



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Expert talks on new mobile communications services

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Talks between experts of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group on new mobile communications services will take place in Hong Kong on February 29.

The British team will be led by British Representative Mr Alan Paul. The Chinese team will be led by Chinese Representative Mr Chen Zuo'er. They will be assisted by experts from the two sides.

End

Technical talks on Vietnamese migrants held in Hanoi

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A technical meeting was held in Hanoi today (Wednesday) between officials of the Hong Kong and Vietnamese governments to review progress on the repatriation of about 19,400 Vietnamese migrants (VMs) still in the territory.

Representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the British Embassy were also present.

A government spokesman said the meeting noted the steady progress made in recent months in the clearance of VMs for return to Vietnam.

"About 12,400 had now been cleared and the Vietnamese side undertook to use their best endeavours to clear the remaining caseload as soon as possible," he said.

At a meeting held in December last year, agreement was reached on bilateral arrangements for the repatriation of VMs arriving in Hong Kong after June 15, 1995.

On this occasion, it was agreed that the first batch of VMs in this category would be returned on the Orderly Repatriation Programme flights scheduled to take place next month.

Commenting on the talks, the Refugee Co-ordinator, Mr Brian Bresnihan, emphasised the cordial atmosphere in which they had taken place.

"The exchanges were very useful and we built on the accords reached with our Vietnamese counterparts last year.

"We are particularly pleased that the repatriation of new arrivals has been put on a firm footing," he said.

End

Bills for better investor protection to be introduced

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Two bills which seek to strengthen the relevant risk management systems and to enhance protection for investors will be published in the Government Gazette on Friday (March 1).

The Leveraged Foreign Exchange Trading (Amendment) Bill 1996 and the Securities and Futures Commission (Amendment) Bill 1996 will be introduced into the Legislative Council on March 13.

A Financial Services Branch spokesman said: "The Leveraged Foreign Exchange Trading (Amendment) Bill 1996 seeks to require a trader licensed under the Leveraged Foreign Exchange Trading Ordinance (LFETO) to obtain the consent of the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) prior to the sale or issue of substantial holdings in its shares.

"Likewise, the Securities and Futures Commission (Amendment) Bill 1996 seeks to amend the SFC Ordinance so that the consent of the SFC is required prior to the sale or issue of substantial holdings in shares in a company registered with the SFC as dealers or investment advisers."

The spokesman added that the Leveraged Foreign Exchange Trading (Amendment) Bill 1996 also amended LFETO so that the making of orders by the High Court under section 13 would apply to any person, instead of to licence holders only, and any such order might specify assets other than currency.

End

Bill to update HK bankruptcy law to be introduced

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The Bankruptcy (Amendment) Bill which seeks to updating and streamlining the existing Bankruptcy Ordinance will be published in the Gazette on Friday (March 1).

A government spokesman today (Wednesday) said the Bill makes a number of significant legal and procedural changes to the law of bankruptcy in Hong Kong.

"The present legislation is out of date in terms of its concepts and procedures. The Administration, after taking into consideration the Law Reform Commission's Report on Bankruptcy published in May 1995, proposes to adopt virtually all the recommendations in the report, except for revising some technical issues," the spokesman said.

The salient changes to the existing law include the abolition of the Acts of Bankruptcy and bankruptcy notices and their replacement by a system of statutory demands for a debtor to pay his debts due; new procedures for automatic discharge from bankruptcy and for independent voluntary arrangements between debtors and their creditors; simpler and/or more flexible court procedures and arrangements for meetings of creditors; and new "anti-avoidance" provisions to overturn disposals of property made by a debtor prior to bankruptcy that are contrary to the interests of the estate.

Other clauses in the Bill make amendments that are essentially technical or consequential to these changes.

"The Bill should be welcomed by the business community as it updates and simplifies bankruptcy procedures and should help to reduce the time and costs involved," the spokesman said.

"This is also in line with the needs of the economy as business activities continue to expand and increase in complexity.

"Insolvency legislation forms a key part of our overall legal framework for the operation of business. The changes that we propose to make provide a further demonstration that Hong Kong remains responsive to the demands of its status as a forward-looking, international business centre."

The Bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council in mid-March.

End

Judiciary's response to press report

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In response to press enquiries about South China Morning Post's story entitled "Judge Chua tries to stop report of court remarks" and similar reports in Sing Tao Daily today (Wednesday), a Judiciary spokesman stated that the judge realised that she erred in asking the press not to report her remarks.

The Chief Justice had asked to see the judge this morning. After speaking with the Chief Justice, the judge acknowledged that it was not appropriate for her to approach the press on the question of reporting as she did.

End

Further grants from Disaster Relief Fund approved

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The Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee today (Wednesday) approved a grant of \$2.5 million to the World Vision Hong Kong and \$1.18 million to the Salvation Army as contributions to their relief operations for earthquake victims in Lijiang, Yunnan, China.

So far, the Advisory Committee has approved a total of \$12.825 million from the Disaster Relief Fund for various relief projects to assist the victims of the earthquake in Lijiang and Zhongdian counties in Yunnan.

Grants previously approved include \$4.195 million to the Hong Kong Red Cross, \$3 million to the Oxfam Hong Kong, and \$1.95 million to the Medecins Sans Frontieres.

"The Advisory Committee is encouraged to see the response from members of the public towards the plight of the people in this earthquake," a government spokesman said.

"It shows that the Hong Kong people are generous towards the less fortunate."

As in the previous cases, the Hong Kong government will require both the World Vision Hong Kong and the Salvation Army to submit an evaluation report and an audited account on the use of the grant to ensure that the money will be used for the designated purpose.

End

New classification for marine pilots proposed

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The Marine Department is proposing to introduce a new classification structure of licensed pilots which is characterised by the length of ships to ensure competency for each class of pilotage, a Marine Department spokesman said today (Wednesday).

Under the current classification, Class IIC is pilotage of ship not exceeding 153 metres, Class IIB not exceeding 168 metres, Class IIA not exceeding 229 metres and Class I pilotage is for ships of any length.

"As the number of container ships between 220 and 260 metres arriving Hong Kong have increased considerably in recent year, there is a need to review our pilotage structure," the spokesman said.

In August 1993, the Marine Department had commissioned the Rotterdam Pilots Consultancy to conduct a review on pilotage.

"Based on the recommendations of the consultancy report, the department decided to revise the current structure," the spokesman said.

The proposed classification structure is:

- * Class IID is pilotage of ships not exceeding 150 metres;
- * Class IIC is pilotage of ships not exceeding 165 metres;
- * Class IIB is pilotage of ships not exceeding 220 metres;
- * Class IIA is pilotage of ships not exceeding 260 metres;
- * Class I is pilotage of ships of any length.

The proposal is incorporated in the Pilotage (Amendment) Order 1996 which will be gazetted on Friday (March 1).

"It is intended to bring the amendment Order into operation on April 9, 1996," the spokesman said.

The new classification structure will apply to those who are applying a licence after April 9.

The Pilotage (Amendment) Order 1996 also provides changes to ensure that an apprentice pilot can obtain the necessary experience in handling naval ship after the demolition of HMS Tamar Naval and to update the information of floating docks listed in Table 1 of the Pilotage Order.

Currently the Pilotage Order requires that an apprentice pilot should accompany a licensed pilot to carry out two berthing and two unberthing operations at HMS Tamar Naval Dockyard.

"It is necessary to introduce changes to this provision following the demolition of the naval dockyard in February 1995," the spokesman said.

"As some of the floating docks listed in the order have been sold and tow away, it is necessary to update the list also."

End

Comic book to promote rights of the child published

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To promote public understanding of the rights of the child, the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) has produced a comic book to introduce the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on collaboration with the Hong Kong Committee for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The Convention was extended to Hong Kong in 1994, a spokesman for CPCE said today (Wednesday): "The significance of the extension of the Convention is that it places Hong Kong under continuing international obligations to protect the rights of children and provide for their interests.

"The Convention obliges signatory states to respect and protect the rights of children as set out in the Convention, such as the right to health care and education, and to protect children from discrimination, abuse and neglect, among other things.

"The promotion of the Convention is part of the human rights publicity programme launched by the Government.

"The CPCE has organised a number of events and programmes that include promotion of the Convention, for example, at the Civic Education Exhibition held last summer and in the human rights teaching kit for school children which has been published recently."

The 64-page comic book, written in Chinese, provides a clear and interesting illustration of the Convention in colourful pictures and simple words. The full text of the Convention is also included for easy reference.

The booklet will be widely distributed to schools, libraries and community organisations.

It is now available for members of the public at the Civic Education Resource Centre on the second floor, Tung Sun Commercial Centre, 194-200 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Enquiries can be made on 2802 0131.

End

DB Chairmen's Macau visit a success

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The 18 District Board (DB) chairmen and their representatives today (Wednesday) paid the first-ever visit to Macau in a one-day trip arranged and coordinated by the Home Affairs Department (HAD).

The delegation of DB chairmen and HAD officials were warmly received by the Secretary for Public Administration, Education and Youth Affairs of the Government of Macau, Mr Jorge Rangel.

It also paid a courtesy call on the Macau Municipal Council.

"This is indeed a historic trip," said the Director of Home Affairs, Mrs Shelley Lau, who led the delegation.

"Hong Kong and Macau shared so much in common and a lot to learn from one another in terms of district administration and how to improve our services to the community."

Apart from calling on government and Municipal Council representatives, the delegation also toured a community centre above a market complex, a modern incinerator and the new Macau Airport.

"We are most impressed by the new development in Macau in recent years, as well as the success of the campaign to keep the city clean," said the Chairman of the Kwun Tong District Board, Mrs Winnie Poon.

"We also appreciated the chance to exchange views with Mr Jorge Rangel on how to encourage voter turnout in their forthcoming elections."

In summing up the successful one-day visit, Mrs Lau said she wished there would be opportunities for DB chairmen to visit other territories in the future.

She also expressed the hope that government officials and the municipal councillors from Macau could visit Hong Kong in the near future so that the Hong Kong government and DBs could reciprocate the hospitality received.

End

Two lots of land to let

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The Lands Department is inviting tenders for the short-term tenancies of two pieces of government land in Kowloon and the New Territories.

The first lot, located in Area 26C, Kwai Chung, has an area of 3.38 hectares for use as a fee-paying public car park for container tractors and trailers only.

The tenancy is for 18 months, renewable quarterly.

With an area of 1,070 square metres, the second lot is located at the junction of Ko Shan Road and Shansi Street in Hung Hom. It is earmarked for use as a fee-paying public car park for vehicles excluding containers, container vehicles, tractors and trailers.

The tenancy is for three years, renewable quarterly.

Closing date for submission of both tenders is noon on March 15.

Tender forms, tender notices and conditions may be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, and the respective district lands offices of Kwai Tsing and Kowloon West.

Tender plans can also be inspected at these offices.

End

Salt water cut in Kowloon

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Flushing water supply to all premises in Hung Hom, Kowloon City, Wong Tai Sin and adjacent areas will be temporarily suspended from 9 pm on Friday (March 1) to 8 am the following day to allow maintenance works of watermains to be carried out.

The temporary suspension will affect Hung Hom, To Kwa Wan, Tung Tau, Wong Tai Sin, Lok Fu, Kowloon City, Wang Tau Hom, Chuk Yuen, Kowloon Tong, Ma Tau Wai, Ma Tau Kok, the Hong Kong International Airport and the Kowloon Hospital.

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	1,931	0930	+871
Closing balance in the account	2,776	1000	+871
Change attributable to :		1100	+871
Money market activity	+871	1200	+878
LAF today	- 26	1500	+878
		1600	+871

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 123.0 *+0.0* 28.2.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.71	2 years	2802	5.16	99.67	5.41
1 month	4.82	3 years	3901	5.57	99.87	5.70
3 months	4.95	5 years	5012	6.38	100.84	6.27
6 months	5.04	7 years	7302	6.02	97.03	6.66
12 months	5.10	5 years	M502	7.30	103.27	6.58

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$29,191 million

Closed February 28, 1996

End