



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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The way forward for civic education

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The Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) will formulate its long term and short term strategies for the next ten years to create a climate conducive to the nurturing of "ideal citizens" and promotion of civic values, said CPCE Chairman, Mr Moses Cheng today (Saturday).

Speaking at the "Civic Education 2000 - The Way Forward and Implementation" Conference, Mr Cheng noted that from the perspective of civic education, an ideal citizen should have acquired the basic knowledge on civic values, possessed the necessary skills to develop critical thinking as well as having a positive attitude of willing to play a constructive role in the civic mission of the community, the nation and the world.

Noting that the very purpose of the conference was to draw on the collective experience of front-line civic education workers, Mr Cheng said the CPCE would continue to benefit from the diversity of ideas provided by them in formulating its future plans.

"The CPCE has all along valued the collaborative efforts of community organisations in the promotion of civic education and will continue to provide support to them through the Community Participation Scheme," Mr Cheng said.

On the achievement of the CPCE over the past ten years, Mr Cheng said there had been a rise in the general level of civic awareness in HK as a result of the concerted effort of the CPCE, Education Department, schools, voluntary agencies and community organisations.

Through its Community Participation Scheme, the CPCE has provided sponsorship totalling about \$11.5 million to over 350 projects that helped to disseminate civic education concepts to various sectors of the community.

Mr Cheng noted that with an increase in financial resources in the last couple of years, the CPCE had produced a number of resource materials and teaching kits on various civic education topics for use by education workers and the public.

"I am delighted to note that more and more people from different walks of life are visiting the Committee's Civic Education Resource Centre to obtain these materials.

"Over 300,000 copies of various booklets on the Basic Law published by the CPCE were distributed to the public through the Centre and District Offices within a few months in the latter half of last year," he said.

Opened by the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, today's conference was organised to commemorate CPCE's tenth anniversary. About 400 front-line civic education workers attended the conference to share their views on the way forward for civic education in HK.

Dr Man Sze-wai and Dr Lee Wing-on, guest speakers from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong, also spoke on the occasion.

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Special stamps on the year of the Ox to be issued

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The Postmaster General Mr Robert Footman said today (Saturday) that the set of special stamps on the theme of the Year of the Ox will be issued on February 27, 1997.

There will be four denominations: \$1.30, \$2.50, \$3.10 and \$5. A souvenir sheet incorporating the four stamps will also be issued. A stamp booklet containing six each of the \$1.30 and \$3.10 stamps will be available at \$26.40 each.

A beautifully designed presentation pack containing the four stamps will be available for sale at \$20 each at all post offices as from February 27.

A restriction of two stamp booklets, twenty souvenir sheets and five sheets of stamps of each denomination (viz. 250 sets of stamps) per customer queuing will be imposed on the first day of issue.

The stamps were originally planned for release on January 17, 1997 but was postponed to February 27 due to problems in printing.

Corrigendum sheets will be available at all post offices as from February 24 for customers to amend the date of issue printed on the First Day Covers and stamp booklets.

Customers who have ordered serviced first day covers through the Local Advance Order Service are advised that the revised collection period of the serviced covers will be from March 20 to April 17. Customers who have ordered their stamps through the Local Standing Order Service may collect their orders from their designated post offices as from March 3.

On the first day of issue, hand-back service will be provided at all post offices to official and privately-made covers bearing indication of the first day of issue on 27 February. A special postmark will also be introduced. The GPO-1 hand stamp will also be available for hand-back service at the 19 philatelic offices.

As on previous occasions of first day issue of new stamps, the following 23 post offices will open at 8 a.m. on February 27:

Hong Kong

General Post Office, Aberdeen, Shau Kei Wan, Sai Ying Pun, Tsat Tse Mui, Wan Chai, Wah Fu

Outlying Islands

Cheung Chau

Kowloon

Tsim Sha Tsui, Airport, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon Central, Kowloom City, Kwun Tong, Tseung Kwan O, To Kwa Wan

New Territories

Yuen Long, Shatin Central, Sai Kung, Shek Wu Hui, Tuen Mun Central,, Tai Po, Tsuen Wan

End

Firing practice in March

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Firing practice will take place at the Ha Tsuen/Castle Peak Range on 12 days next month (March 1997). Members of the public are advised not to enter the area when red flags are hoisted.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
March 3 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 4 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 5 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 6 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 10 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 11 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 12 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 13 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 20 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 25 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 26 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
March 27 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm

End

Water cut in Tai Po Market

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Fresh and flushing water supply to some premises in Tai Po Market will be suspended from 11 pm on Tuesday (February 25) to 6 am the following day for waste detection work on watermains.

The suspension will affect all premises in the area bounded by Kwong Fuk Road, Tung Cheong Street, Plover Cove Road and Po Yick Street, including Plover Cove Garden, Po Wu Lane and Po Yick Lane.

End

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The Governor's "Letter to Hong Kong"

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Following is the text of the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten's broadcast on RTHK's "Letter to Hong Kong" this (Sunday) morning:

I was going to talk to you this morning about other matters. About human rights. About democratic development. About our superb civil service.

And then in the early hours of Thursday morning we heard the news about Mr Deng's death, followed by all the comment and the speculation. That made me think that I should concentrate today on one simple fundamental point which we are always in danger of overlooking.

Hong Kong is one of the greatest cities in the world. It's a city which has grown to success through all the ups and downs of the history of this region over the last 50 years. It's had to take in its stride momentous events. Many people are here because of those events. But we've coped. Coped, grown, prospered, succeeded. We've been an example to the world of what men and women are capable of doing in pretty difficult circumstances. It's an example that the rest of the world looks to with wonder. And that's of course one reason why people in other countries are so fascinated in how we manage the changes that are taking place this year.

Now I want to say some things about Hong Kong which you may or may not know. I don't want this to sound too much like a volume of the Hong Kong statistical digest. But I want to underline just why no-one should think that Hong Kong is the plaything of events. I can't speculate any more successfully than the next man or woman about what is going to happen in China or by extension what's going to happen here as a result of Mr Deng's death. I just say in passing, that the speculation is exactly that - speculation - and however authoritative people may sound, nobody knows for certain what is or is not going to happen.

But what we do know - it's not speculation - is what sort of a place Hong Kong is. What sort of a place it's become. What we know is that it's a strong enough community, a healthy and stable enough community, to withstand almost anything which the history of the coming months and years may throw at it.

We're one of the strongest and best run economies in the world. Think tanks abroad name us year after year as the free-est economy anywhere. And when it comes to competitiveness, they place us right up there near the top of the first division. The International Monetary Fund keeps an eagle eye on how all the world's economies perform. And they give Hong Kong what might be called, if you were talking about the theatre rather than economics, rave reviews. They think that so far as running a sophisticated economy is concerned, we've got it just about right. The Hong Kong formula is one which is unreservedly recommended for others. While the size of our total economy has grown massively, so that nowadays it's roughly the same as one fifth of the whole of China's, the amount that individual men and women are worth has also soared. Today our wealth per head, which I guess is about the best way of judging the strength of an economy and the prosperity of its people, is higher than that of people in Australia, in Canada or in the UK. We have massive financial reserves. We have healthy surpluses. We are the 4th largest investor in other countries. We invest overseas, according to the UN figures, almost 10 times as much as Singapore.

Look north and west from Hong Kong island and you see evidence that we're the busiest container port anywhere. We've got the 3rd busiest airport in the world and we're building what will be the 2nd busiest. The bridges, the tunnels, the new roads and railways, the new universities and hospitals, the new office buildings and shopping malls - all that sign of activity is striking evidence of our long term vitality.

Like any other great city, we've made great social progress as well. Look at the blocks of new flats where there were once squatter huts and shanty towns. Remember the days when Hong Kong suffered from epidemic disease and then look at today's health statistics which are comparable with any of the richer countries in the world. And note our life expectancy is longer than anywhere except Japan.

One of the things which I notice particularly is the impact of education on our society. I'm the titular head as Governor of all our tertiary institutions so that I spend many afternoons each year at graduation ceremonies. I see the growing ranks of young people in Hong Kong who've enjoyed the benefits of a university education. When I go to people's housing authority flats I see the photographs of their children or grandchildren who've graduated in their caps and gowns. Those are proud records of an astonishing social revolution. 10 years ago about 1 in every 33 of Hong Kong's young people went into tertiary education. Today almost 1 in 4 do so.

What else do we see in Hong Kong? Well we don't see what has become a real puzzle in many rich societies elsewhere. There people worry over the fact that rising prosperity has been accompanied by rising rather than falling crime. But here we've seen the reverse. I know that low crime is not acceptable. The only thing that would satisfy that criterion is no crime at all. But we've done incredibly well in our city with overall crime down and violent crime down, too. And down on the figures not just of the year before last but down on the figures in the early 1980s.

That's one of the clearest examples of the extraordinary stability which has accompanied our prosperity as a community. Now that doesn't mean that we're boring or uninterested in the world around us or politically quiescent. This is a lively, argumentative place. We've probably got more newspapers and journals for our size than anywhere else in Asia or even the world. People get involved in the life of their community. They join churches. They join social clubs. They join charitable bodies. They take part in the life of their business organisations or professions. They join action groups. They petition for better housing and a quieter environment. They argue for better welfare benefits and better services for our older citizens. They march and demonstrate, by and large peacefully, in far larger numbers than used to be the case, using the safety valves for blowing off steam which exist in every successful open society. But I repeat, they do all these things peacefully and with great moderation. This is a vibrant society and it's a responsible society as well. So, greater civic consciousness, more political activity, have been in a way a reflection of our stability just as they've helped to give that stability stronger foundations.

A word we've heard a lot of in recent months is reality. Well, the reality is that Hong Kong is a great city. A success story, almost without parallel. A community with a pretty good government, run by an excellent largely Chinese civil service. Low crime. Excellent police. Competitive businesses. The rule of law. It's argumentative and free. Open and responsible. Moderate and fair. "A slice of the future" as an American newspaper called it. A model for Asia, bringing together the best of East and West. That's Hong Kong today. Not something you need to speculate about. Something you live and breathe every day. That's our Hong Kong, that's your Hong Kong, and I'm sure that you'll keep it that way.

End

Year of Heritage commemorative cover put on sale

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The Year of Heritage, which aims to raise the understanding and awareness of the general public to local heritage and thereby increase commitment to its protection for future generations, is gaining momentum with the issuance of a commemorative cover to mark the opening ceremony.

The souvenir cover is the first in a series of special postal items to commemorate the various functions of the Year of Heritage and raise funds for the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust.

Featuring a collage of archaeological relics, historical buildings and heritage-related activities, each cover bears a HK\$1.3 definitive stamp and the date chop of the Post Office. The logo and the slogan for the Year of Heritage, "Treasure Our Heritage, Benefit Our Future", are also highlighted.

The production quantity is 10,000 pieces and each purchase is limited to a maximum of 10 only. The cover, at \$25 each, will be available at the Heritage Resource Centre of the Antiquities and Monuments Office at 136 Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, between 9.30 am and 2.30 pm from Monday to Friday starting next Tuesday (February 25).

Further enquiries can be made at 2721 2326.

The Year of Heritage is jointly organised by the Antiquities Advisory Board, the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust, and the Antiquities and Monuments Office of the Broadcasting, Culture and Sport Branch.

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Youth Funding Scheme on AIDS invites applications

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The Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS) is inviting young people to make use of the Youth Funding Scheme on AIDS for the seventh year.

The Scheme is run by the Task Force on Youth of CEPAIDS to encourage and mobilise young people to organise innovative projects on education and publicity on AIDS.

A spokesman for the Task Force on Youth said: "Youth groups each comprising not less than five members are invited to submit project plans designed to promote awareness on AIDS among young people."

"By organising and implementing an AIDS project, young people will learn a great deal about AIDS and its impact on the community. A subsidy of not exceeding \$8,000 will be granted for each approved project," he explained.

In 1996 a total of 15 youth groups participated in the Scheme. An exhibition on the awards will be held from today (Sunday) until the end of March at Red Ribbon Centre on second floor of Wang Tau Hom Jockey Club Clinic, 200 Junction Road East, Lok Fu, Kowloon.

All members of the public are welcome to take part.

For enquiries, please call Mr S Y Mak of the Red Ribbon Centre at 2304 6268.

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Focus on General Teaching Council

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The Registrar of the General Teaching Council (GTC) for Scotland, Mr Ivor Sutherland, will visit Hong Kong between February 27 and March 2 at the invitation of the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (CPCE).

As requested by the CPCE, Mr Sutherland will speak at two seminars to introduce to Hong Kong teachers the establishment, structure and professional status of the GTC in Scotland.

The seminars will be held on February 27 (Thursday) between 2.30 pm and 5 pm at the Academic Community Hall, Kowloon Tong, and on March 1 (Saturday) from 10 am to 12.30 pm at the Studio Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui, respectively.

Proposals for setting up a GTC in Hong Kong have been discussed for a number of years. The CPCE has now invited Mr Sutherland to visit Hong Kong and to speak at two identical seminars so as to share his experience on the setting up of a GTC in Scotland and to facilitate the setting up of one in Hong Kong.

As the setting up of a GTC in Hong Kong is important to the professional status of teachers, the CPCE called on teachers to show active support by attending the seminars.

Schools may obtain admission tickets to the seminars from the Education Department. Those who are too late to get the tickets from the Education Department can still attend by obtaining tickets from staff at the seminars right before the seminars begin.

Meanwhile, the CPCE has invited various educational bodies, school sponsors, school councils, members of the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, and members of the GTC working group under the Education Commission to meet Mr Sutherland on the need, problems and solutions in setting up a GTC.

Mr Sutherland will meet educational bodies from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm on February 27, the Education Commission GTC working group and Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications from 9.30 am to 11.30 am on February 28, and school councils and sponsors from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm on February 28. These meetings will take place at Room NAB209 of the Lam Woo International Conference Centre of Hong Kong Baptist University.

Members of the organisations concerned may attend the meetings whether or not they have already received the invitation letter, and regardless of whether they have replied to the invitation.

End

Total number of votes cast in Tai Po by-election

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The poll of the Tai Po District Board's by-election in respect of Shuen Wan Constituency was closed at 10.30 pm today (Sunday).

During the 15-hour poll, a total of 1,423 voters have cast their votes, representing 29.3 per cent of the total 4,857 electors.

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Tai Po DB by-election results

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The following is the number of votes received by the three candidates of the Tai Po District Board by-election in respect of Shuen Wan constituency on Sunday (February 23):

Mr Chan Mei-tak 702 votes

Mr Man Chen-fai 402 votes

Mr Roger Li Kwok-keung 307 votes

Mr Chan Mei-tak was declared elected by the Returning Officer, Mr Lui Kin-fun.

End