Feb 96
Paper on offer	EF bills
Issue number	Q606
Issue date	7 Feb 96
Maturity date	8 May 96
Tenor	91 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500 + 300 MN

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	3,024	0930	-522
Closing balance in the account	3,015	1000	-522
Change attributable to :		1100	-550
Money market activity	-562	1200	-550
LAF today	+553	1500	-549
		1600	-562

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 123.9 *-0.1* 30.1.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.44	2 years	2711	5.60	100.58	5.32
1 month	5.42	3 years	3901	5.57	100.32	5.53
3 months	5.37	5 years	5012	6.38	102.22	5.93
6 months	5.31	7 years	7211	6.82	103.83	6.22
12 months	5.23	5 years	M502	7.30	104.88	6.20

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$10,922 million

Closed January 30, 1996

End