

IS MR TUNG CHEE HWA GOING ON AN ‘EXTENDED HOLIDAY’ ?

Mr Tung Chee Hwa, the Chief Executive of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), is likely to seek, and to be granted, an *‘extended holiday’*.

According to TARGET's usually reliable information, Mr Tung Chee Hwa is suffering from the pressures of his office.

Beijing is looking at 2, HKSAR candidates to replace Mr Tung Chee Hwa, according to our sources.

They are:

1. Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen, Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology of the HKSAR; and,
2. Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung, Secretary for Education and Manpower of the HKSAR.

Both of Beijing's candidates, thought to be very capable of taking over the office of Chief Executive of the HKSAR, are Ministers, a Minister, being part of the inner circle of the HKSAR Government, reporting directly to Mr Tung Chee Hwa and being accountable to him, solely.

Mr Tung Chee Hwa, now 65 years old, was the First Chief Executive of the HKSAR, having been appointed for his first, 5-year term by the Central People's Government on December 16, 1996.

He assumed his post on July 1, 1997.

On February 28, 2002, Mr Tung Chee Hwa was re-elected as Chief Executive of the HKSAR, unopposed, for a second, 5-year term.

No eligible candidate threw his or her hat into the ring in an attempt to snare the top job of the 416 square miles that constitute the HKSAR, following the outcome of the first *‘elections’* for the plum job, back in the latter part of 1996.

Mr Tung Chee Hwa has been singularly unsuccessful in his first attempts at being a politician; and, this was made only too evident of late with regard to the controversy over Article 23 of The Basic Law of the HKSAR.

Premier Zhu Rong Ji, last year, was critical of Mr Tung Chee Hwa, referring to him, obliquely, as *‘a certain man of Hongkong’* who attends fruitless meetings and, when there is some *‘fruit’*, discovered at these meetings, he fails to execute any decisive action.

This was only too evident on January 8, this year, when, after, delivering his 2003 Policy Address, Mr Tung Chee Hwa declined to face the public and be questioned on his deliberations via radio.

Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen

The prime candidate to replace Mr Tung Chee Hwa is thought to be Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen, a 50-year-old Minister, who is the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology.

Appointed to his post in July 2002, Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen is responsible for policies, relating to information technology, telecommunications, broadcasting, film services, innovation and technology, external commercial relations, industry and business support, intellectual protection and inward investment promotion.

He has been a member of the Executive Council since 1997 and, prior to that time, he served on the Legislative Council for 7 years, from 1991 to 1998.

Prior to joining the Government, Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen was an industrialist in the HKSAR.

Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen is known to be very wealthy and, in March 2002, he sold his house at Number 23, Big Wave Bay Road for \$HK100 million, according to **TOLFIN** (**TARGET'S** Computerised Online Financial Intelligence Service and Credit-Checking Provider).

He is married with 4 children.

Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen appears to have all of the attributes that Beijing requires for a person to assume the post of Chief Executive of the HKSAR:

1. He is independently wealthy;
2. He has a history in business;
3. He has rarely been outwardly critical of the HKSAR Government or of the PRC Government;
4. He is a university graduate (Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from The University of Michigan, the USA); and,
5. He is squeaky clean, having never been known to have been involved in unseemly litigation; and, he has led, what Beijing would consider to be, an exemplary lifestyle, also preferring to be very low key.

Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung

Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung is a member of one of the richest and most prominent families of the HKSAR: The Li Family.

The Li Family comprises:

Mr David Li Kwok Po, the Chairman of The Bank of East Asia Ltd (Code: 23, Main Board, The Stock Exchange of Hongkong Ltd);

Mr Simon Li Fook Sean, a Hongkong Affairs Adviser to the PRC Government and, formerly, a Vice President in the Court of Appeal in the old Hongkong; and,

Mr Andrew Li Kwok Nang, Chief Justice of the HKSAR Court of Final Appeal.

Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung is the brother of Dr David Li Kwok Po and, presently, holds the post of Minister and Secretary of Education and Manpower.

Before taking up his present post, he was Vice Chancellor of The Chinese University of Hongkong.

As Professor Arthur Li, he served as Professor of Surgery and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hongkong.

He is a large shareholder of The Bank of East Asia Ltd, owning, in his name, 7,594,363 shares, equivalent to a little more than one half of one percent of the Issued and Fully Paid-Up Share Capital, according to **TOLFIN**.

At today's stock-market quotation of The Bank of East Asia, this parcel of shares has a market value of not less than \$HK110 million.

Beijing may consider that Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung's uncle, Mr Ronald Li Fook Shiu, is a bit of a black mark for this illustrious Family since Mr Ronald Li Fook Shiu went to prison in 1988 for corruption.

Mr Ronald Li Fook Shiu, however, founded Far East Exchange in 1969 in defiance of the dominance of the British-controlled, Hongkong Stock Exchange, as it was then called.

However, greed got the better of this multi-billionaire who, in 1988, was jailed for corruption offences. He spent about 18 months in Stanley Prison.

He is, now, thought to be living in Toronto, Canada, and Bangkok, Thailand.

However, that would be the only possible objection that Beijing would have in respect of Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung, being a prime candidate for the top job of the HKSAR:

1. He is an intellectual;
2. He is immensely wealthy;
3. He is squeaky clean; and,
4. He has extensive experience in managing large and complex institutions, including non-academic organisations.

The Hierarchy

When one looks at the structure of the HKSAR Government on its website, one notes that, flowing down from the Chief Executive is Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen, with Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung, appearing in the next tier of Government bigwigs.

It gives on the appearance of the pecking order of Government, in fact.

This is, often, the way that the PRC Government delineates and distinguishes the most important persons within a level of government.

It is highly unlikely that Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen was given such prominence over Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung by accident: That is not the way that Beijing arranges things.

When Mr Tung Chee Hwa stood for '*election*' to be the First Chief Executive of the HKSAR on December 11, 1996, he was placed in the middle of the other 2 candidates for the post in the Convention Centre, Wanchai.

Mr Tung Chee Hwa's position was underneath the logo of the HKSAR: The bauhinia flower, now widely accepted as the national flower of the HKSAR.

It was not by accident that he was placed in that prominent position.

When he rose to take his place on the podium of the Convention Centre, in order to deliver his election speech, the then PRC Director of The Hongkong and Macau Affairs Office, Mr Lu Ping, clapped loudly and ostentatiously, causing all of his sycophants to follow suit.

Long before the elections for the First Chief Executive of the HKSAR, it was widely known that Mr Tung Chee Hwa would get the job.

That is the way of the PRC Government.

As Mr Chris Patten, the last white Governor of Hongkong, noted: The PRC Government does not hold elections unless the outcome is known, well in advance.

No surprises, if you please.

One thing that Beijing has made very clear of late is that existing advisors and delegates to the National People's Congress (NPC) must retire at the age of 70 years.

Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen is the younger of the 2 candidates for the post to replace Mr Tung Chee Hwa.

That, alone, gives him a slight edge over Dr Arthur Li Kwok Cheung.

Mr Tung Chee Hwa, in any event, would not have been '*elected*' for a third term as Chief Executive of the HKSAR due to his age, which would be, exactly, 70 years in 2007.

Ah, well, all's well that ends well!

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