



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

Tuesday, September 26, 1995

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Hong Kong helps maintain regional stability .....	1
Hong Kong offers abundant investment opportunities .....	2
Interest rate deregulation and inner reserves .....	4
New Director of Education appointed .....	6
Code of Access to Information further extended .....	8
Two lots of land sold for \$368 million .....	9
Quarterly drug figures released .....	9
Provisional statistics of retail sales for July .....	11
Land Survey Ordinance will take effect early next year .....	14
EPD to commission indoor air quality study .....	15
Two language fund projects launched .....	16
Hong Kong to celebrate World Maritime Day .....	18
Monthly Digest of Statistics for September published .....	20
Job bazaars to assist job-seekers .....	21
Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results .....	22
Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations .....	23

## Hong Kong helps maintain regional stability

\* \* \* \* \*

Hong Kong plays a vital part in keeping the Asia-Pacific region stable by helping to generate prosperity, and it will continue in the 21st century to do what it does now.

The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, said this in Japan today (Tuesday) when talking on "Hong Kong and Japan partnership into the Pacific century" during the Hong Kong-Japan Partnership Promotion. Hong Kong has contributed significantly in the modernisation of China with its huge investment and is helping the country to bring its systems and its standards up to international standard.

It has also provided a conduit for investment, trade and travel between Taiwan and the mainland.

On top of that, Hong Kong's businessmen have been investing actively in Vietnam and in the Philippines.

Mrs Chan cited the countries emerged from the former Soviet bloc as examples, the governments of which found it hard to meet the new economic ambitions of the people. This has led to political turbulence.

"That has not happened in this region largely, I believe, because emerging countries in this region have had access to the financial resources and the entrepreneurial talent necessary to get things moving. "But will Hong Kong be able to continue in the 21st century to do what it does today? My answer is an unequivocal yes."

She said investment and services in China would not only continue but would grow. Five years ago Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product was the equivalent of 20 per cent of China's GDP.

"Today our GDP is equivalent of 26 per cent of China's," she said.

"Hong Kong is the hub, and its position is strengthening not diminishing."

The Chief Secretary noted that soon after the transfer of sovereignty, Hong Kong would open Asia's largest convention centre and welcome 3,000 delegates to the World Bank/IMF 1997 Annual Meeting.

And a new airport will open with a capacity of 35 million passengers a year rising to 87 million when the second runway is completed at the turn of the century.

Mrs Chan admitted that it was not without worries as the reversion of sovereignty to China in 1997 was a unique challenge with no parallel.

"It is no secret that, since 1989, we have had problems. Problems getting agreements between China and Hong Kong on matters of vital importance for Hong Kong," she said.

With the approach of 1997 the climate was improving, she added, and some important agreements had been made.

"In June, China and Britain agreed on the establishment of a Court of Final Appeal for Hong Kong, to be operational on the first day of the new Hong Kong, 1 July 1997. Legislation has since been passed, and preparations are now underway." Final agreement on the financing arrangements for the new airport has been made, enabling the airport corporation to raise loans from international banks to complete the remaining construction work.

Mrs Chan said during her visit to China in early July, she was assured of the importance China attached to Hong Kong civil service.

"The Chinese want Hong Kong civil servants (including expatriate staff) to remain at their posts; they do not want any upheaval or an exodus in 1997 any more than we do," Mrs Chan said.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

#### Hong Kong offers abundant investment opportunities

\* \* \* \* \*

Hong Kong as a base for technology-intensive manufacturing offers abundant opportunities to overseas investors in high-tech manufacturing, the Director-General of Industry, Mrs Regina Ip, said today (Tuesday).

Addressing some 200 business leaders at an investment promotion workshop in Tokyo, Japan, Mrs Ip said Hong Kong's manufacturing sector had undergone major restructuring in the past decade.

"It has moved away from low-cost, low-skilled manufacturing towards high value-added manufacturing and serving as the manufacturing-control centre for production in the Asia Pacific region.

"Taking advantage of China's open door policy in the late seventies, manufacturers in Hong Kong have moved the cost-sensitive production activities across the border to southern China, thereby releasing the resources in Hong Kong for higher technology and higher value-added operations, such as product design, research and development, material and component sourcing, product testing and quality control, management, financing, marketing, and packaging," she said.

Mrs Ip said the complementary or the strategic fit between Hong Kong and China had contributed towards the continued improvement in Hong Kong's industrial productivity and growing product sophistication, in addition to enhancing its competitiveness in the world markets.

"For example, with only half the size of the manufacturing workforce ten years ago, Hong Kong produced 44 per cent more in real terms in 1994 when compared to the situation in 1985. During the same period, productivity has increased by 11 per cent per annum," she said.

She called on those investors who wish to exploit the vast market potential in China to emulate the successful partnership between Hong Kong and China by locating their cost-sensitive operations in China and controlling these operations from Hong Kong to capitalise on its technology capability, efficient management and marketing flair.

"Furthermore, Hong Kong manufacturers, with their close ties to world markets and high productivity, are among the world's most reliable OEM (original equipment manufacture) and ODM (original design manufacture) partners," she said.

The Director-General of Industry said Hong Kong's attractions were well recognised by overseas investors. Hong Kong has received substantial investments from Japan, the United States and China in its manufacturing sector.

The size of overseas direct investment has increased steadily at an average annual growth rate of 15 per cent in the past nine years. Japan has become the largest investor in Hong Kong's manufacturing industries, accounting for about one-third of the total US\$5.2 billion at the end of 1993.

"Reflecting the recognition of Hong Kong's growing strengths in technology, the majority of these investments are in the sectors of electronics, electrical products, textiles and high-quality clothing.

"In addition, some 1,850 overseas companies have chosen Hong Kong as their regional headquarters and offices. Among them, 348 are Japanese companies," she said.

Mrs Ip is participating in the Hong Kong Promotion in Japan, "Hong Kong - Japan Partnership", by giving key-note speeches on Hong Kong's investment opportunities for Japanese manufacturers at investment promotion workshops in Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka.

Guest speakers at the workshops in the three cities will include Japanese investor as well as manufacturers from Hong Kong. They are the Chairman of Epson Precision (HK) Ltd, Mr K Kikuchi; Chairman and Chief Executive of the Gold Peak Group, Mr Victor Lo; Chief Executive of Central Textiles, Mr Alex Woo; and Chairman and Chief Executive of VTech Holdings Ltd, Mr Allan Wong.

Apart from the investment promotion workshops, an exhibition will be mounted at each of the three cities to highlight Hong Kong's strengths as a technology-driven manufacturing base and to showcase the companies which have been granted the Hong Kong Award for Industry since 1989 for their excellence in various aspects of industrial performance.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

#### Interest rate deregulation and inner reserves

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government has decided today (Tuesday) that the Hong Kong Association of Banks (HKAB) should be requested to take a further step in deregulating time deposits governed by the Interest Rate Rules (IRR). This would remove the interest rate cap on all time deposits fixed for seven days or with a call or notice period of seven days.

While the Government continues to believe that deregulation is in the best long-term interests of the banking system, its objective remains to strike a balance between more competition and the need to preserve the stability of the banking and monetary systems.

It has therefore decided that there should be no further move below seven days and that the current programme of deregulation should come to an end.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) also announced today that it will recommend the disclosure of balance sheet inner reserves in the banks' 1995 accounts.

In commenting on the Government's decision, acting Chief Executive of HKMA, Mr David Carse, said: "The latest step means that all the recognised maturity brackets specified in the IRR will have been deregulated with the exception of 24-hour call deposits. This accounts for over 99% of the time deposits that were subject to the IRR."

Time deposits of less than \$500,000 and with a maturity of less than seven days (including 24-hour call deposits) will remain subject to the IRR.

Very few deposits currently fall within this category, but by leaving it subject to the IRR a "firewall" will be created to serve as a buffer between deregulated time deposits and current and savings accounts.

This should avoid any potentially destabilising migration of deposits and is consistent with the Government's previously stated position that there should be no deregulation of current and savings accounts for the time being.

The Consumer Council has indicated that it accepts the "firewall" concept. There is however some difference of opinion over the thickness of the firewall.

The Consumer Council would have preferred that only deposits below 72 hours should continue to be subject to the IRR. The Government looked very carefully at this option which would have created a new maturity bracket, but considers that seven days is a more natural and logical place at which to stop.

This will leave a thicker firewall, while enabling small depositors to gain access to market rates of interest at only a small cost in terms of loss of liquidity.

The Government's decision follows a review by HKMA of the first two stages of deregulation. HKMA's review concludes that the banking sector has so far absorbed the effects of deregulation well.

However, it also noted that the more volatile international environment (as demonstrated particularly by the Mexican crisis) and the negative perception of influential international analysts on the impact of further deregulation have reinforced the need for caution.

HKMA will discuss with HKAB when the interest rate cap on 7-day deposits will be lifted.

HKMA's decision to recommend disclosure of balance sheet inner reserves in the banks' 1995 accounts was made following a review which took account of such factors as the market reaction to the disclosure of transfers to inner reserves in the banks' 1994 accounts and the views of market analysts, auditors and the banks themselves.

The review concluded that the existing disclosures in the 1994 accounts had already prepared the way for disclosure of balance sheet inner reserves and that this further step could be safely undertaken. The banks consulted by HKMA raised no objection to making the disclosure in their 1995 accounts.

"The size and significance of the inner reserves of individual banks should be put into perspective," said Mr Carse.

"Inner reserves are only one component of the total capital base of local banks. The principal measure of capital strength which we use is the capital adequacy ratio which banks are required to maintain under the Banking Ordinance. On this measure, all banks in Hong Kong are well above international standards.

"The deregulation which we have undertaken so far (including the step announced today) and the improvements in financial disclosure which we have made in the 1994 and 1995 accounts, have gone a long way to improving the liberalisation and transparency of the Hong Kong banking system," Mr Carse concluded.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

#### New Director of Education appointed

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government today (Tuesday) announced the appointment of Mrs Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping, currently Director of Buildings, as the Director of Education, succeeding Mr W K Lam when he takes up the appointment as Secretary for the Civil Service (Designate) next January.

Commenting on the appointment, the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, said: "Helen Yu has led the Buildings Department with great skill at a time when it has been frequently under the spotlight. She has a wealth of experience in many areas of the Government and brings with her enthusiasm, a determination and will to achieve her mission."

The successor to Mrs Yu will be selected from eligible officers in the Lands and Works groups of departments, in common with recent practice in these departments.

Brief biographical notes of Mrs Helen Yu and Mr W K Lam are as follows:

#### Mr Lam Woon-kwong, JP

Aged 44. Mr Lam joined the Administrative Service in 1974 and rose to his present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in 1995.

During the early years of his career, he served in a variety of posts in the then New Territories Administration and later the City and New Territories Administration, Finance Branch, the then Environment Branch and the then UMELCO Office. On return from a training course at Harvard University in 1987, he was Administrative Assistant to the Chief Secretary and then Deputy Director, Regional Services Department.

He became Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service from 1991 to 1993 and Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower from 1993 to 1994.

He took up his present appointment as Director of Education in December 1994 and will become Secretary for the Civil Service in early 1996.

Mrs Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping, JP

Aged 54. Mrs Yu first joined the civil service in 1965. She became an Administrative Officer in 1968 and rose to her present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in February 1995.

She spent the early part of her career in the Administrative Service in the former Social Services Branch and Home Affairs Department.

She left the Administrative Service in 1975 to join the ICAC where she later became Head of the Community Relations Department in charge of its programme of public education. She re-joined the service in 1980 and was posted to the London Office where she stayed until 1984.

On return from London, she held a number of senior positions including Deputy Director of Urban Services from 1984 to 1989, Deputy Director of the former Hospital Services Department from 1989 to 1990, Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare from 1990 to early 1993 and Secretary-General of the Office of the Members of the Legislative Council from 1993 to 1994.

She took up her present appointment as Director of Buildings in January 1994.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Code of Access to Information further extended

\*\*\*\*\*

Another 15 government departments will become subject to the Code on Access to Information next Monday (October 2).

A government spokesman said today (Tuesday) that the extension of the Code's coverage, from 21 to 36 departments, followed a review of the Code's operation since it was introduced in March.

"Under the Code, anyone can seek information or copies of records held by government departments," he said.

"A department can only refuse to provide copies of records in strictly defined circumstances, which must be explained in the event of a refusal.

"Anyone who thinks that a department's refusal to provide information contravenes the Code can ask for a review, or can complain to the Commissioner for Administrative Complaints."

The spokesman said during the first six months of the Code's operation it had been used to make 258 requests. Of these, 93 per cent had been dealt with in less than 21 days.

The additional departments to come under the Code in October will be the Buildings, Drainage Services, Fire Services, Legal, Planning, Regional Services, Territory Development and Urban Services Departments, the Government Laboratory, the Government Land Transport and Government Property Agencies, the Land Registry, the Office of the Telecommunications Authority, Radio Television Hong Kong and the Royal Observatory.

Copies of the Code on Access to Information are available free of charge from any District Office or from any of the government departments to which it applies.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Two lots of land sold for \$368 million

\* \* \* \* \*

Two lots of government land were sold for a total of \$368 million at a public auction held by the Lands Department this (Tuesday) afternoon.

The first lot, located in Area 37, Tai Po, was bought by Perfect Idea Ltd at \$280 million, with bidding opening at \$230 million.

With an area of 15,300 square metres, the lot is designated for residential use.

The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 7,344 square metres on or before September 30, 1999.

The second lot, located in Shing Yiu Street, Kwai Chung, was sold to Brigadier Company Ltd at \$88 million, with bidding at opening the same price. This 6,525-square-metre lot is for industrial or godown use.

The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 29,360 square metres on or before September 30, 1998.

Held in the Concert Hall of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui, the auction was conducted by Government Land Agent, Mr Francis H K Ng.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Quarterly drug figures released

\* \* \* \* \*

The number of drug abusers of all ages reported to the Government's Central Registry of Drug Abuse (CRDA) in the second quarter of this year has decreased by 9.7 per cent to 7,096 from 7,856 in the corresponding period last year, the quarterly drug statistics revealed today (Tuesday).

This is the second consecutive quarter which registers a decrease in the figure, following a drop of 7.1 per cent in the previous quarter.

The second quarter statistics showed that among the drug abusers reported, 1,037 were reported to CRDA for the first time while 6,059 were previously reported, representing decreases of 25.4 per cent and 6.3 per cent respectively.

For drug abusers under the age of 21, the total number of individuals reported is down by 15.6 per cent to 1,452 from 1,721 in the same quarter last year.

Among them, 522 were reported for the first time and 930 were previously reported. These represented a decrease of 37.6 per cent and an increase of 5.2 per cent respectively against the corresponding figures in the same period last year.

The statistics were presented to and discussed by the Action Committee Against Narcotics at its meeting held this afternoon.

Committee members noted that there was an increase in the percentage of female drug abusers of all ages from 9.3 per cent (733) to 11.1 per cent (786) and for those under 21 from 18.9 per cent (326) to 20.7 (301) per cent.

The most common reasons for drug taking attributed by reported abusers under 21 were peer pressure, curiosity, to avoid the discomfort of withdrawal and to relieve boredom/depression/anxiety.

The drugs commonly abused by youngsters remained heroin (74.6 per cent), cannabis (15.8 per cent) and cough medicines (9.3 per cent).

On the treatment front, the second quarter of this year saw an increase of 7.7 per cent to 3,877 in the number of persons admitted to the three main government-funded treatment programmes as compared with the same period last year.

Of them, 1,050 or 27.1 per cent were first-time admissions, representing an increase of 4.8 per cent over the corresponding quarter last year.

The increase in new admissions was highest for the under-21 group in the methadone treatment programme, by 27.5 per cent.

This was followed by the programmes run by the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers, by 19 per cent for those under 21.

A decrease of 2.1 per cent for this age group was however noted for new admissions to Drug Addiction Treatment Centres of the Correctional Services Department.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Provisional statistics of retail sales for July

\* \* \* \* \*

According to the provisional figures released today (Tuesday) by the Census and Statistics Department, the value of total retail sales in July 1995, estimated at \$17.5 billion, increased by 2% when compared with July 1994. After discounting the effect of price changes over the period, total retail sales dropped by 4% in volume.

The moderate decline in volume of total retail sales in July 1995 continued to be attributable mainly to a significant drop in sales of motor vehicles, by 53% in value or by 57% in volume.

Sales of food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco, and of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts also went down, both by 1% in value. In terms of volume, they decreased by 6% and 4% respectively.

Meanwhile, sales of other consumer durable goods and fuels increased by 4% and 1% respectively in value, but decreased by 1% and 5% respectively in volume. Sales in department stores went up by 5% in value but decreased by 4% in volume.

Nevertheless, there were still notable increases in sales of clothing and footwear (21% in value and 9% in volume) and miscellaneous consumer goods (17% in value and 12% in volume). These were faster than the corresponding growth rates in June. Sales in supermarkets rose by 11% in value and 4% in volume.

Compared with June 1995 (but bearing in mind that this comparison may be affected by seasonal factors), total retail sales in July 1995 increased by 6% in both value and volume.

Comparing the period from January to July 1995 with the same period in 1994, total retail sales rose by 5% in value, but dropped by 1% in volume.

The volume of retail sales is derived from the value of retail sales after adjusting for price changes. The relevant components of the Consumer Price Index are used as deflators.

Table 1 presents the revised total retail sales figure for June 1995 and the provisional figure for July 1995.

Table 2 shows the value and volume indices of retail sales in June and July 1995 for all retail outlets and by type of retail outlet, with average retail sales from October 1989 to September 1990 taken as 100.

Comparisons of the July 1995 results with those for June 1995 and those for July 1994, as well as comparisons of retail sales in the period from January to July 1995 with the same period in 1994 are also given.

The report containing the analysis of the July 1995 results is now on sale at \$4 per copy at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, ground floor, Low Block, 66 Queensway; and the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, Wan Chai.

Enquiries about the survey results may be directed to the Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2802 1258.

-----

**TABLE 1 : TOTAL RETAIL SALES**

Total Retail Sales for July 1995 (Provisional Figure) = HK\$17,525.0 million  
 for June 1995 (Revised Figure) = HK\$16,530.3 million

**TABLE 2 : VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES FOR JUNE 1995 AND JULY 1995**

(Monthly average of Oct 89 - Sept 90 = 100)

Type of Outlet	Type of index	Index number		July 1995 compared with June 1995		July 1995 compared with July 1994		Jan - Jul 1995 compared with Jan - Jul 1994	
		June 1995 (Revised figures)	July 1995 (Provisional figures)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)
<b>(A) FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS</b>									
	Value	176.0	186.6	+10.6	+6.0	+3.9	+2.1	+8.7	+5.0
	Volume	129.5	137.5	+7.9	+6.1	-5.7	-4.0	-1.9	-1.4
<b>(B) BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLETS</b>									
Food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (other than supermarkets)	Value	134.4	138.0	+3.6	+2.7	-1.9	-1.4	+5.8	+4.4
	Volume	97.2	99.2	+2.0	+2.0	-5.8	-5.5	-2.8	-2.7
Supermarkets $\phi$	Value	176.4	175.1	-1.3	-0.7	+17.4	+11.1	+10.7	+6.9
	Volume	116.6	115.5	-1.1	-0.9	+4.0	+3.6	-0.9	-0.8
Fuels	Value	183.4	184.6	+1.2	+0.7	+1.2	+0.6	+11.7	+8.0
	Volume	119.9	120.7	+0.8	+0.7	-5.7	-4.5	+0.2	+0.2
Clothing, footwear and allied products	Value	262.1	302.9	+40.8	+15.6	+52.4	+20.9	+35.2	+14.5
	Volume	163.0	194.9	+31.9	+19.6	+15.8	+8.8	+5.4	+3.1
Consumer durable goods	Value	148.9	134.9	-14.1	-9.4	-52.0	-27.8	-22.2	-12.1
	Volume	119.8	108.1	-11.7	-9.8	-43.9	-28.9	-24.0	-15.6
- Motor vehicles and parts	Value	118.5	114.5	-4.0	-3.4	-130.9	-53.3	-51.8	-27.1
	Volume	78.8	76.5	-2.2	-2.9	-103.4	-57.5	-48.1	-34.0
- Consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and parts	Value	171.0	149.6	-21.3	-12.5	+5.1	+3.5	-0.7	-0.4
	Volume	149.6	131.0	-18.6	-12.4	-0.8	-0.6	-6.6	-4.1
Department stores	Value	144.9	164.2	+19.3	+13.3	+8.4	+5.4	+7.5	+5.0
	Volume	95.5	111.8	+16.3	+17.0	-5.1	-4.3	-4.5	-3.9
Jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts	Value	170.6	167.7	-2.9	-1.7	-1.2	-0.7	+9.5	+5.5
	Volume	157.8	153.8	-4.0	-2.5	-5.8	-3.6	+6.3	+3.8
Other consumer goods not elsewhere classified	Value	219.6	264.3	+44.7	+20.4	+38.5	+17.1	+30.4	+16.0
	Volume	165.6	200.5	+34.9	+21.1	+21.4	+11.9	+15.8	+10.4

NOTE :  $\phi$  Not including supermarkets operating in department stores.  
 The underlined figures were rounded up to 5.

Land Survey Ordinance will take effect early next year

\* \* \* \* \*

Starting from mid-January next year, conveyance or other instrument in writing effecting a division of land and delivered to the Land Registry for registration should be accompanied by a land boundary plan signed and certified by an authorised land surveyor.

This is required under the new Land Survey Ordinance which will become operational on January 15 next year.

Announcing details of the ordinance at a press conference today (Tuesday), Principal Government Land Surveyor, Mr Leung Shou-chun, said the ordinance dealt only with division of land but without provisions to amend errors in old land boundary plans.

Furthermore, the ordinance would not apply to division of land effected by a will or judgment and the granting of probate in respect of a will or judgment but would apply upon transfer of title of the divided lots.

Mr Leung said under the ordinance, land owners or their agents would have to engage authorised land surveyors, who should be fully qualified professionals with experience in land boundary surveys in Hong Kong, to carry out a survey for subdivision.

An authorised land surveyor who certified the land boundary plan for the division should deposit with the Land Survey Authority a duplicate of the plan and the corresponding survey record plan not later than seven days after the deed had been delivered into the Land Registry for registration.

The Land Survey Authority, namely the Director of Lands or effectively the Principal Government Land Surveyor to whom the Director has delegated his functions under the ordinance, will check the plans for compliance with a Code of Practice and will forward the plans to the respective District Survey Office for record and information.

Mr Leung stressed that the final responsibility for the accuracy and reliability of the land boundary plans rested with the authorised land surveyors. If a plan did not comply with the Code of Practice, the authorised land surveyor would be required to make the necessary amendments. Failure to do so is an offence under the law.

Mr Leung also pointed out that there was no provision in the ordinance for the Land Survey Authority to amend the original land boundary plan registered with the Land Registry. However, he advised land owners, for their own benefit, to submit an amended land boundary plan for registration with the Land Registry.

"This will give them better protection and will obviate problems and delay with the District Land Offices in subsequent land administrative processing.

"It will also help the Land Registry to maintain a good and reliable record that will match with that of the Land Survey Authority," he said.

The new ordinance will enable land owners to enjoy the benefits of an improved land record system, and will provide efficiency and security for land deals, Mr Leung added.

A Land Survey (Fees) Regulation and a Disciplinary Procedure Regulation will be submitted to the Legislative Council for approval in October.

As soon as the two regulations are approved, suitable and qualified applicants will be registered as authorised land surveyors with effect from January 1 next year. Following that, a list of authorised land surveyors will be available from the Land Survey Authority and the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors.

There will be no mandatory scale of fee for land boundary surveys, but the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors will have a set of recommended fees available for sale to the public.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

#### EPD to commission indoor air quality study

\* \* \* \* \*

The Environmental Protection Department today (Tuesday) signed a \$9 million contract with the EHS Consultants Ltd for a study on indoor air pollution in offices and public places.

"The study, which will start next month, will involve surveys on various building/premises types with a view to determining the extent of indoor air pollution problem in Hong Kong," Principal Environmental Protection Officer Mr Tse Chin-wan said.

The consultants will gather information on the levels of major indoor air pollutants, such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, respirable suspended particulates, microbial contaminants and volatile organic compounds.

They will also assess the contribution of various causes and indoor sources, including human activities, building materials, office equipment and air conditioning ducts/units, to indoor air pollution.

"The consultants will then identify cost-effective mitigation measures for reducing indoor air pollution and its risks to public health," Mr Tse said.

He said improperly designed or maintained ventilation and air-conditioning systems in buildings with few openable windows allowed potential for air pollutants to recirculate and to build up their concentrations.

"If an indoor air pollution problem occurs, occupants might experience health problems including lethargy, stuffy or running nose, headache, eye and throat irritation and chest tightness, which are commonly termed as the 'Sick Building Syndrome'," he said.

"The World Health Organisation has suggested that potentially one-third of modern commercial buildings can be affected by indoor air pollution problem.

"Therefore we want to find out the extent of the indoor air pollution problem in Hong Kong and whether it is necessary to put it under some form of control," Mr Tse said.

The study is expected to complete by mid-1997.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

#### Two language fund projects launched

\* \* \* \* \*

The Education Department with the assistance of the British Council today (Tuesday) launched two English language improvement projects under the sponsorship of the Government's \$300 million Language Fund.

The projects included the 60-hour Primary English Teachers Oral Proficiency courses for the school year 1995/96 and a 30-week Look Ahead Television English series to be broadcast on Cable TV.

Addressing a reception to mark the launch, the Deputy Director of Education, Miss Elaine Chung, underlined the importance of language as the key to communication and learning.

She said the Government had always taken a pro-active approach to improving standards of English and Chinese, including Putonghua, among students. Measures include curriculum renewal, teacher training, additional facilities and resources, bridging courses and medium of instruction policy.

"Specific measures to enhance English language skills include employment of native English speakers, extra-curricular programmes, Extensive Reading Schemes, summer camps, etc. In the 1994/95 school year, Education Department spent a total of \$205.8 million specifically to improve language proficiency in the school sector," she said.

"The creation of a \$300 million Language Fund represents yet another government initiative to pool together the expertise and experience in the community to uplift language standards."

Miss Chung stressed the importance of ensuring that students in Hong Kong have the opportunity to develop effective communication skills in Chinese and English.

"Language proficiency will allow them to continue the learning process throughout their adult lives. Furthermore, Hong Kong will lose its cutting edge as a highly competitive international business centre and gateway to China if our students are not fully bilingual."

Also speaking at the reception, the chairman of the Language Fund Advisory Committee, Professor Rosie Young, said the Language Fund had so far approved grants for 56 projects totalling \$87 million.

"In a few days' time, that is by the 30th of September, applications for the third Language Fund allocation exercise will officially be closed," she said.

Professor Young called on everybody concerned, including language teacher trainers, resource developers and researchers among others, to support this important mission.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

## Hong Kong to celebrate World Maritime Day

\* \* \* \* \*

Hong Kong will join some 152 maritime administrations around the world to celebrate World Maritime Day 1995, the Director of Marine, Mr Ian Dale, announced today (Tuesday).

Being an associate member of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Hong Kong wholeheartedly supported the actions taken by IMO in its endeavours towards safer ships and cleaner seas, Mr Dale said on the eve of Hong Kong's World Maritime Day 1995.

IMO is an United Nations agency dealing with international shipping and its members are celebrating the World Maritime Day 1995 during the week of September 25 to 29.

The annual event was first held on March 17, 1978, to mark the date of entry into force in 1958 of the convention establishing IMO and since then the organisation uses the occasion every year to publicise its work.

The theme of this year's World Maritime Day is "50th Anniversary of the United Nations: IMO's Achievements and Challenges".

"Hong Kong will continue to be in the forefront of maritime administrations which adopt internationally ratified maritime safety conventions," said Mr Dale.

He noted that just recently Hong Kong had completed another round of legislative amendments to the Merchant Shipping (Safety) Ordinance to bring local regulations in ship construction and design in line with internationally ratified maritime safety standards.

In a message marking World Maritime Day 1995, the Secretary-General of IMO, Mr William O'Neil, said IMO was established by means of a convention which was adopted under the auspices of the United Nations in 1948 and today has 152 member states.

"Its most important treaties cover more than 98 per cent of world shipping," said Mr O'Neil.

IMO succeeded in winning the support of the maritime world by being pragmatic, effective and above all by concentrating on the technical issues related to safety at sea and the prevention of pollution from ships.

"IMO's priorities are often described in the slogan 'safer shipping and cleaner oceans'," Mr O'Neil stressed.

Noting that nobody could predict precisely what would happen in the shipping world during the next few years, Mr O'Neil said there were indications that, from a safety point of view, IMO should be especially vigilant.

He said until recently, the indications were that IMO's efforts to improve safety and reduce pollution were paying off.

The rate of serious casualties was falling and the amount of oil and other pollutants entering the sea was decreasing quite dramatically.

"But recently there has been a disturbing rise in accidents and our fear is, if nothing is done, that the progress we have diligently fought for over the last few decades will be lost," said Mr O'Neil.

To avert the this danger, IMO has taken a number of actions:

- \* set up a special sub-committee to improve the way IMO regulations are implemented by flag states;
- \* encouraged the establishment of regional port state control arrangements so that all countries which have ratified IMO conventions and have the right to inspect foreign ships to make sure that they meet IMO requirements and can do this more effectively;
- \* adopted a new mandatory International Safety Management Code to improve standards of management and especially to make sure that safety and environmental issues are never overlooked or ignored; and
- \* adopted amendments recently to the convention dealing with standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers. The convention has been modernised and restructured, but most important of all, new provisions have been introduced which will help to make sure that the convention is properly implemented.

When these and other measures were added together they made an impressive package that should make a significant contribution to safety and pollution prevention in the years to come, Mr O'Neil said.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Monthly Digest of Statistics for September published

\* \* \* \* \*

Two feature articles, entitled "Trends of Infant Mortality in Hong Kong, 1946-1994" and "River Trade Cargo Statistics 1994", are published in the September issue of the Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics.

The former article describes the trends of infant mortality in Hong Kong from 1946 to 1994. Sex differentials and major causes of infant deaths are analysed and reasons for the decline in infant mortality and scope for further improvements are also discussed.

In recent years, river trade activities have been playing an increasingly important role in Hong Kong trade. This development is closely associated with the economic growth in the Pearl River Delta region. An analysis of river trade cargo statistics for 1994 is provided in the latter article.

The September 1995 issue of the Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics is available at \$50 a copy (not including postage).

It contains all information about Hong Kong's latest situation regarding economic growth, the labour market, inflation and many other social and economic issues that have important impact on business and everyday life.

The publication can be purchased at the Government Publications Centre, ground floor, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

It can also be bought at the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th Floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Regular subscription can be arranged with the Publications (Sales) Office of the Information Services Department on 2598 8194.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Job bazaars to assist job-seekers

\* \* \* \* \*

The Labour Department will organise two job bazaars on September 28 and October 3 to help job-seekers including retrainees find jobs.

Organised by the department's Employment Services Division and sponsored by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), the bazaars will provide a chance for employers and job-seekers to discuss job vacancies and employment conditions in the trades concerned.

About 15 employers from different trades including hotel, catering, department store, retail, supermarket, trade, communications, airline, medical, electronics, security and property management will be participating in the bazaars.

They will brief job-seekers on their respective trades and select suitable persons for interview on the spot or on a later date.

There will also be talks by the ERB and participating organisations on the Employees Retraining Scheme.

The first bazaar will be held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Exhibition Hall and the second at the Tsuen Wan Town Hall Exhibition Hall. Both bazaars will open from 11 am to 5.30 pm.

Hong Kong residents, especially those aged 30 or above and are looking for a job, are welcome to visit the bazaars.

Four similar bazaars organised by the department last year were well-received and had attracted a total of more than 9,300 visitors.

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

\*\*\*\*\*

Tender date	26 Sept 1995	26 Sept 1995
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q539	H574
Amount applied	HK\$3,740 MN	HK\$3,548 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN	HK\$800 MN
Average yield accepted	5.69 PCT	5.70 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.70 PCT	5.70 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 34 PCT	About 73 PCT
Average tender yield	5.70 PCT	5.72 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning 2 Oct, 1995

Tender date	3 Oct 1995	3 Oct 1995
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q540	Y594
Issue date	4 Oct 1995	4 Oct 1995
Maturity date	3 Jan 1996	2 Oct 1996
Tenor	91 days	364 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300 MN	HK\$500+150 MN

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

\*\*\*\*\*

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	2,017	0930	+385
Closing balance in the account	2,402	1000	+385
Change attributable to :		1100	+385
Money market activity	+400	1200	+400
LAF today	-15	1500	+400
		1600	+400

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 122.3 \*+0.1\* 26.9.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.68	2 years	2708	6.06	100.17	6.05
1 month	5.69	3 years	3807	6.16	99.68	6.38
3 months	5.70	5 years	5009	6.95	99.92	7.09
6 months	5.72	5 years	M501	7.90	102.03	7.51
12 months	5.74					

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$20,328 million

Closed September 26, 1995

End/Tuesday, September 26, 1995