



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES  
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**Saturday, June 1, 1996**

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## Chief Secretary addresses Boston business community

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Hong Kong's economic fundamentals remain very strong, with 35 years of sustained economic growth, the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, told the business community in Boston, Massachusetts, today (May 31, Massachusetts time).

"In the past decade we've averaged a growth of 6.5 per cent in real terms in our GDP and we forecast a five per cent real growth for the foreseeable future.

"We're crucially aware of the need to keep Hong Kong competitive and to keep the cost of doing business in Hong Kong down," Mrs Chan said.

Addressing a luncheon meeting of bankers and business executives on the first day of her visit to Boston, the third city in her US tour, the Chief Secretary explained that, in addition to the welcome levelling off in property prices, the Government was also looking into other aspects of helping Hong Kong stay competitive.

"Currently, we are glad to know that the World Heritage Foundation rates Hong Kong the freest economy, and in terms of the world competitive table we are the third most competitive economy in the world. We fully intend to maintain that position and, hopefully, improve on it," Mrs Chan said.

Turning to the future, the Chief Secretary said one cloud on the economic horizon was the question of the most favoured nation status (MFN) extension to China.

"We fully agree with President Clinton that the best way to address a host of issues of concern - ranging from arms proliferation to human rights - is to have a constructive engagement with China and to be able to continue to assist in the economic growth of China," she said.

Mrs Chan went on to explain the heavy blow that would be dealt to Hong Kong if MFN were not settled.

The Chief Secretary began her day with a briefing to the business community at a meeting hosted by the office of the Mayor of Boston, Mr Thomas Menino.

It was followed by a call on Governor William Weld of the State of Massachusetts at the State Capital.

In the afternoon, Mrs Chan briefed the faculty at Tufts University and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She ended the day with a dinner with members of the academic community of Boston and Cambridge.

End

Reminder on prohibition of licence transfer

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The Trade Department today (Saturday) reminded importers and exporters that licences issued by the department were not transferable and violation of this prohibition would lead to a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years.

They were also reminded that any person who deliberately supplied false or misleading information on a licence application or declaration, was committing an offence under the Import and Export Ordinance.

This would include a person who declares himself to be the importer or exporter on the licence application with a view to transferring the licence issued to another person. If found guilty of such an offence, that person would also be liable to a \$500,000 fine and two years' jail sentence.

Issuing the reminder, a department spokesman said: "A licence is issued direct to the importer or exporter and not to any other person; and it can only be used by the person declaring himself to be the importer or exporter on the licence application concerned.

"In their own interests, importers and exporters should apply for the required licences themselves and licence applications should be submitted to the Trade Department direct."

Moreover, the spokesman said, the import or export of textiles other than under and in accordance with a valid licence issued by the department is an offence under the Import and Export Ordinance, unless the importer/exporter is a registered textiles trader under the Textiles Trader Registration Scheme and has been granted exemption from licensing requirements in respect of certain textile articles under the Import and Export (General) Regulations.

Traders who are interested in participating in the Textiles Trader Registration Scheme are welcome to contact Mr K T Lee of the department's Non-restrained Textiles Branch on 2398 5476 for details.

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	2,198	09:30	-300
Closing balance in the account	1,778	10:00	-300
Change attributable to:		11:00	-300
Money market activity	-300	11:30	-300
LAF today	-120		

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.1 \*-0.2\* 1.6.96

End

ED staff awarded for good service

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The good service of 10 staff of the Education Department, five of them members of the Psychological Services (Professional Support) Section, paid off when they received the staff incentive awards.

In a presentation ceremony, Senior Assistant Director of Education, Mr Hsu Show-hoo, praised the award winners for their outstanding performance.

The group winners comprised three educational psychologists, Mrs Wong Chiu Man-chong, Mrs Ng Shing Pui-ying and Mrs Lucinda Wong Leung Sai-man, and two educational counsellors, Miss Judy Wong Chi-tack and Mrs Chan Hui Siu-king.

They were recommended for their services rendered to the students and teachers at THKCWC Fung Yiu King Memorial Secondary School after the Pat Sin Leng disaster.

Mrs Wong Chiu Man-chong said: "We worked out a preliminary plan on the day of the tragedy and visited the school the next day. We assess the need of the school and conduct debriefing sessions for all teachers to help them in handling their grief and emotions.

"Bereavement counselling and on-site supportive services were also rendered."

Miss Wong Chi-tack said: "Now we still maintain a close working relationship with the school and visits are paid to pick up cases with delayed reaction."

Their commitment and positive attitude towards work were highly commended by their section head.

They were awarded a certificate of merit showing their names and photo-stands with the logo of the department.

For the other five awardees, they were each presented with a meritorious certificate and a watch embossing with the department's logo.

They were Education Officer of Belilios Public School, Mr Lau Kwok-kee; Assistant Education Officer of Helen Liang Memorial Secondary School (Sha Tin), Mr Leung Kim-hung; Clerical Officer I of NTHYK Southern District Secondary School, Mrs Tsang Leung Shuet-fun; Clerical Officer I of Central and Western District Education Office, Mr So Siu-wing; and Workman II of Advisory Inspectorate Division's General Office, Mr Lee Tat-cheong.

Apart from running the Audio-visual Department of the school efficiently, Mr Lau was awarded for excellent work in setting up the Computer Department, School Administration Management System and Student Information Management System.

He also contributed a lot in a large-scale project of installing air-conditioning in the school hall and setting up an E-mail system with a partner school in the United Kingdom.

Mr Leung was commended for his dedication to education and his high self-motivation in providing an improved working environment and devising work procedures for students and colleagues.

Mrs Tsang was nominated for her efficient work, quality customer service, dedication to work and willingness to offer help.

Mr So was efficient, resourceful and helpful. He contributed to the improvement of the office environment. He also take the initiative to learn Putonghua and computer in order to provide better service and assist office computerisation.

Mr Lee was conscientious, meticulous and industrious. He was also praised for his efforts to strengthen the security of the office.

End

#### Scholarships for agriculture and fisheries studies

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Eligible students are invited to apply for financial assistance under the Agricultural Products Scholarship Fund and the Marine Fish Scholarship Fund.

The assistance can be in the form of scholarship, grants and interest-free loans from the two funds which are administered by the Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD).

A spokesman for the Agricultural Product and Marine Fish Scholarship Funds Advisory Committee said application forms were now available from AFD Headquarters on the 12th floor of Canton Road Government Offices, 393 Canton Road, and from various District Agricultural and Fisheries Liaison Offices.

Applications for tertiary education subsidies in the new academic year will close on July 20 while those for secondary school students will close on August 15.

The spokesman said the funds were set up in 1978 to help people wishing to serve the local agriculture and fisheries industries or related trades on completion of their studies, and also those employed in the industries wishing to pursue further training.

"Another aim of the funds is to provide financial assistance to children or dependants of farming and fishing families to complete their tertiary and secondary schooling," he said.

"Applicants in tertiary education should be Hong Kong residents under 30 years of age while secondary school applicants should be students in Form four to seven.

"The awards will be tenable at any university in Hong Kong, any acceptable overseas institution and any secondary school in the territory."

Approved courses for tertiary education include those on agriculture, veterinary science, marine science and biology or any applied science directly relevant to the local agriculture or fisheries and related trades.

Enquiries about the funds and application procedures can be made on 2733 2244 during office hours.

End