



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

Friday, November 15, 1996

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Transcript of the Governor's media session	1
Government committed to combating tax evasion: FS	3
SFS stresses the need to sharpen HK's competitive edge	5
Land sales revenue set to exceed \$36 billion this year	6
Prices on the community electronic trading service approved	7
Electronic restrained textiles export licences fee approved	8
APEC Meeting on Science & Technology	9
New SWAC Chairman appointed	10
Empty taxis using Cross Harbour Tunnel	11
Air quality report for October released	12
Domestic export statistics by industrial origin	13

/Student Discipline

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SECTION OF THE POLICE FORCE
HONG KONG

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Student Discipline Section renders support to schools	16
Wan Chai to hold road safety carnival tomorrow	17
Public invited to join country parks liaison group meeting	18
Man Kam To Food Control Office to be open on Monday	19
Another contract for Shenzhen River project awarded	20
Tai Mo Shan weather radar station building tenders invited	20
Two lots of land for auction	21
Tai Po government land for sale by tender	22
Dragon design aerogramme to be issued next Friday	22
Gurkha colonel fires noon day gun	23
Sea Cadets' final parade at HMS Tamar	24
Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations	24

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, at the Kai Tak Airport on his return from London this (Friday) evening:

Governor: Sorry to keep you waiting. I just had to do a quick change because I am going off to a Police Beating the Retreat.

I have had a very good, if extremely rushed, visit to Europe. It began on Monday with a speech I made about Hong Kong and Asia to the Confederation of British Industry Conference in Harrogate; then I went to Paris to make a speech and to have high-level meetings with officials, including the Foreign Minister and the President of the Senate; and I then went on to Bonn where again I made a speech, met the Chancellor, the Foreign Minister, the Vice Minister at the Interior Ministry, and a number of Parliamentarians.

While I was, of course, setting out the case for rational optimism about the future of Hong Kong, what I was also doing in particular was pressing on France and Germany - which are of course two of the biggest and most important players in the European Union - the case for visa-free access for people from Hong Kong after 1997. And I was pressing, in particular, that the European Union should leave it to individual member states to decide what to do about SAR passport holders, rather than add SAR passports to what is called the Common Visa List, which would in effect be an attempt to get all of the European Union countries to insist on a visa. That is something that I have argued strongly against, pointing out what a very bad signal it would send to everybody in Hong Kong about Europe's future relationship with Hong Kong.

I received a very courteous and friendly hearing at the highest level and I think it was important to be able to register these strong arguments with Chancellor Kohl and with the two Foreign Ministers.

Question: Mr Patten, Qian Qichen this morning said the selection process for the Chief Executive does not mean the end of democracy but the beginning of democracy as the British Government has never consulted the opinions of Hong Kong people over the selection of a governor. So what do you think on this? And Qian Qichen and Lu Ping, they are now in town, would you manage to meet them tonight? If not, are you disappointed?

Governor: I think, actually, you are wrong on the second point. I think they are in the process of leaving town. But shall we have a pact on these questions? You know perfectly well that the person to ask that question to is Mr Qian Qichen or Director Lu Ping. You know perfectly well that I and the Chief Secretary have always been extremely courteous and open in saying that we would meet senior leaders from China whenever they liked. It is senior leaders from China who appear to have diaries which are too busy, too blocked, to do what everybody in Hong Kong would like them to do. So you put the questions to them and I am sure you will get interesting answers.

As to the first point, I think that people in Hong Kong will, over the course of the next weeks, reach their own decisions about the openness and the transparency of the system for selecting a Chief Executive. If this is a good time for democracy, then perhaps the best way of underling that would be for Mr Qian to make it absolutely clear that the present Legislature will continue until the end of its natural term, rather than thrown away and replaced by a rubber-stamp.

On the other hand, if Mr Qian has it in mind to introduce electoral arrangements which are even more democratic than ours, I am sure the whole community would be interested in listening to that.

But I hope that Mr Qian and Director Lu enjoyed their visit to Hong Kong. I think it is the first - I hope the first of many visits which Mr Qian will make to Hong Kong - and I am sure they will have seen for themselves what a splendidly successful and stable community this is. I hope that they will get courteous receptions whenever they come and I very much hope, as well, that they will be able, during the course of their visits, to talk to the whole range of community opinion and not just some people from the community.

Question: Mr Patten, how do you think about the protest today outside the Convention Centre and why do the police have to move the protesters out from the Convention Centre? And is it the pressure from the Chinese Government?

Governor: You know perfectly well that that is a ludicrous thing to suggest. You know that perfectly well. Do you seriously suppose that I or the Chief Secretary would interfere in the decisions made about policing by the Commissioner of Police and his senior officers? I hope you won't start giving the impression that the way Hong Kong conducts its affairs, the way Hong Kong, for example, polices public assemblies and public demonstrations, is going to be changed by interventions from anyone. It is not.

Now let me reply to the first part of your question and say that freedom of assembly is allowed under the law, but it must be within the law. If people have breached the law, then they will be charged and taken to court. I don't know whether that has happened. But I leave these matters to the police operating within the terms of the law and operating according to the International Covenants and the Bill of Rights. That is how things will continue to be, as far as I am concerned, right up to midnight on 30 June 1997. Have no doubt about that whatsoever. And I very much hope they will be like that after 30 June 1997 because that is what is supposed to happen under the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

Question: The result of today's first round of the selection process revealed that Tung has got over 200 votes - 206; that T L Yang has 82; and Peter Woo has 54. Is that of any surprise to you, the results?

Governor: I do not think it is proper for me to comment on these matters. I hope that the whole selection process will be carried out in a way which the community regards as satisfactory and open. Thank you very much indeed. Sorry to keep you waiting.

End

Government committed to combating tax evasion: FS

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The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, said that the Government was firmly committed to combating tax evasion and minimising opportunities for tax avoidance.

Speaking at the annual luncheon of the Board of Review of the Inland Revenue today (Friday), Mr Tsang said the tax system in Hong Kong was simple and there was no excuse for not paying them in full.

To fight tax evasion, the Inland Revenue Department had set up nine field audit teams and had collected more than \$3 billion in back taxes and penalties over the past two years, Mr Tsang said.

"We expect to receive a further \$1.8 billion this year because of their work," he added.

On the use of service companies to avoid or reduce salaries tax liabilities, Mr Tsang said the Government would strictly enforce the new legislation on the books.

"Since the enactment of the legislation summer last year, the Inland Revenue Department has re-assessed 310 cases involving disguised employment and over 150 cases involving the payment of inflated management fees by professional firms," he said.

"As a result, the Department has recovered about \$70 million in tax. There are about 1,000 further cases still under assessment."

Mr Tsang said the Government was also applying its attention and energy to the new legislation requiring proper and adequate business records for tax purposes.

In 1994 and 1995, the Government conducted two surveys on business establishments. The results recorded a score of 85 per cent of business establishments maintaining adequate records in 1995 compared with 60 per cent in 1994. This could be attributed to the legislation introduced in mid-1995 specifying minimum record standards for tax purposes and which increased the penalty for non-compliance.

"This is an encouraging sign, and we will strive to ensure that the number gets as close as possible to 100%."

To strengthen the system for the collection of tax debts, the Government would streamline the procedures relating to the imposition of the five per cent surcharge on tax overdue cases.

"We will also impose a further 10 per cent surcharge on tax debts overdue for more than six months, in line with the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Council," he said.

"All these measures show our determination to fight tax evasion and reduce the scope for tax avoidance," he added.

Turning to taxation development in Hong Kong, Mr Tsang noted that it was important to publish decided cases of tax appeal for the information of taxpayers and tax practitioners.

"We are in the process of putting new decisions of the High Court on tax appeal cases on the Inland Revenue Department's homepage on the Internet," he said.

"Our next step will be to put the Board of Review decisions on the Internet as well." he added.

End

SFS stresses the need to sharpen HK's competitive edge

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The Secretary for Financial Services, Mr Rafael Hui, said the Government was committed to ensuring that Hong Kong's firm foundation would continuously be improved in keeping with developments in the financial markets internationally.

Speaking at the Hong Kong Management Association Theme Year Talk on Finance this (Friday) evening, Mr Hui said Hong Kong was and would be sharpening its competitive edge in financial intermediation in the face of increasing regional competition.

He stressed that Hong Kong could not be complacent and would need to continue with investments into the future if it was to continue to be successful.

Mr Hui said these investments included physical infrastructure, telecommunications, human resources and training.

"All such investments need to be financed and this is where financial intermediation features," he said.

Mr Hui said financial intermediation presented as one of the major challenges for Hong Kong which would be featured prominently as a leading international financial centre in the region.

Mr Hui noted that most Asian economies were improving their financial "prisms", which would in turn contribute to more effective financial intermediation, and hence greater economic efficiency.

The financial "prisms", according to Mr Hui, is the five pre-conditions for effective financial intermediation:

"P" stands for abundance and sophistication in financial PRODUCTS;

"R" stands for effectiveness in RISK assessment;

"I" stands for robustness in market INFRASTRUCTURE;

"S" stands for SUPERVISORY prudence; and

"M" stands for MONETARY stability.

In his speech, Mr Hui also explained in length the "prisms" in Hong Kong.

End

Land sales revenue set to exceed \$36 billion this year

* * * * *

Revenue from land transactions this year is likely to exceed the forecast figure of \$36 billion, the Director of Lands, Mr Bob Pope, said today (Friday).

Addressing a seminar on "Investing in Hong Kong's Property Market: 1997 and Beyond", Mr Pope said that in keeping with previous years' estimates, the figure was shown to be too conservative and indications currently were that our revenue would exceed this figure.

He said that of the \$36 billion forecast revenue from land transactions, only \$13 billion, or 36 per cent, would come from sales by public auction or tender.

"In recent years, due to the large developments above the airport railway stations serving the new airport there has been a larger amount of land disposed of by private treaty grant to the Mass Transit Railway Corporation who in turn tender out development contracts with consortia of local and overseas developers.

"Total revenue from land transactions in the past five years has been a remarkable \$157 billion of which \$80 billion, or 50 per cent came from sales by auction, \$31 billion from sales by private treaty and \$46 billion from lease modifications and exchanges," Mr Pope said.

Looking ahead, Mr Pope said the long term prospects still look good.

"Property supply figures are expected to increase from 1997 onwards. Major infrastructure projects spanning 1992 to 2001 are under way or planned with the \$158.2 billion airport and related road and rail systems entering their final stages.

"Hong Kong will maintain its position as a major financial and business centre and transport hub for the region and as a result, the property and stock markets will remain strong and real long-term growth in values well into the next century can be expected," Mr Pope said.

End

Prices on the community electronic trading service approved

* * * * *

A Government spokesman announced today (Friday) that the proposed prices submitted by Tradelink Electronic Document Services Ltd relating to the provision of the Community Electronic Trading Service (CETS) have been approved by the Governor in Council.

As part of Government's agreement with Tradelink, the company has been granted the exclusive right to provide services through CETS for handling a range of Government trade-related transactions. Prices to be charged by the company for the exclusive services would be subject to the prior approval of Government.

"Tradelink will charge the prices approved when it commences its commercial phase in January 1997," the spokesman said.

At present, about 50 companies are using the CETS to apply for Restrained Textiles Export Licences (RTEL). Their feedback is being used by Tradelink and the Government to fine-tune the systems before full commercial launch of the RTEL service in January 1997.

Testing for the Trade Declaration (TDEC) service has started and the current plan is to launch a commercial TDEC service in April 1997.

"The commencement of Tradelink's commercial phase is an important event for the Hong Kong business community. From that time on, the use of paper forms will be phased out in favour of electronic trading, the preferred method of conducting business internationally," the spokesman added.

End

Electronic restrained textiles export licences fee approved

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A licence fee of \$132 for Restrained Textiles Export Licences (RTEL) applied through the Community Electronic Trading Service (CETS) has been approved by the Governor in Council.

The service, to be launched commercially in January 1997, is provided by Tradelink, the company which was granted the exclusive right to provide services through CETS for handling a range of Government trade-related transactions.

The new licence fee, proposed under the Import and Export (Fees) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 1996, will be gazetted on November 22.

A Government spokesman said currently, the licence fee for paper RTEL applications submitted to the Government is \$202. This licence fee will continue to apply if the applications are submitted to the Government in paper.

"The licence fee payable to Government for each RTEL applied through the CETS will be \$132," the spokesman said.

"Taken together with Tradelink's charge of \$70, the combined Government and Tradelink charges for each RTEL applied through the CETS will not be more than the licence fee payable to the Government in respect of applications submitted in paper."

The spokesman said it is Government's intention that the relevant receiving counters in Trade Department, which handles paper applications, will all be closed by December 1998.

From January 1999 onwards, RTEL applications will all be processed through the CETS.

"The new licence fee aims at encouraging the use of the CETS in the meantime," the spokesman added.

End

APEC Meeting on Science & Technology

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The Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue, participated in the Second Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministers' Conference on Regional Science and Technology Cooperation in Seoul, South Korea, on November 13 and 14.

The Conference, chaired by Dr Koo Bohn-Young, Korean Minister of Science and Technology, was attended by 18 APEC economies.

At the Conference, member economies shared their experience regarding recent developments in their science and technology policies and systems.

Miss Yue, in her keynote speech, recounted Hong Kong's experience in economic restructuring, and thus the need to focus more on higher value-added and higher technology economic activities.

Miss Yue said that improving technology information flow, improving researcher exchange, transparency of regulatory framework and facilitation of joint research, are closest to our hearts.

'They are of particular relevance to Hong Kong as an economy committed to free trade, free market and free enterprise, and where government acts as a supporter and facilitator of the economic process,' she said.

Ministers of the 18 economies also discussed means to enhance researcher mobility and creativity, as well as the need to promote gender equality in science and technology endeavours.

At the end of the Conference, Ministers issued a Seoul Declaration reaffirming member economies' commitment to develop individual plans to promote interest in science and technology and encourage further technological exchange by the year 2010, and welcomed the offer by Mexico to host the next Science and Technology Ministers' Conference in 1998.

The 18 APEC economies are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and the United States.

End

New SWAC Chairman appointed

* * * * *

The Government announced today (Friday) the appointment of Mr Peter Wong Hong-yuen as the Chairman of the Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC) for a term of two years with effect from November 6, 1996.

Mr Wong, a former Legislative Council Member, served as a Member of SWAC in the 1980s and currently holds a number of important posts including Chairman of the Advisory Council on the Environment and Board Member of both the Housing and Hospital Authorities.

His interest in social welfare matters is shown in his active involvement with various non-governmental organisations. He replaces Mr Eric Li Ka-cheung who has served as Chairman of the Committee for four years.

The Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, said she was extremely grateful to Mr Wong for accepting appointment as Chairman in addition to his many other duties and expressed confidence that he would show great skill and dedication in this new role.

Mrs Fok also paid tribute to Mr Li for his hard work and dedication while serving on the Committee. She was pleased to note that Mr Li would continue to play an active role in social welfare matters.

Also announced was the appointment of three new members and re-appointment of three incumbent members to SWAC.

The three new members are Miss Elle Shum Mun-ling, Miss Deborah Wan Lai-yau and Mr Stephen Yau How-boa. Together with an incumbent member, Mr Stephen Ng Chi-wing, they have been appointed for two years with effect from December 1, 1996.

Miss Elsie Leung Oi-sie and Professor Wong Hoi-kwok have been re-appointed as members for one year, also with effect from December 1, 1996.

The main functions of SWAC are to keep social welfare services under continuous review and to advise the Government on all matters of social welfare policy.

The above appointments were published in the Gazette today.

End

Empty taxis using Cross Harbour Tunnel

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In response to press enquiries, a spokesman for the Transport Department (TD) said today (Friday) that the department's recent surveys showed an average of about 12 per cent of empty taxis used the Cross Harbour Tunnel (CHT) from 11 pm to 7 am on weekdays.

The survey recorded nine per cent of empty taxis used CHT on November 7, 13 per cent and 12 per cent on November 13 and 14 respectively during the same period.

The spokesman was responding to a recent survey done by taximen on empty taxis using the CHT claiming that the vacancy rate averaged about 30 per cent between 11 pm on November 13 and 7 am the next day.

The spokesman added that TD's survey found the vacancy rate was as low as 4.6 per cent at 11 pm and slowly climbing up as the hour grew. The highest rate was noted on November 14 between 6 am and 7 am when 30 per cent of taxis using the CHT were empty.

For reference purpose, listed below are average percentages of empty taxis using CHT based on results of TD's various surveys:

Daytime	: 11%
Night time	: 9% - 13%
24 hours	: 10%

The spokesman said: "The findings are very much in line with our earlier survey results which showed the vacancy rate was between 10 per cent and 15 per cent on the average for a normal day although the percentage might be a bit higher for some special hours."

End

Air quality report for October released

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The Environmental Protection Department today (Friday) released air quality information for October, 1996.

Except on one occasion in the month, air quality levels in October were within the 24-hour air quality objectives (AQO) limits.

On October 3, the total suspended particulates concentration was 290 microgrammes per cubic metre at a roadside air quality monitoring station at Mong Kok. It was 12 percent higher than the AQO. The levels of respirable suspended particulates and nitrogen dioxide levels were also high, though not exceeding the relevant AQOs.

The report includes the monitoring results from Mong Kok, Central/Western and Kwai Chung, which respectively represent three important land use types in the territory:

- * locations close to road traffic in built-up areas,
- * combined commercial and residential districts, and
- * districts close to industrial areas.

Air pollutants reported include sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, total suspended particulates, and the respirable suspended particulates. All these pollutants can affect respiratory health in sufficient concentration.

Air pollution originated from various sources, including combustion, industrial and construction processes. In terms of impact on local air quality, motor vehicle exhaust is the most important source of nitrogen dioxide and airborne particulate matter, especially the smaller respirable particles.

End

Domestic export statistics by industrial origin

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The four major industries of textiles; wearing apparel; machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components; and consumer electrical and electronic products together accounted for 70% of Hong Kong's total domestic exports of manufactured goods in the third quarter of 1996, according to statistics released today (Friday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

In the third quarter of 1996, domestic exports of consumer electrical and electronic products; machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components; wearing apparel; and textiles decreased by 21%, 18%, 9% and 4% over a year earlier to \$6.5 billion, \$8.7 billion, \$11 billion and \$13.7 billion respectively.

More notable decreases in the value of domestic exports were also recorded for professional and optical equipment (-\$554 million or -13%) and basic metals and fabricated metal products (-\$186 million or -7%).

For the transport equipment industry, although the change in absolute value was not as large, a marked percentage decrease of 48% was recorded.

On the other hand, a notable increase in the value of domestic exports was recorded for food (+\$125 million or +19%).

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

In comparison, the HSIC is more related to production processes whereas the 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 table which is obtainable from the General Economic Surveys Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2805 6642.

A table showing more detailed breakdowns of similar statistics for major manufacturing industries is also included in the Hong Kong External Trade, September 1996, report.

**Domestic exports of manufactured goods classified by industrial origin
for the third quarter of 1996**

\$ Million

Industrial origin of the commodities exported	Merchandise domestic exports			
	1996 3rd qtr.	1995 3rd qtr.	Value change	% change
Food	793.4	668.6	+124.8	+18.7
Beverages	161.9	167.5	-5.6	-3.3
Tobacco manufactures	512.4	518.2	-5.8	-1.1
Textiles (including knitting)	13,678.6	14,222.8	-544.3	-3.8
Wearing apparel, except footwear	11,047.1	12,138.5	-1,091.4	-9.0
Leather and leather products, except footwear and wearing apparel	359.6	414.9	-55.4	-13.3
Footwear, except rubber, plastic and wooden footwear	10.3	15.2	-4.9	-32.2
Wood and cork products, furniture and fixtures	72.9	76.7	-3.7	-4.8
Paper and paper products, printing and publishing	2,299.1	2,400.0	-100.8	-4.2
Chemicals and chemical products	2,132.0	2,071.0	+61.1	+2.9
Products of petroleum and coal	8.3	7.3	+1.1	+14.9
Rubber products	15.8	17.8	-2.1	-11.5
Plastic products	1,151.5	1,240.9	-89.3	-7.2
Non-metallic mineral products, except products of petroleum and coal	83.2	123.5	-40.2	-32.6
Basic metals and fabricated metal products	2,329.3	2,515.7	-186.3	-7.4
Machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components	8,710.2	10,670.8	-1,960.5	-18.4
Consumer electrical and electronic products	6,545.2	8,242.1	-1,696.8	-20.6
Transport equipment	20.6	39.9	-19.2	-48.3
Professional and optical equipment	3,785.1	4,339.3	-554.3	-12.8
Other manufacturing industries	3,336.2	3,288.9	+47.3	+1.4
Total	57,052.9	63,179.4	-6,126.5	-9.7

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

November 1996

End

Student Discipline Section renders support to schools

* * * * *

Heads and discipline masters/mistresses of secondary schools receiving professional support from the Student Discipline Section (SDS) of the Education Department are invited to participate in the regional network meetings.

Four regional network meetings organised for schools on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Territories East and New Territories West will be held on November 20, November 21, November 27 and November 28 respectively.

"The regional meetings aims at providing schools in the same region with information on the relevant resources available," Chief Student Discipline Officer, Mrs Ruth Lau, said today (Friday).

"Participants will share their experiences in student discipline work and explore resources available in the region.

"Outreach social workers are also invited to brief participants on the services they render to help students spend their time in a more purposeful way during lunch hour and after school."

She added that since November 8, the SDS had been liaising with and visiting schools joining the support service.

"Student discipline officers also give talks in one of the series of seminars organised by the Hong Kong Association for Student Discipline and Counselling Teachers held between October 19 and November 23," she said.

The response to the two seminars on Positive Student Discipline in Schools organised by the SDS last month (October) was very encouraging.

Representatives from 363 schools, or over 78 per cent of secondary schools in the territory, attended the seminars.

An information folder has been sent to those schools which have not attended the seminars.

As at November 11, a total of 89 secondary schools have opted for general mode of support and nine schools requested for intensive support.

Among them, seven are government, 86 aided and five private schools.

The SDS aims at providing professional support, guidance and training to secondary schools on matters relating to student discipline.

It also assists schools in reviewing and formulating related strategies and programmes.

Support was offered to all secondary schools, and it is not limited to schools with clusters of academically weak students, Mrs Lau added.

Besides consulting the relevant advisory bodies and organisations on discipline, the Psychological Services (Professional Support) Section, Student Guidance Section, and Careers and Guidance Section of the Education Department have contributed a lot in setting up the SDS.

Student discipline officers of the SDS are experienced discipline masters/mistresses recruited from government schools with an average of seven years' experience in discipline work.

Some of them had taught in teaching primary, aided and private secondary schools.

End

Wan Chai to hold road safety carnival tomorrow

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Members of the public are welcome to take part in a colourful carnival to be held at Southorn Playground, Wan Chai, tomorrow (Saturday) to get a better understanding of road safety.

There will be an exhibition of classic cars, a Road Safety Town, game stalls, a magic show, marching band performance, lion dance and singing to educate the public on the importance of observing traffic rules.

Participants can also take part in quizzes to test their knowledge of road safety.

Community leaders will also tour the district in an open-top double-decker to distribute to pedestrians leaflets and tissue packs printed with road safety messages.

Officiating at the carnival's opening ceremony tomorrow are the Wan Chai District Officer, Mrs Elaine Tang; the Chairperson of Wan Chai District Board, Mrs Peggy Lam; the Wan Chai District Commander of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force, Mr A K McLoughlin; and the Chairman of the Wan Chai District Board's Traffic and Transport Committee, Mr Stephen Ng.

The carnival is jointly organised by the Wan Chai District Road Safety Campaign Working Group and the Royal Hong Kong Police, with the assistance of the Wan Chai District Office and sponsored by the Wan Chai District Board. Admission is free.

End

Public invited to join country parks liaison group meeting

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Countryside visitors with good suggestions in mind to improve services and facilities at the territory's country parks are invited to enrol as participants in the coming Country Parks Visitor Liaison Group meeting in January next year.

Other members of the public with first-hand experience of country parks are also welcome to take part in the discussions on January 18 (Saturday) with Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) staff on matters relating to these public scenic parks.

An AFD spokesman said the coming meeting would be the seventh round of discussions of the liaison group since its establishment in late 1993.

He said: "The previous meetings had proved useful as there were direct and frank exchanges of views between participants and AFD on services provided at country parks and on suggestions concerning the provision of these services.

"We hope that participants would put forward more suggestions in the January 18 meeting which will be held between 2.30 and 4.30 pm at the Ranger Head Office, Shing Mun Country Park."

Those interested to take part can collect enrolment forms at AFD's Country Parks Management Office at Room 1462, Canton Road Government Offices, 393 Canton Road, Kowloon. Forms are also obtainable from the Country Parks Information Post at Mui Wo Pier, visitor centres at country parks in Aberdeen, Plover Cove, Shing Mun, Clear Water Bay and Tai Mo Shan as well as in the Lions Nature Education Centre, Sai Kung.

Completed forms should be returned by mail to the Country and Marine Parks Authority or in person to any of the country park visitor centres on or before December 28. Successful applicants will be notified by post before January 8.

End

Man Kam To Food Control Office to be open on Monday

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The Man Kam To Food Control Office set up by the Department of Health to strengthen surveillance of food items imported from China will be officially open on Monday (November 18).

Funded and supported by the two municipal councils, the purposely-built checkpoint comprises, among other things, a laboratory capable of conducting confirmatory analyses for vegetables.

Officiating at the opening ceremony will be the Director of Health cum Chairman of the Hygiene Services Committee (HSC), Dr Margaret Chan.

Other officiating guests include HSC members and Urban Councillors, Mr Joseph Chan and Mr Wong Kwok-hing; HSC members and Regional Councillors Mr Ting Yin-wah and Mr Leung Che-cheung; and the Director of Architectural Services, Mr Chan Yat-sun.

Following the opening ceremony will be a tour of the various facilities of the Man Kam To Food Control Office.

End

Another contract for Shenzhen River project awarded

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The Drainage Services Department has awarded a \$126-million contract for the Stage II, Phase I works of the Shenzhen River regulation project.

The contract was signed today (Friday) by the Assistant Director of Drainage Services (Operations and Maintenance), Mr Victor Bradley, and a representative of the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation.

Speaking after signing the contract, Mr Bradley said the contract mainly comprised the reprovisioning of the border road between Lok Ma Chau and Tam Kon Chau and its security facilities.

"A 3.6 kilometres long new border road, security fence and ancillary drainage works will be constructed," he said.

The works, said Mr Bradley, were to provide land for the main river improvement works under Stage II of the Shenzhen River regulation project which included the widening and deepening of 6.6 kilometres of the river to reduce flooding in northern New Territories and Shenzhen City.

"Works on the contract will commence next week for completion in 22 months. Measures will be implemented to minimise the impact on the environment," he said.

End

Tai Mo Shan weather radar station building tenders invited

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The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of a weather radar station at Tai Mo Shan, New Territories.

The scope of works covers the construction of a single storey main building with a structural steel radome tower, two single storey ancillary buildings for generator and switch rooms including all associated building services installations, drainage and external works.

Works will commence in February 1997 for completion in April 1998.

Forms of tender and further particulars can be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

The tender offer will close at noon on Friday, December 6.

End

Two lots of land for auction

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Two pieces of government land will be put up for auction at 2.30 pm on December 11 (Wednesday) at the Concert Hall of Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui, it is gazetted today (Friday).

The first lot, located at Electric Road in North Point, has an area of about 1,222.6 square metres. It is intended for non-industrial purposes, excluding godown, warehouse, hotel, service apartment, petrol filling station and private residential use.

The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 11,000 square metres on or before December 31, 2000.

Covering an area of about 222 square metres, the second lot is situated at the junction of Tseuk Luk Street and Hong Keung Street in San Po Kong.

The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 999 square metres on or before December 31, 1999.

The lowest three floors of the building to be developed should be used for non-industrial purposes, excluding godown, hotel, service apartment and petrol filling station. The remaining floors will be for private residential use.

Full particulars and conditions of sale can be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong; and the District Lands Offices, Kowloon, Yau Ma Tei Car Park Building, 10th floor, 250 Shanghai Street, Kowloon.

Conditions of sale will also be available at the District Lands Offices of Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan, Sai Kung, Kwai Tsing, Tai Po, North and Islands.

End

Tai Po government land for sale by tender

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The Lands Department is inviting tenders for the sale of two pieces of government land in Area 12, Tai Po.

With an area of about 1,190 square metres and 1,410 square metres respectively, the lots are intended for use as petrol and diesel filling stations and for vehicle servicing or lubricating facilities.

The closing date for submission of tenders is noon on Friday, December 13.

Tender forms, tender notices and conditions can be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong, and the District Lands Office/Kowloon, 10th floor, Yau Ma Tei Car Park Building, 250 Shanghai Street, Kowloon.

Tender documents will also be available at the District Lands Offices of Sha Tin, Tai Po, North, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Tuen Mun, Sai Kung and Islands.

End

Dragon design aerogramme to be issued next Friday

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The Postmaster General, Mr Robert Footman, announced today (Friday) that the Post Office will issue a dragon design aerogramme with the new denomination of \$2.3 on November 22 (Friday).

This is a pictorial aerogramme with a dragon design feature released in 1992.

A hand-back service will be provided on November 22 at all post offices for these aerogrammes bearing an address.

Aerogrammes tendered for the hand-back service must be sealed. There is, however, no objection if the aerogramme tendered for the hand-back service is sealed on one side and the other two side flaps are folded and not sealed.

End

Gurkha colonel fires noon day gun

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Lieutenant Colonel Bijaykumar Rawat, the Commanding Officer of the last Gurkha Infantry Battalion in Hong Kong and the first Nepalese ever to command a British Gurkha Infantry Battalion is to have a surprise opportunity to fire the famous Noon Day Gun today (Friday).

As the last Gurkha Infantry Battalion to be based in Hong Kong, 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles (1RGR) departs the territory tomorrow, firing the Noon Day Gun is an appropriate farewell gesture.

The firing of the Noon Day Gun is an abiding Hong Kong tradition which was initiated by a former Senior Naval Officer Hong Kong. As a punishment, he ordered Jardines to fire a daily gun as a time-check for the ships in port after they had upset him by firing a salute to their own Taipan, who was entering the harbour aboard his yacht.

The original Noon Day Gun was lost during the war and the one now used was a gift to Jardines from the Royal Navy. A three-pounder Hotchkiss manufactured before World War I, it is identical to the three saluting guns mounted for many years at the former Royal Navy base at HMS Tamar in Central (now the Prince of Wales Barracks).

The last known examples of their type, the three Royal Navy guns have been returned to Britain as museum pieces, leaving the Jardines gun as the only known operational weapon of its kind anywhere in the world.

Lt Col Bijaykumar Rawat was born in 1955. He enlisted into the Brigade of Gurkhas in October 1972. He was commissioned in 1981 from the Royal Academy Sandhurst and was awarded the Sword of Honour. He spent some time in the United Kingdom and returned to regimental duty in Hong Kong in March 1972 as a company commander and served with the 10 Gurkha Rifles. He was appointed Second-in-Command of the 1st Battalion in August 1994 to September 1995 and returned as Commanding Officer on December 8, 1995.

End

Sea Cadets' final parade at HMS Tamar

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More than 200 young Sea Cadets will be on parade this Sunday (November 17), when they take part in their last annual divisions at HMS Tamar.

HMS Tamar's Commanding Officer, Commander Ross Thoburn, will inspect the divisions.

This is the last time the 8-14 year old boys and girls will parade at the Naval Base, on Stonecutters Island, which is due to be decommissioned next April in preparation for the drawdown of British Forces and the handover of sovereignty to China.

The Sea Cadets undergo drill instruction and spend days at sea with the Hong Kong Squadron and this year, they will participate in the Garrison's final Open Days, on November 23 and 24, where they will be helping with crowd control and escorting visitors on board the Squadron's patrol craft.

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	2,309	0930	+588
Closing balance in the account	2,396	1000	+588
Change attributable to:		1100	+591
Money market activity	+577	1200	+591
LAF today	- 490	1500	+591
		1600	+577

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.3 *-0.1* 15.11.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/MTRC notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.92	2 years	2811	5.72	100.15	5.72
1 month	4.92	3 years	3910	6.28	100.81	6.06
3 months	4.94	5 years	5109	7.32	103.30	6.61
6 months	5.01	7 years	7308	7.24	102.43	6.90
12 months	5.25	10 years	1610	7.37	102.21	7.18
		5 years	M503	7.35	102.04	6.95

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$7,664 million

Closed November 15, 1996

End