



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
GARDEN ROAD, 5th-8th FLOORS, MURRAY BUILDING,
HONG KONG. TEL.: 2842 8777

Friday, January 24, 1997

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Governor's statement

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In response to media enquiries, the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten said:

"I am pleased at the appointment of two serving ExCo members to Mr C H Tung's Executive Council. Their presence will provide a measure of continuity. Dame Rosanna Wong and Raymond Ch'ien have given me wise, independent and valuable advice since I appointed them to my Executive Council in October 1992. I fully expect that they will continue to do so up to June 30, as I am confident they will beyond that as members of Mr Tung's Executive Council."

End

Joint Liaison Group expert talks to be held on Monday

* * * * *

The 22nd round of expert talks in the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group on Hong Kong's defence and public order will take place in Hong Kong on Monday, January 27.

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

End

Consultation on Long Term Housing Strategy Review launched

* * * * *

The Government published today (Friday) a Consultative Document setting out the conclusions and recommendations of its review of the Long Term Housing Strategy.

Launching the four-month consultation exercise at a press conference, the Secretary for Housing, Mr. Dominic Wong, said that in conducting the review, the Government's aim had been to set a course for meeting the Government's housing goals over the next ten years up to March 2006.

"Our housing goals are to help all families gain access to adequate and affordable housing, and to encourage home ownership in the community," Mr. Wong said. "We have achieved a great deal in recent years towards achieving these goals," he added. "But we still face important challenges in the years ahead."

"Despite the enormous resources we commit each year to our public rental housing construction programme, there are still many genuinely needy families waiting for public rental flats. At the same time, there are many families in public rental housing who are less in need of subsidy," he explained.

Mr. Wong said, "We believe that the best and most fair way to help families in genuine need more quickly is to encourage those public housing tenants who can afford to do so to move out, thus releasing flats for re-allocation.

"Another important challenge we face is to help more families to fulfil their wish to own their homes," Mr. Wong said. "We believe that the best and most efficient way to do this is to increase the supply of land for private housing and accelerate production, while continuing to implement and expand our subsidised home ownership schemes."

Mr. Wong highlighted the Government's priorities in tackling these challenges. "We need to concentrate on four key objectives," he said. These are -

- * to increase flat supply to meet forecast demand, currently estimated to be some 80,000 flats on average each year over the period from 1995 to 2006;
- * to maximise the contribution of the private sector towards meeting housing demand;
- * to encourage wider home ownership; and
- * to provide public rental housing for those in genuine need.

Mr. Wong explained that the Government had put forward a number of possible initiatives to achieve these objectives.

"To increase flat supply, we propose to increase the supply of land and supporting infrastructure (including, where appropriate, by means of entrustment of such works to private developers); to streamline and speed up procedures for the approval of housing projects and related land transactions; and to facilitate the urban renewal process. We will also continue to monitor the capacity of the construction industry and take early measures, as appropriate, to alleviate any specific constraint which may arise," Mr. Wong said.

"To maximise the contribution of the private sector, we propose to ease any supply constraints; and to invite private developers to build more subsidised home ownership flats as part of mixed developments. We will also continue to monitor the operation of the private residential property market and take action, as appropriate, to protect the interests of consumers and genuine home buyers."

"To encourage wider home ownership, we propose to maintain and, where possible, expand the existing subsidised home ownership schemes to help eligible families to buy their own homes. We also propose to allow public housing tenants to buy Sandwich Class Housing flats on equal terms with families living in private housing; to buy new public rental flats at a discount to normal HOS prices; and to buy suitable existing public rental flats at affordable prices."

"To provide public rental housing for those in genuine need, we propose to require all prospective tenants to undergo a comprehensive means test before entry, covering both income and net assets and to introduce similar restrictions on the ability to 'take over' public rental tenancies. We also propose to increase public housing rents gradually to more realistic but still affordable levels, whilst ensuring that the Housing Authority (HA)'s Rent Assistance Scheme continues to provide adequate assistance to families facing genuine hardship."

Mr Wong said these measures were designed to help all sections of the community.

"For families on the HA's waiting list, including the inadequately housed, there will be a more equitable system of allocating public rental housing. Together with an increase in the number of flats available for allocation, this will help shorten the waiting time," Mr Wong said.

"For existing public housing tenants, there will be more opportunities for home ownership."

"For aspiring home owners in the private sector, opportunities should also be greater as flat supply continues to increase."

"For private sector developers, there will be greater opportunities to help meet the housing needs of Hong Kong."

"And for the whole community, there will be greater choice in housing provision, and more equitable use of the community's resources."

"Housing is a key factor in determining our quality of life," Mr Wong stressed. "While we believe that the priorities we have identified are the right ones for Hong Kong, we welcome views on what our objectives should be and how best to achieve them. It is important that we have an open and constructive debate in the community on how best to meet the challenges ahead."

Copies of the Consultative Document may be obtained from District Offices, the Government Publications Centre and the Hong Kong Government Home Page on the Internet (at <http://www.info.gov.hk>). The public will have up until 31 May 1997 to submit their views to the Housing Branch.

End

Consultation on Consumer Council report extended

The Government announced today (Friday) that the public consultation period for the Consumer Council's Study Report on Competition Policy will be extended until February 28, 1997.

A Government spokesman said: "We have invited the public and more than 110 interested organisations to comment on the recommendations of the Council's Report by January 6 this year. So far, about 40 responses have been received, half of which requested us to extend the deadline for consultation by one to three months.

"In view of these requests and recognising that the recommendations of the Council's Report will have far-reaching implications for the Hong Kong economy as a whole, we have decided to extend the consultation period to end of February 1997. This will allow interested organisations more time to consider the recommendations of the Council's Report and send their views to us."

"We will consider comments received and examine the recommendations in the Report carefully. We intend to publish a Government Response around six months after the conclusion of the consultation period," the spokesman added.

Members of the public and interested organisations are requested to send their views on the Report in writing to the Trade and Industry Branch, Government Secretariat, Hong Kong Government at 8/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 11 Ice House Street, Central.

End

Medical services provided to VMs

* * * * *

Medical services are provided to all Vietnamese migrants (VMs) if they need them.

There is no truth in allegations that any life-saving medical treatment had been denied to VMs unless they volunteered to return to Vietnam, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Security, Ms Sally Wong, said today (Friday).

Ms Wong said this in response to enquiries made at the Legco Home Affairs Panel and also recent reports in the media.

The Hong Kong Government's policy on the provision of medical services to VMs and Vietnamese refugees (VRs) is explained in the United Kingdom Government's response to the Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, tabled at the Home Affairs Panel today.

Ms Wong said that having investigated into the three cases of alleged "refusal of medical or dental treatment", referred by Refugee Concern to the UN Committee, it was concluded that the allegations made were unfounded.

The three cases involved a VM child with leukaemia, a VM woman with breast cancer and another woman seeking dental treatment.

"The VM child with leukaemia was given appropriate chemotherapy treatment as soon as he was diagnosed as having the disease. Complete remission was achieved," Ms Wong said.

"The leukaemia recurred in January 1994. A second complete remission was again achieved with chemotherapy.

"As some abnormality was detected, an allergenic bone marrow transplantation was deemed necessary. None of the child's family members was found to be a suitable compatible donor and the boy was put on the waiting list for a matched unrelated donor transplant."

Ms Wong said that contrary to what had been said in some press reports, a bone marrow transplant was performed on the child on September 23, 1994 in Queen Mary Hospital.

"Unfortunately, after the transplant, the child developed symptoms and signs of acute graft-versus-host disease and various other diseases despite medical treatments given to him.

"He was transferred to the Intensive Care Unit, put on mechanical ventilation and given further treatment, including frequent blood replacement.

"Failing to respond to various treatments, the boy finally died on December 1, 1994," she said.

The death inquest of the child revealed a natural cause of death.

"Throughout the treatment period, the camp management, various non-government organisations (NGOs) and hospital personnel offered assistance to the family, including arrangements for the parents to visit their child in hospital on a daily basis.

"Exceptional arrangements were also made for the child's mother to stay with him in the hospital," Ms Wong added.

In the case of the Vietnamese woman with breast cancer, Ms Wong said that the woman expressly refused to consent to the release of her medical records held by Prince of Wales Hospital, where she had sought medical assistance before.

"Her medical records at Whitehead Detention Centre were destroyed alongside others in the camp riots on May 10, 1996. The woman was transferred to Victoria Prison after the riots.

"In the absence of the patient's consent, the Hospital Authority is not in a position to release medical information concerning a patient to third parties," Ms Wong said.

"Access to the woman's medical history was thus effectively blocked."

Ms Wong said that the doctor at Victoria Prison found the general condition of the woman satisfactory and fit for travel.

The woman was repatriated to Vietnam on June 18 last year as scheduled, and her case was referred to the medical section of UNHCR for follow up in Vietnam.

The third case concerned a woman who admitted that she was a Chinese national and asked to return to China. Arrangements were made for her return to China on October 21, 1995.

Ms Wong said that the woman did not say anything about her alleged dental problem or any forthcoming dental appointment.

"The camp management was first informed of the matter by an NGO on the day of repatriation and even then, the NGO was unable to state the appointment date.

"When the fax was received, the woman was already on her way back to China and it was too late to reverse the repatriation process," Ms Wong said.

End

Government establishes Planning Committee on Science Park

* * * * *

The Industry Department announced today (Friday) the establishment of a Planning Committee on Science Park to take forward the proposal of setting up a science park in Hong Kong.

The science park project was identified by the Government as an integral of an advanced technological infrastructure in Hong Kong.

The project stemmed from the recommendations in the Science Park Stage Two Study Report published in October 1995. The report was made available for public consultation until the end of 1995.

The proposed development of a science park in Hong Kong has received strong support from industry, the higher education sector and the business community.

"The planning committee deals with the detailed planning issues relating to the setting up of a science park and makes recommendations to the Government on the institutional arrangements for the future governing body of the science park, the parameters of development, the project estimates and the financing mechanism," said the Director-General of Industry and chairman of the planning committee, Mr Francis Ho.

He said recommendations in the report would be used as a broad basis for establishing a science park at Pak Shek Kok, which would be available for development in early 1998.

He said the planning committee would recommend detailed implementation proposals, which would form the basis to evaluate project estimates.

The planning committee is chaired by the Director-General of Industry and its members comprise academics, industrialists and businessmen from investment community and estate management sector, in addition to representatives of relevant government departments.

Non-official members are appointed on an ad persona basis and include Mr Carlos Genardini of Motorola Semiconductor, Mr Gabriel Kow of Glaxo Wellcome, Mr Patrick Wang of Johnson Electric, Mr Norman Yuen of Hong Kong Telecom, Professor Charles Kao, Professor Arthur Li of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Woo Chia-wei of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Mr Joseph Pang of the Bank of Far East and Mr Keith Kerr of Swire Properties.

Apart from the Industry Department, the Finance Branch, the Trade and Industry Branch, the Architectural Services Department, the Lands Department and the Planning Department are represented in the Planning Committee.

"The planning committee plays an important role in paving the way for proceeding further with the science park project.

"We have a strong team from the various relevant sectors to undertake the task. We hope to hold the first meeting of the Planning Committee in February," said Mr Ho.

End

Foreign exchange reserves to be published monthly

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The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today the latest figures on Hong Kong's foreign reserves held in the Exchange Fund.

As at the end of December 1996, Hong Kong's foreign reserves stood at US\$63.8 billion, representing an increase of 15% over the corresponding figure as at the end of 1995 of US\$55.4 billion.

On this basis, Hong Kong has maintained its seventh position in the world ranking of foreign reserves holdings.

Including forward transactions to be settled, Hong Kong's foreign reserves at the end of 1996 were US\$69.6 billion, 22% higher than the US\$57.2 billion recorded for the end of 1995.

All these figures do not include Hong Kong's foreign reserves held in the Land Fund.

The HKMA also announced that figures on foreign reserves held in the Exchange Fund will from now on be released on a monthly basis.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Joseph Yam, said: "This is part of our on-going effort to increase transparency in our operations. Monthly disclosure of our foreign reserves is in line with the practice of major economies and is a recommendation of the International Monetary Fund.

"We have come a long way in the last few years. We only started releasing figures on the Exchange Fund in 1992. Since then, the HKMA has progressed from annual to half-yearly, quarterly and now to monthly release of figures on foreign reserves."

Foreign Reserves Ranking

Japan	US\$217 billion	Nov 96
China	US\$105 billion	Dec 96
Germany	US\$91 billion	Nov 96
Taiwan	US\$88 billion	Dec 96
United States	US\$78 billion	Oct 96
Singapore 96	US\$76 billion	Nov 96
Hong Kong	US\$64 billion	Dec 96
Spain	US\$57 billion	Nov 96

Sources: IMF, HKMA

Exchange Fund Foreign Currency Assets

	(US\$ Bn)		
	Excluding forward transactions	Net forward transactions	Including forward transactions
March 95	52.4	(0.2)	52.2
June 95	53.6	-	53.6
September 95	51.8	2.8	54.6
December 95	55.4	1.8	57.2
March 96	58.1	1.7	59.8
June 96	57.3	2.7	60.0
September 96	55.4	6.7	62.1
December 96	63.8	5.7	69.6

End

HK Delegation to attend Border Liaison Review Meeting

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At the invitation of the Deputy Secretary General and Director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Guangdong Provincial Government, Mr Chao Zhenwei, a Hong Kong Government delegation will visit Guangdong from January 26 to 28 (Sunday to Tuesday) for the 17th Annual Border Liaison Review Meeting.

Led by the Secretary for Constitutional Affairs, Mr Nicholas Ng, members of the delegation will include Mrs Regina Ip, Director of Immigration; Mrs Carrie Yau, Deputy Secretary for Security; Mr Canice Mak, Deputy Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands; Miss Nancy Law, Deputy Secretary for Transport; and Mr Spencer Foo, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Operations).

Other members are Mr Edmond Lau, Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional Affairs; Miss Shirley Yung, Assistant Secretary for Constitutional Affairs; and Mr Himly Li, Mr K F Li and Mr Ronald Fok, Border Liaison Officers respectively for Customs, Immigration and the Police.

The meeting will be held in the morning on Monday (January 27) in Guangzhou to review border liaison arrangements for cooperation as well as cross-border traffic management over the past year. The two sides will also look ahead for the future and discuss ways of further strengthening these arrangements.

End

Trade director to attend APEC meeting in Canada

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The Director-General of Trade, Mr Alan Lai, will represent Hong Kong at this year's first Senior Officials Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) to be held on January 27 and 28 in Victoria, Canada.

Mr Lai will lead a Hong Kong delegation comprising officials from the Trade and Industry Branch, the Financial Services Branch, the Customs and Excise Department, the Government Supplies Department, the Industry Department, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Toronto, and the Trade Department.

At the meeting in Victoria, senior officials will map out the themes and priorities of APEC in 1997 in the light of decisions and initiatives agreed by APEC Ministers and Economic Leaders in Subic, the Philippines, last November.

Last November, the Economic Leaders endorsed the Manila Action Plan for APEC (MAPA) comprising members' Individual Action Plans and Collective Action Plans to achieve free and open trade by 2010/2020 as well as joint activities on economic and technical co-operation.

They also agreed on sustaining the dynamism of the action plans through a continuous process of review and consultations.

Senior Officials will discuss how to implement and improve the plans at the meeting, and will also discuss ways to strengthen economic and technical co-operation among members in a coherent and focused manner, and to increase the involvement and contribution of the private sector towards the APEC process.

The Senior Officials Meeting will be followed by a number of committee/sub-committee meetings including those of the Committee on Trade and Investment, the Economic Committee, the Investment Experts Group, the Sub-committee on Customs Procedures, the Sub-committee on Standards and Conformance, and the Government Procurement Experts Group to be chaired by Hong Kong.

Three Senior Officials Meetings are planned for this year. The second meeting will be held in Quebec City, Quebec in May and the third in St John's, Newfoundland in August. The APEC Ministerial and Economic Leaders Meetings will be held in Vancouver in November.

Member economies of APEC are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and the United States.

End

Customs & Excise celebrates International Customs Day

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The Customs and Excise Department hosted a reception today (Friday) to mark the 1997 International Customs Day.

"This is the 10th year Hong Kong has celebrated the International Customs Day since it became a full member of the World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1987," said a spokesman for the Customs and Excise Department.

Since its establishment, the WCO has been promoting closer international Customs links within its membership which has now increased to 142, including China and Hong Kong.

The annual event, the spokesman noted, was a means of promoting customs co-operation and forging closer links among customs officials of different customs administrations.

About 400 guests, including members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, senior government officials, Consuls-General and Foreign Customs Attaches, and top executives from trade and business organisations, attended today's reception at the Customs and Excise Service Senior Officers' Mess.

Also at the function, the Executive Director of Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Mr Michael C C Sze, presented WCO certificates of merit to nine Hong Kong Customs officers in recognition of their efforts in organising the 1996 World Customs Organization Conference held in Hong Kong in June last year.

End

November provisional statistics of retail sales released

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The value of total retail sales in November 1996, estimated at \$18.4 billion, increased by 8% when compared with November 1995. After discounting the effect of price changes over the period, total retail sales increased by 3% in volume.

These are provisional figures on retail sales released today (Friday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

Compared with a year ago, the increase in November 1996 was mainly attributable to the increase in spending on consumer durable goods (12% in both value and volume). While sales of consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles surged by 13% in value and 12% in volume, that of motor vehicles grew by 11% in both value and volume.

Concurrently, sales of some other commodities also recorded increases of various magnitudes in both value and volume terms. These included jewellery, watches and clocks and valuable gifts (7% in both value and volume); miscellaneous consumer goods (12% in value and 6% in volume) and food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (3% in value and 0.2% in volume). Sales in supermarkets also went up by 11% in value and 5% in volume.

On the other hand, sales in department stores registered an increase of 6% in value, but a decrease of 1% in volume. Similarly, sales of clothing and footwear rose by 4% in value, but went down by 5% in volume.

Besides, sales of fuels continued to show a decline of 6% in volume, though showing no apparent change in value. The decline is largely due to the continued shift from retail purchases to direct purchases from major fuels suppliers.

Compared with October 1996 (but bearing in mind that this comparison is affected by seasonal factors), total retail sales in November 1996 decreased by 4% in value and 5% in volume.

Comparing the period from January to November 1996 with the same period in 1995, total retail sales rose by 6% in value and 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 October 1996 and the provisional figure for November 1996.

Table 2 shows the value and volume indices of retail sales in November 1995, October 1996 and November 1996 for all retail outlets and by type of retail outlets, with average retail sales from October 1994 to September 1995 taken as 100. Comparisons of the November 1996 results with those for October 1996 and those for November 1995, as well as comparison of retail sales in the period from January to November of 1996 with the same period in 1995 are also given.

The report containing the analysis of the November 1996 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, 12 Harbour Road, 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 November 1996 (Provisional Figure) = HK\$18,442.1 million
for October 1996 (Revised Figure) = HK\$19,284.7 million

TABLE 2 : VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES FOR NOVEMBER 1995, OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 1996

(Monthly average of October 1994 - September 1995 = 100)

Type of Outlets	Type of Index	Index Number			% Change		
		November 1995 (Revised figures)	October 1996 (Revised figures)	November 1996 (Provisional figures)	Nov 1996 compared with Oct 1996	Nov 1996 compared with Nov 1995	Jan - Nov 1996 compared with Jan - Nov 1995
(A) FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS		(Point)	(Point)	(Point)	(%)	(%)	(%)
	Value	98.7	111.1	106.2	-4.4	+7.7	+6.1
	Volume	94.5	102.4	97.4	-4.8	+3.1	+1.5
(B) BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLETS							
Food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (other than supermarkets)	Value	100.1	107.3	102.9	-4.1	+2.8	+5.6
	Volume	99.2	103.9	99.4	-4.3	+0.2	+2.4
Supermarkets †	Value	93.1	108.0	103.5	-4.2	+11.2	+7.9
	Volume	88.5	97.2	92.7	-4.6	+4.7	+1.5
Fuels	Value	87.0	95.7	87.1	-9.0	+0.1	-2.3
	Volume	84.3	87.8	79.1	-9.9	-6.2	-8.6
Clothing, footwear and allied products	Value	111.3	114.7	116.2	+1.3	+4.4	+9.7
	Volume	102.1	97.5	97.2	-0.3	-4.8	+1.8
Consumer durable goods	Value	91.9	101.6	103.2	+1.6	+12.3	+4.2
	Volume	90.6	99.5	101.0	+1.5	+11.5	+3.4
- Motor vehicles and parts	Value	83.6	99.5	93.1	-6.5	+11.4	-1.1
	Volume	83.2	98.3	92.2	-6.2	+10.9	-1.5
- Consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and parts	Value	96.9	102.8	109.2	+6.2	+12.8	+7.1
	Volume	95.1	100.3	106.4	+6.0	+11.9	+6.1
Department stores	Value	96.5	95.8	102.2	+6.7	+5.9	+4.5
	Volume	90.3	84.7	89.1	+5.1	-1.3	-1.0
Jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts	Value	99.7	107.2	106.7	-0.5	+7.0	+2.0
	Volume	97.6	104.0	104.4	+0.4	+7.0	-1.2
Other consumer goods not elsewhere classified	Value	98.7	139.9	110.0	-21.3	+11.5	+10.5
	Volume	94.4	128.1	100.5	-21.5	+6.4	+5.5

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

Ocean vessel and seaborne cargo for the third quarter of 1996

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In the third quarter of 1996, 10,487 ocean vessels with a total capacity of 46.2 million net registered tons entered Hong Kong, according to the statistics released today (Friday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

Compared with the third quarter of 1995, the number of vessels decreased by 2%, while capacity increased by 4%.

Net registered ton (NRT) is a unit measure in volume terms of the space of a vessel available for carrying passengers or goods. One NRT is equivalent to 100 cubic feet.

During the same period, there were 10 463 outgoing ocean vessels with a total capacity of 46.2 million net registered tons, representing a decrease of 3% in number and an increase of 4% in capacity over the third quarter of 1995.

In the third quarter of 1996, the total tonnage of seaborne inward cargo, comprising seaborne imports and seaborne inward transshipment, was estimated to be 22.0 million tonnes, representing an increase of 2% over the same quarter in 1995. Within this total, the tonnage of seaborne imports grew by 3%, while that of seaborne inward transshipment fell by 1%.

During the same period, the total tonnage of seaborne outward cargo, comprising seaborne exports (domestic exports plus re-exports) and seaborne outward transshipment, was estimated to be 10.5 million tonnes, representing a decrease of 1% over the same quarter in 1995. The respective declines in the total tonnage of seaborne exports and seaborne outward transshipment were 1% and 3%.

Of the seaborne inward cargo, 82% in terms of tonnage were seaborne imports and 18% were seaborne inward transshipment. 53% of these cargoes were containerised.

Of the seaborne outward cargo, 59% in terms of tonnage were seaborne exports and 41% were seaborne outward transshipment. 86% of them were containerised cargo.

The above statistics are summarised in Table 1.

In the third quarter of 1996, the top five countries/territories of loading for seaborne inward cargo were Singapore (which accounted for 17% in tonnage terms), Japan (12%), China (12%), Taiwan (11%) and the USA (8%). The top five countries/territories of discharge for seaborne outward cargo were China (25%), the USA (21%), Taiwan (6%), Japan (5%) and Singapore (4%).

The top five principal commodities of seaborne inward cargo in tonnage terms included petroleum, petroleum products and related materials (20%); coal, coke and briquettes (10%); artificial resins and plastic materials (8%); iron and steel (7%) and paper and paper products (5%).

The top five principal commodities of seaborne outward cargo in tonnage terms included machinery (12%); other manufactured goods classified chiefly by material (9%); toys (9%); petroleum, petroleum products and related materials (8%) and other manufactured articles (7%).

The distribution of the top 10 countries/territories of loading and discharge and their changes in the tonnage of seaborne inward and outward cargo between the third quarter of 1996 and the third quarter of 1995 are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

Similar statistics for seaborne inward and outward cargo analysed by the top 10 principal commodities are shown in Table 4 and Table 5.

Ocean vessel statistics are compiled primarily from general declarations submitted to the Marine Department by ship masters or authorised shipping agents and cover all ocean vessels entering and leaving Hong Kong, excluding yachts and pleasure craft.

Seaborne cargo statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the ocean cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies or agents to the Census and Statistics Department. The sampling method is described in the Explanatory Notes of the report.

More details of ocean vessel and seaborne cargo statistics for the third quarter of 1996 are contained in the report entitled Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, July - September 1996. This report is in bilingual form.

The report is now on sale at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, Low Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong; and the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai at \$66 a copy.

Enquiries on statistics contained in the report may be directed to the Shipping and Cargo Statistics Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2582 4887.

Table 1: Summary of ocean vessel and seaborne cargo statistics

	3rd quarter <u>1996</u>	% change over <u>3rd quarter 1995</u>
Incoming ocean vessel		
Number	10 487	-2
Capacity (Mn. net registered tons)	46.2	+4
Seaborne inward cargo (Mn. tonnes)	22.0 (53)	+2
Seaborne imports (Mn. tonnes)	18.1 (44)	+3
Seaborne inward transhipment (Mn. tonnes)	3.9 (97)	-1
Outgoing ocean vessel		
Number	10 463	-3
Capacity (Mn. net registered tons)	46.2	+4
Seaborne outward cargo (Mn. tonnes)	10.5 (86)	-1
Seaborne exports (Mn. tonnes) (domestic exports plus re-exports)	6.2 (77)	-1
Seaborne outward transhipment (Mn. tonnes)	4.3 (99)	-3

Note: Figures in brackets denote the extent of containerization in percentage.

Table 2: Seaborne inward cargo⁽¹⁾ by top ten countries/territories of loading

<u>Country/territory of loading</u>	<u>3rd quarter</u>		<u>% change over</u>
	<u>1996</u>	<u>% share⁽²⁾</u>	<u>3rd quarter 1995</u>
	<u>('000 tonnes)</u>		
Singapore	3 753	17	-1
Japan	2 574	12	+1
China	2 565	12	-10
Taiwan	2 526	11	+18
U.S.A.	1 721	8	-13
Republic of Korea	1 623	7	+15
Australia	1 039	5	-6
Indonesia	1 024	5	+19
Malaysia	583	3	+94
Republic of South Africa	478	2	-53

Notes: (1) Seaborne inward cargo comprises seaborne imports and seaborne inward transshipment.

(2) % share in total tonnage of seaborne inward cargo.

Table 3: Seaborne outward cargo⁽¹⁾ by top ten countries/territories of discharge

<u>Country/territory of discharge</u>	3rd quarter		% change over
	<u>1996</u>	<u>% share⁽²⁾</u>	<u>3rd quarter 1995</u>
	('000 tonnes)		
China	2 659	25	+13
U.S.A.	2 221	21	+3
Taiwan	635	6	-6
Japan	519	5	+2
Singapore	412	4	-11
Federal Republic of Germany	401	4	-13
Netherlands	358	3	-11
United Kingdom	304	3	-4
Philippines	267	3	-8
Australia	233	2	+11

Notes: (1) Seaborne outward cargo comprises seaborne exports (domestic exports plus re-exports) and seaborne outward transhipment.

(2) % share in total tonnage of seaborne outward cargo.

Table 4: Seaborne inward cargo⁽¹⁾ by top ten principal commodities

<u>Commodity group</u>	<u>3rd quarter</u>		<u>% change over</u>
	<u>1996</u>	<u>% share⁽²⁾</u>	<u>3rd quarter 1995</u>
	('000 tonnes)		
Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	4 462	20	+7
Coal, coke and briquettes	2 229	10	-18
Artificial resins and plastic materials	1 754	8	+5
Iron and steel	1 618	7	+24
Paper and paper products	1 210	5	+11
Machinery	1 078	5	+2
Other manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	999	5	-9
Cement and cement clinker	764	3	+10
Textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products	761	3	+21
Stone, sand & gravel	588	3	-6

Notes: (1) Seaborne inward cargo comprises seaborne imports and seaborne inward transshipment.

(2) % share in total tonnage of seaborne inward cargo.

Table 5: Seaborne outward cargo ⁽¹⁾ by top ten principal commodities

<u>Commodity group</u>	<u>3rd quarter</u>		<u>% change over</u>
	<u>1996</u>	<u>% share⁽²⁾</u>	<u>3rd quarter 1995</u>
	('000 tonnes)		
Machinery	1 267	12	+17
Other manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	941	9	-17
Toys	909	9	+16
Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	856	8	+11
Other manufactured articles	767	7	-6
Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	492	5	-4
Artificial resins and plastic materials	342	3	-3
Footwear	334	3	+1
Other chemicals and related products	309	3	-18
Textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products	308	3	-15

End

Notes: (1) Seaborne outward cargo comprises seaborne exports (domestic exports plus re-exports) and seaborne outward transshipment.

(2) % share in total tonnage of seaborne outward cargo.

New award category for the Hong Kong Awards for Industry

* * * * *

The Secretary for Trade and Industry, Miss Denise Yue, today (Friday) urged manufacturers to enter the 1997 competition of the Hong Kong Awards for Industry, which is an initiative of the Government to recognise and encourage outstanding achievement in different aspects of manufacturing performance.

Speaking at a press conference, Miss Yue said a new category - technological achievement - had been introduced into this year's awards scheme. The new company-based category will be in addition to the existing categories of consumer product design, machinery and equipment design, productivity, quality, environmental performance and export marketing.

Miss Yue said the technological achievement category would be organised by the Hong Kong Industrial Technology Centre Corporation.

"This new category underscores the importance of technological development and application of new technologies in Hong Kong's manufacturing sector and recognises achievements of local companies in high technology sectors," Miss Yue said.

"It serves to give timely recognition to the impact and relevance of technology in our economic progress. Technological innovation enables our manufacturers to develop better quality and differentiated products. Technological application enhances operational efficiency and improves productivity."

Inaugurated in 1989, the Industry Awards are in their ninth year.

"The Industry Awards have developed into an important annual event for Hong Kong's manufacturing sector. The scheme showcases Hong Kong's manufacturing achievements, raises the profile of the local manufacturing sector and promotes its competitiveness in international markets," Miss Yue said.

As in previous years, each category will be run by a different organisation.

The Consumer Product Design Award category, organised by the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, encourages innovative design in consumer products.

The Machinery and Equipment Design Award category, administered by the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, encourages upgrading in the design and production of machinery and equipment.

The Productivity Award category, run by the Hong Kong Productivity Council, promotes endeavours to achieve improved productivity.

The Quality Award category, organised by the Industry Department, recognises quality achievements in manufacturing operations.

The Environmental Performance Award category, run by the Private Sector Committee on the Environment, promotes a wider appreciation of the importance of environmental protection among Hong Kong companies.

The Export Marketing Award category, organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, recognises the importance of export marketing strategies, methods and techniques in expanding and opening markets abroad.

Entries are invited every year and the best entry in each award category will be presented with the Hong Kong Awards for Industry.

Organisers of the various categories may also give their own awards in each award category or confer certificates of merit on deserving entries.

The closing date for entries in all seven categories is May 15. The presentation ceremony of the 1997 Awards will be held in early November at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Also speaking at the press conference was the Director-General of Industry, Mr Francis Ho, who introduced the Quality Award category.

Mr Ho said the Quality Award was a formal recognition of those manufacturers who had demonstrated outstanding performance in the quality of their products, and in the implementation of effective quality systems in their management and operation.

"The success of the Award is demonstrated not only by the increasing number of entrants year on year, but also by the increasing diversity of industries participating in the competition.

"As in previous years, the competition is open to all Hong Kong-based companies whose products have been wholly or partially manufactured in Hong Kong during the year prior to the closing date for entries. All applicants must have a valid local business registration certificate," he said.

Mr Ho said entries for the Quality Award will be evaluated on two main criteria, namely product quality and quality management system.

"The criteria will include such considerations as fitness for purpose of the products, consistency of performance, appearance, value for money and safeness. Companies will also be judged on the effectiveness of their quality management systems in all aspects of their operation, from the design stage to after sales service," he said.

"Other considerations will include vision and mission statements, human resource development and customer satisfaction awareness," he added.

Entry forms and brochures on the Quality Award are obtainable from the Quality Services Division of the Industry Department. Enquiries can be made at telephone 2829 4875.

Representatives from the other six organisations also introduced their respective award categories at the press conference.

End

Amusement rides operation fees to be revised

* * * * *

The Amusement Rides (Safety) (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 1997 which seeks to revise certain fees payable under the Amusement Rides (Safety) Ordinance and the Amusement Rides (Safety) (Operation and Maintenance) Regulation, was published in the Gazette today (Friday).

A spokesman for the Broadcasting, Culture and Sport Branch said it was Government policy that fees should in general be set at levels sufficient to recover the full cost of providing the services.

"The fees were last revised in March 1996. On the basis of the outcome of a recent costing review, it is proposed to revise the fees to achieve full cost recovery at 1996-97 prices except for the fees for approval to commence or resume operation of category A and B amusement rides.

"For the exceptions, we propose to phase in the full cost recovery over three years," he added.

Details of the existing and proposed fees are as follows :

Item	Description	Existing Fee (\$)	Proposed Fee (\$)
1	Fee for the designation by name of persons who may by exercise powers conferred sections 19 and 20 of the Ordinance	153	385
2	Fee for the approval of a person as a qualified person	700	1,155
3	Fee for an amendment to a limited certificate of approval held by a qualified person	700	1,155
4	Fees for approval under section 10 of the Ordinance for the commencement of operation of an amusement ride in - (Note)		
	(a) Category A	170	200
	(b) Category B	300	355
	(c) Category C	2,765	2,825
5	Fees for permission under section 15 of the Ordinance for the resumption of operation of an amusement ride in - (Note)		
	(a) Category A	170	200
	(b) Category B	300	355
	(c) Category C	2,765	2,825

The amendment regulation will be tabled in the Legislative Council on January 29 and come into effect on March 8.

Note:

An amusement ride in :

- a) Category A means any ride which is permitted to carry not more than 2 persons;
- b) Category B means any ride which is permitted to carry not more than 5 persons; and
- c) Category C means any ride which is permitted to carry not more than 20 persons.

End

Fee revision proposed for fire report

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The Government is proposing to revise the fee for the issue of a report on fire or other calamities attended by officers of the Fire Services Department (FSD).

The Fire Services Department (Reports and Certificates) (Amendment) Regulation 1997, which contains the revision, is gazetted today (Friday).

Under the Fire Services Department (Reports and Certificates) Regulations, the Director of Fire Services (DFS) may issue a report on fire or other calamities to any person applying in writing and upon payment of the appropriate fee.

A Government spokesman said that it was Government policy that fees should in general be set at levels sufficient to recover the full cost of providing the services.

He noted that the existing fee of \$180 for a fire report has been in force since 1994.

"A recent costing review of the fire report fee by the DFS has shown that the full cost of issuing such a report at 1996-97 prices is \$380.

"The increase in cost reflects the increase in professional input from fire officers in preparing the reports to cope with the demand for more technical information by the applicants in recent years," the spokesman said.

He said that in keeping with the full cost recovery policy, the Government proposed to increase the fee to \$380 with effect from March 7 this year.

"The proposed fee increase will have a minimal impact on the operating cost of the applicants as most of them are solicitor firms which will normally use the fire report in legal proceedings or for making insurance claims," the spokesman added.

The Amendment Regulation will be tabled in Legco on January 29.

End

Electrical fees revised

* * * * *

Two fees payable under the Electricity Ordinance will be revised on March 8, 1997 to reflect the increased costs of providing the services.

Regulations to this effect are gazetted today (Friday).

They are the Electricity (Registration) (Amendment) Regulation 1997 and the Electricity (Wiring) (Amendment) Regulation 1997.

The Electricity (Registration) Regulations stipulate the fee payable in respect of an application for registration of a generating facilities.

The Electricity (Wiring) Regulations stipulate the fee payable in respect of an application for endorsement by the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services of a safety inspection and test certificate for a fixed electrical installation in certain specific types of premises such as hotels, hospitals, schools and dangerous goods stores.

The fees will be revised to achieve full cost recovery at 1996-97 prices. The application fee for registration of generating facilities will increase by 1% to \$775. The fee for application for endorsement of a periodic inspection and testing certificate will increase by 13% to \$650.

It is Government policy that fees charged should in general be set at levels sufficient to recover the full cost of providing the services. The fees were last increased on December 30, 1994.

End

Gas safety fees revised

* * * * *

Various fees under the Gas Safety Ordinance will be revised on March 8, 1997 to reflect the increased costs of providing the services.

Three sets of regulations to this effect are gazetted today (Friday).

They are the Gas Safety (Gas Supply) (Amendment) Regulation 1997, Gas Safety (Registration of Gas Installers and Gas Contractors) (Amendment) Regulation 1997, and the Gas Safety (Registration of Gas Supply Companies) (Amendment) Regulation 1997.

The Gas Safety (Gas Supply) Regulations prescribe the fees payable in respect of application for approval of construction work on notifiable gas installations such as gasholders, plant and equipment for the manufacture of gas, high pressure gas mains and service pipes, and LPG stores; approval to use notifiable gas installations; and issue and annual renewal of permits for gas transport vehicles, i.e. road tankers and LPG cylinder wagons.

The Gas Safety (Registration of Gas Installers and Gas Contractors) Regulations prescribe the fees payable in respect of application for registration as a gas installer and a gas contractor.

The Gas Safety (Registration of Gas Supply Companies) Regulations prescribe the fee payable in respect of application for registration as a gas supply company.

The revised fees achieve full cost recovery at 1996-97 prices except the fee for renewal of permit for a LPG cylinder wagon, which is to be brought up to full cost recovery level over the next three years.

The increases range from 1.5% for the fee for request for approval to use of certain types of notifiable gas installation such as LPG terminals and plants for the manufacture of gas, etc. to 32% for the fee for application for registration as a gas supply company.

It is Government policy that fees should in general be set at levels sufficient to recover the full cost of providing the services. The fees were last increased on December 30, 1994.

End

Consultancy on supervision plan commissioned

* * * * *

The Buildings Department today (Friday) commissioned a consultancy firm to look into the supervision of building works in Hong Kong and to prepare a Technical Memorandum and a Code of Practice for a supervision plan system.

The Director of Buildings, Dr Choi Yu-leuk, signed a \$4.8 million contract with C M Wong & Associates Limited this afternoon. The consultant will complete the major part of the assignment in nine months.

Speaking after signing the contract, Dr Choi said the Government recognised that the safety of building works depended very much on the adequacy of supervision provided throughout the construction period.

"The supervision plan system, introduced under the Buildings (Amendments) Ordinance 1996, was a milestone achieved to upgrade the safety level on building sites.

"The Building Authority is empowered to refuse an application for consent to commence building works if a supervision plan has not been lodged. Deviation from the plan may lead to disciplinary action on the parties involved."

Dr Choi explained that a supervision plan would include a comprehensive management system on site safety specifying how the works were to be supervised and the supervisory responsibility of the building professionals and all other personnel engaged in the building works.

"The Technical Memorandum which will be subject to legislative procedures will lay down the system and framework for the supervision requirements.

"It will also specify the required experience and qualifications of all the persons responsible for site supervision, and the form and content of the supervision plan.

"The Code of Practice, on the other hand, will provide guidelines for building professionals on ways to meet the standards and requirements specified in the memorandum. It will also advise on the operation of the supervision plan system," he added.

End

Sha Lo Tung DPA plan published

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The Town Planning Board announced today (Friday) the draft Sha Lo Tung Development Permission Area (DPA) Plan.

Located about 3.8 kilometres to the north of Tai Po New Town, the Sha Lo Tung area covers about 57 hectares of land which is almost enclosed by the Pat Sin Leng Country Park.

Sha Lo Tung is an upland basin made up mostly of abandoned agricultural land. Some low-gradient streams meander through the area and support an extremely diverse community of dragonflies.

"The DPA plan serves to provide proper planning guidance and development control to the land uses in the area. It aims to preserve existing sensitive wildlife habitats from human disturbance," a spokesman for the board said.

"The board, when preparing the plan, has taken into consideration the traditional rights of the indigenous villagers and the existing rights of land owners."

On the plan, about 22 hectares of land, or 39 per cent of the total area, have been zoned "Site of Special Scientific Interest" to safeguard the stream courses in the area from pollution and to preserve the nearby woodlands, which provide habitats for the wildlife in the areas, in particular dragonflies.

About two hectares of land have been reserved for "Village Type Development" and 33 hectares have been zoned "Unspecified Use".

The draft plan (No DPA/NE/SLT/1) is available for public inspection until March 24 during office hours at:

- * Planning Department, 16th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong;
- * Sha Tin, Tai Po and North District Planning Office, ground floor, Sha Tin Government Offices, 6 Tung Lo Wan Hill Road, Sha Tin, New Territories; and
- * Tai Po District Office, Tai Po Government Offices Building, Ting Kok Road, Tai Po, New Territories.

Any person affected by the draft plan may submit written objection to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board, c/o Planning Department, 13th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong, before March 24.

The draft plan is also available for sale at the Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong and the Kowloon Map Sales Office, ground floor, 382 Nathan Road, Kowloon.

End

Environment council visits Chek Lap Kok and Sha Chau

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The Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) today (Friday) visited the new airport works site at Chek Lap Kok and the surrounding waters of Sha Chau where interim aviation fuel receiving facilities are being constructed.

ACE chairman, Mr Peter Wong, said members of the council toured the airport terminal building and were briefed by the Airport Authority on the progress of works, the environmental management measures at Chek Lap Kok, such as air quality monitoring and noise and dust control, and the conservation work carried out in the peripheral area.

"We are impressed by the cleanliness of the works site in spite of the intensive construction work being carried out at the moment," he said.

"We also saw the interim aviation fuel receiving facilities under construction in Sha Chau and were briefed on the environmental mitigation measures being implemented."

The visit was organised by the Airport Authority to show to the ACE the environmental mitigation measures to date and the authority's environmental programmes for the future operating airport.

End

Govt to resume private lots in North Tsing Yi

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The Governor-in-Council has approved plans to resume a number of private lots in North Tsing Yi for the provision of land for district open space in accordance with the approved Tsing Yi Outline Zoning Plan.

The proposed district open space will also serve as a buffer to minimise any noise impact from shipyard operations on nearby residents.

Details of the affected lots, which have a total area of 9,830 square metres, are gazetted today (Friday).

A Government spokesman said that the approved Tsing Yi Outline Zoning Plan included an area of about seven hectares for district open space and Government/Institution/Community facilities in North Tsing Yi.

"Part of the area (5.32 hectares) is occupied by a number of shipyards. The Government plans to reclaim 3.78 hectares," the spokesman said.

The proposed reclamation works include the construction of a 520 metres long pitched slope rubble seawall, reclamation of about 3.78 hectares of foreshore and seabed, a public pier, and associated drainage works.

Works are planned to begin in October 1998 for completion in January 2001.

Shipyard operators who own the affected private lots may make statutory claims under the Crown Lands Resumption Ordinance and, if their claims cannot be settled by agreement, they may apply to the Lands Tribunal for a decision.

Some of the affected shipyard operators hold Government land under Short Term Tenancies.

"The tenancies can be terminated with advance notice. No compensation will be payable on such termination. However, under the current policy, the shipyard operators may be eligible for ex-gratia allowances," the spokesman clarified.

The Government has no obligation to offer the affected shipyard operators replacement sites. However, in recognition of the contribution made by the shipyards to the operation of the port and the economy, new sites have been formed in the vicinity.

"Approval has been obtained to offer all affected shipyard operators 15-year lease leases by way of private treaty. For those who wish to take up the offer, we will allow them to hold over their existing sites, after reversion/termination of tenancy, for one year free of rent, on an ex-gratia basis," the spokesman added.

Plans of the affected area can be seen at the Kwai Tsing District Lands Office, 10th floor, Tsuen Wan Station Multi-storey Carpark Building, 174-208 Castle Peak Road Tsuen Wan.

End

Kwai Luen Road improvement works proposed

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The Government today (Friday) proposed to improve Kwai Luen Road and to build a new bus terminus in Kwai Shing East Estate.

The proposal is aimed at coping with the traffic generated from the redevelopment of Kwai Shing East Estate Phase 2, which will house 4,800 people. It will include:

- realignment of a 170-metre section of Kwai Luen Road joining Kwai Shing Circuit;

- modification of the junction of Kwai Luen Road and Kwai Shing Circuit;

- construction of a new bus terminus to replace the existing one; and

- associated footpaths, verges, street furniture, as well as drainage and other ancillary work.

Works will commence in mid-1997 for completion in early 1999.

Details of the proposal were published in the Government Gazette today.

The plan and scheme of the proposed works may be inspected during office hours:

- * Public Enquiry Service Centre, Central and Western District Office, ground floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central;
- * Kwai Tsing District Lands Office, 10th Floor, Tsuen Wan Station Multi-storey Carpark Building, 174-208 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan; and
- * Kwai Shing Sub-office, Kwai Tsing District Office, ground floor, 135-138 Block 8, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung.

Any person who wishes to object to the works or the use, or both, is required to address his objection in writing not later than March 25, 1997 to the Secretary for Transport, second floor, East Wing, Central Government Offices, Lower Albert Road, Central.

End

Tenders for Tseung Kwan O primary school projects invited

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The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of two primary schools in Area 55, Tseung Kwan O.

Each school will have a gross floor area of about 6,530 square metres, comprising a main teaching block, a special classroom block, an assembly hall, two basketball courts, car park, planting area and a separate ancillary building.

The contract will also include the design and construction of piled foundation, external and drainage works.

Works will begin in May for completion in October 1998.

Tender forms and further particulars can be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tender offers for the project will close at noon on February 21 (Friday).

End

Tenders for village flood protection works invited

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The Drainage Services Department is inviting tenders for village flood protection works at Chau Tau Tsuen in northwest New Territories.

The contract will include the construction of a flood protection embankment, a flood water storage pond, a flood water pumping station, a maintenance road and associated works.

Works will commence in April for completion in two years.

Forms of tender and further particulars can be obtained from the Chief Engineer, Drainage Projects Division, Drainage Services Department, 44th floor, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender Box at the lift lobby on the lower ground floor of the Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong, before noon on February 21 (Friday).

End

More than 400 blankets distributed to street sleepers

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Staff of the Social Welfare Department last (Thursday) night distributed a total of 406 blankets to street sleepers in a territory-wide operation during the cold weather.

Of the total, 174 were distributed in West Kowloon, 33 in East Kowloon, 152 on Hong Kong Island, 39 in New Territories East and eight in New Territories West.

End

Fresh water cut in Fanling and Ta Kwu Leng

Fresh water supply to some premises in Fanling and Ta Kwu Leng will be suspended from 9 am to 5 pm on Monday (January 27) for connection works on watermains.

The suspension will affect villages along Ping Che Road including Ping Yeung, Tong Fong, Lei Uk, Chau Tei Village, Fung Wong Wu, Kan Tau Wai Village, Tai Po Tin, Sheung Shan Kai Wat and Ha Shan Kai Wat; and villages along Lin Ma Hang Road including Kaw Liu Village, Chuk Yuen, Tsung Yuen Ha and Heung Yuen Wai.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender next week

Tender to be held in the week beginning January 27, 1997:

Tender date	:	30 January 1997
Paper on offer	:	EF bills
Issue number	:	Q069
Issue date	:	31 January 1997
Maturity date	:	28 February 1997
Tenor	:	28 days
Amount on offer	:	HK\$5,000 MN

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Interbank Liquidity

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		Time	Aggregate Balance Of Settlement Accounts
Opening aggregate balance	467 mn	0930 hr	8,287 mn
Closing aggregate balance	1,168 mn	1000 hr	9,977 mn
Change attributable to :		1100 hr	20,767 mn
money market activity	+7,281 mn	1200 hr	30,461 mn
LAF reversal	+6,568 mn	1500 hr	35,811 mn
LAF today	-13,148 mn	1600 hr	35,659 mn

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 126.6 *+0.0* 24.1.97

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/MTRC notes				
Terms	Yield	Terms	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.35	2 years	2811	5.72	100.25	5.64
1 month	4.31	3 years	3001	6.17	100.31	6.15
3 months	4.48	5 years	5112	6.57	100.33	6.59
6 months	4.66	7 years	7311	6.80	100.66	6.79
12 months	5.04	10 years	1610	7.37	103.55	6.98
		5 years	M503	7.35	102.31	6.87

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$32,884 mn

Closed January 24, 1997

End