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Finneran for China on St. Patrick's Day

Local Fianna Fail TD and Minister of State for Housing Michael Finneran will be spending St. Patrick's Day in China. Minister Finneran will travel to Beijing and Shanghai early next week for a five-day trip. The Taoiseach Mr. Brian Cowen has said that Irish ministers travelling abroad for St. Patrick's Day are doing so to promote a positive image of Ireland in these challenging times.

Pictured in the Coachman's on Friday night last were (l-r) Anne Brennan, Michelle Young, Orla Daly, Caroline Walsh, Stephanie Walsh and Lorraine Grady, Roscommon.
Pic: Andrew Fox.

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Appeal for fresh daffodils

Friday 26th March is Daffodil Day. The organisers of Daffodil Day in Roscommon Town are appealing to the public to donate fresh daffodils again this year. Volunteers will be available to receive daffodils on Thursday the 25th March, at the Daffodil Day Depot i.e. The Unit Vodafone/King Communications Offices, Main Street, Roscommon, (beside Jackson's Restaurant/Guesthouse, on the Main Street) from 10 am to 6 pm., also on Daffodil Day.

Volunteers are aware that the weather is very cold and daffodils are slow to develop so anyone with information on fresh daffodils call Eilish on (090) 66 26616 or (087) 63 62264. We appeal again for volunteers to join with us on Daffodil Day for street selling. Please contact Anne on (087) 9864390, Catherine on (086) 2518515 Mary on (086) 3217951 with your available time as the rota is being prepared.



Head shop protestors take their protest to the Dáil

The Roscommon Head Shop Group will picket Dáil Éireann on Wednesday, 24th March in an effort to remind politicians of their concerns and to insist that head shops are closed without delay.

A spokesperson for the group said, "Families and community leaders have shown their concerns around the operation of one hundred or more head shops in Ireland, all selling psychotropic drugs aimed at altering the brain chemistry. These substances being labelled as bath salts and pot pourri labelled 'not for human consumption'. There have been catastrophic consequences in

some cases and serious psychosis in others.

"In Cork, Dr Chris Luke, a Consultant in Emergency Medicine, has in the past called for closure of head shops. So has Dr. Desmond Corrigan, Chair of NACD. In Dublin, Dr Bobby Smyth, a psychologist with the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services has reported a rise in cases reporting for treatment. Psychosis in some cases can become a lifelong illness. Despite claiming otherwise, children as young as 13 years are being served and the Minister for Children Barry Andrews TD has remained silent.

"On 24th March the Roscommon Head shop Group together with other supporters will mount a picket on Dáil Éireann to remind politicians of their concerns and to insist that all head shops be closed without delay. Planning laws, product liability insurance and more have to be enacted without delay. Romania and Sweden have acted with great swiftness. Therefore Ireland can do so if there is a political will. Head shops agree to regulation. Head shop owners know that they can get around regulation and outsmart the state. Paraphernalia too must be banned. The Government

must not continue to profit from the sales of dangerous substances sold through those shops.

"The support of the media has been greatly appreciated, as has that of the Senate, where a cross party group has been formed and many politicians, including John Curran, Minister with responsibility for Drugs. However, public concerns have to be recognised and respected by our policy makers and we would appreciate meeting and sharing them with our elected Dáil representatives during our protest at Dáil Éireann on 24th March."