



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, March 1, 1974

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Daily guide to wholesale prices and supply of basic food commodities

Release time: 7.15 p.m.

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WEDDINGS AT MARRIAGE REGISTRIES TO COST MORE

The cost of a wedding at the Marriage Registry will be raised from June 1 this year - for the first time in nearly 100 years.

A revised scale of fees charged under the Marriage Ordinance is published in a notice in today's gazette.

Commenting on these increases, the Registrar General, Mr. Walter Hume, said they were needed because the Marriage Registry was running at a considerable loss under the existing scale of charges.

"On the basis of the present fees, a loss of approximately \$2.3 million would be incurred by the Registry for the current financial year," he said.

"This is perhaps hardly surprising when you consider that the marriage fee of \$10 now being charged was set in 1876.

"Obviously it would become increasingly uneconomic to continue operating the Registry for an income so out of keeping with the costs.

"There are now 13 full-time Registries and a number of part-time Registries in operation," Mr. Hume pointed out. "The cost of running the Registries has increased considerably in recent years."

The main increases in the revised scale relate to the giving of notice and the actual marriage ceremony in the Office of the Registrar. These fees will be raised from \$2 and \$10 respectively to \$10 and \$50. Accordingly the total fees payable in respect of a Registry marriage will increase from \$12 to \$60.

"The new costs represent only a small proportion of the total cost of most weddings when you take into account the expenses for hospitality and entertainment that invariably follow," said Mr. Hume.

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RATING OF TSING YI ISLAND AND NGA YING CHAU

A number of owners and occupiers of premises on Tsing Yi Island and the adjacent islet of Nga Ying Chau will become liable for rates as from April 1 this year.

Commenting on this, the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation, Mr. R.A. Fry, said that this was in accordance with the government's policy of extending the urban rating system to developing areas, as announced by the Financial Secretary in 1972 and again mentioned earlier this week in the 1974 Budget.

The new rating area covers the major developed parts of Tsing Yi Island including the power station, a number of factories and several of Hong Kong's largest oil storage depots. Copies of the plan, showing the extent of the new rating area can be seen at the offices of the Rating and Valuation Department, 1, Garden Road and at the District Office, Tsuen Wan.

The percentage rate charge on rateable values for this new area will, as stated by the Financial Secretary, be 11 per cent for the first four years and, thereafter, that is in 1978, be brought into line with the other urban areas, which are presently rated at 15 per cent.

It was, however, emphasized that Tsing Yi town and the neighbouring villages which are not yet developed in accordance with a town plan have been excluded from the new area and owners and occupiers of such premises will not be required to pay rates at this time. Agricultural land which is entitled to exemption will likewise not be subject to rate charges.

/Tsing Yi

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Tsing Yi Island, which is now linked by a road bridge to the mainland, will be the first area of the New Territories to be rated on the urban system since the Castle Peak Road/Tsuen Wan area was added in 1956. The Financial Secretary has indicated that further rapidly developing areas will be rated in due course, and it is hoped to make a start on Yuen Long and Tai Po this year.

The valuation list for the new area will be formally declared, as required under the Rating Ordinance, by the Commissioner on Friday, March 8 at 12.15 p.m. in the offices of the Rating and Valuation Department. It will then be handed over to the Accountant General.

The list, which shows the premises assessed and their rateable values, will be displayed from March 9 to 29 at the Treasury Offices in the Central Government Offices, West Wing, 2nd Floor, Hong Kong. A copy will also be available for reference by the public at the Tsuen Wan District Office.

During this period of 21 days, any person may take an extract from the list and any person who disagrees with the inclusion or exclusion of premises in the list or the amount of rateable value assessed may serve on the Commissioner a proposal to amend the list. If the Commissioner does not agree to a proposal there are also rights of appeal to the District Court.

Notices, setting out details of assessments, were sent out today (Friday) to the owners involved and the Valuer concerned will be available at the department's head office, 1, Garden Road, should any ratepayer wish to discuss his assessment.

The Commissioner added that the new rating area has a total rateable value of just over \$20 million and will produce additional revenue of some \$2 million per annum.

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30 ACRES TO BE RECLAIMED AT SHAM SHUI PO

Work To Continue Round The Clock

Work on a \$12.5 million contract is now under way at Sham Shui Po to provide a 30-acre reclamation off Tung Chau Street on which a new ferry concourse, and other projects, including three secondary schools and a civic centre will be built.

A section of the West Kowloon Corridor Road project which will link Tong Mi Road to Yen Chow Street through the Tai Kok Tsui district will also be constructed on the reclamation.

The 900,000 cubic yards of filling material required for this reclamation is being brought from a borrow area at Shek Kip Mei to the east of Nam Cheong Street.

Because of the serious traffic congestion which exists in this part of Kowloon, it would be extremely difficult to convey this material through the streets in the hours permitted under the Summary Offences Ordinance.

If the contract were restricted to normal working hours delays in the projects which are to be built on the reclamation would be inevitable.

To avoid this situation arising the Executive Council have granted exemption from Section B of the Ordinance to permit work to be carried out on a 24-hour a day basis up to March 1975.

The work will be restricted to the excavation, loading, transporting and placing of filling material.

/Every effort

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Every effort will be made to minimise the disturbance to local residents by restricting night operations to sections of the borrow area which are farthest from the Shek Kip Mei residential area.

Whilst some inconvenience may be caused by this work there will also be some benefits to local residents in that:-

- * the overall period of inconvenience will be reduced;
- * it will be possible to make an earlier start on the Community Projects planned for the reclamation; and
- * the amount of traffic during the day time will be reduced.

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PRISONS OFFICERS RECRUITING CAMPAIGN

Note to Editors: A press conference to launch the Prisons Officers Recruiting Campaign will be held by the Commissioner of Prisons, Mr. Tom Garner in the 35 mm theatre, Government Information Services Department, 5th Floor, Beaconsfield House, on March 3 (Sunday), at 12 noon.

Also present will be Mr. Lo Kwok-kuen, Senior Superintendent (Narcotics), and Mr. John Law Yiu-wing, Principal Officer (Acting).

You are invited to send a reporter and/or photographer to cover the meeting.

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FIRE FIGHTERS SOUGHT

Young men interested in a challenging career are being sought by the Fire Services Department to fill vacancies in the rank of Assistant Station Officer/Station Officer.

Vacancies will be advertised tomorrow (Saturday) and applicants given initial interviews at Fire Services Headquarters, North Point, the following Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

There are 46 vacancies, representing 14 per cent of the total Assistant Station Officer/Station Officer establishment.

A spokesman for the Fire Services said today there is normally no shortage of applicants when such jobs are advertised, but, because high standards are demanded, only a small percentage are **finally selected**.

"**Intakes** could be increased by lowering standards, but we could never seriously consider this," he said. "By maintaining our present standards, we are certain of taking into the Service men of the calibre to make first class fire officers."

He pointed out that the type of man most likely to be selected would be both physically and mentally strong and, because of the increasing technology of fighting fires, academically well qualified.

"Fire officers are constantly having to study to keep up with the latest techniques and equipment," he said.

/The spokesman

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The spokesman said that, besides fighting fires, Assistant Station Officers also had supervisory and administrative duties to perform. Expansion of the department over the next few years ensured promotion prospects for the officer prepared to work hard and study to become qualified.

The starting salaries for officers vary from \$1,570 per month to \$1,855 per month, depending on educational qualifications. The maximum pay for an Assistant Station Officer is \$2,070 per month.

On being appointed, a recruit officer attends the Training School at Pat Heung in the New Territories for a six-month residential course covering different aspects of fire fighting. At the end of the course, he has to pass a final examination before posting to a fire station for operational duty.

The officer is on probation for the first three years of service, after which, provided he has carried out all his duties satisfactorily and passed the required examinations, he is confirmed to the permanent and pensionable establishment. He is also advanced to the rank of Station Officer, the salary scale for which is \$2,510 - \$3,910.

Officers are expected to maintain a high standard of discipline and turnout.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS TWO NEW MEMBERS

Two new members of the Board of Education have been appointed by the Governor.

They are the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hong Kong, the Most Rev. Peter Wang-kei Lei or his representative, and Mr. C.F. Sung, Managing Director of Hong Kong Flour Mills, Ltd.

Their appointment as Board members is published in today's government gazette.

Rev. Fr. Derek Reid, S.J., Principal of Wah Yan College, Kowloon, will represent the Roman Catholic Bishop at future meetings of the Board.

Mr. Sung succeeds Mr. Jack C. Tang, who has resigned from the Board.

The other members of the Board remain unchanged. They are:

Mr. Woo Pak-chuen, Senior Unofficial Member of Legislative Council (Chairman);

Director of Education, Mr. John Canning (Vice Chairman);

Bishop of Hong Kong, Right Rev. Gilbert Baker or his representative;

Vice Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, Dr. Rayson Hsiung Huang or his representative;

Vice Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Dr. Li Choh-ming or his representative;

General Secretary of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China, Rev. Peter Wong or his representative;

Director of the Hong Kong Polytechnic, Mr. C.L. Old or his representative;

Mr. Liu Yun-sum, Chairman of the Sheung Shui Rural Committee and Supervisor of the Pang Kai Public School, Sheung Shui;

/Mr. R.H. Lobo*****

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Mr. R.H. Lobo, Unofficial Member of Legislative Council;

Mrs. Joyce Symons, Unofficial Member of Legislative Council and
Headmistress of the Diocesan Girls' School;

Mr. P.G. Williams, Unofficial Member of Legislative Council.

The Board's Secretary is Mr. Morris Morgan, Assistant Director
of Education.

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CLOSURE OF YAU MA TEI OPEN AIR CAR PARK

Motorists are advised that the open air metered car park in
Kansu Street between Shanghai Street and Temple Street, Mong Kok, will be
closed to parking from 8.00 a.m. on Monday (March 4).

The closure of this car park is to facilitate piling works for the
Yau Ma Tei Multi-Storey Car Park, Stage II.

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CROWN LANDS OFFICE MOVES

The Crown Lands and Survey Office of the Public Works Department
has moved to new premises on the 9th floor of the Murray Road Multi-storey
Car Park in Central. The telephone number is 5-260061.

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HONG NING ROAD CLEARANCE

A large piece of Crown Land at Hong Ning Road, Kwun Tong, was cleared today (Friday), by the Housing Department and handed over to the Urban Council for development into a public playground.

The clearance operation, involving the demolition of 231 illegal squatter huts which were built there recently was smoothly completed by 3 p.m.

A total of 659 people who claimed to be homeless were accommodated in transit centres at Queensway, Chai Wan, and Wong Chuk Hang.

Another 2,000 who were eligible for re-site accommodation have already moved to Sai Cho Wan during the past few days.

The Housing Department also made available a fleet of lorries and about 300 labourers to assist people in the removal of their personal effects.

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CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

Daily Guide To Wholesale Market Prices And Supplies

The following prices were realised today (Friday) at sales under the Rice Control Scheme and at the Vegetable Marketing Organisation Wholesale Market and the Fish Marketing Organisation Wholesale Market at Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon:

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Rice

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>
<u>China Rice</u>		<u>Average</u>
See Mow -- old crop	-	-
-- new crop	-	-
S.C.Jion -- old crop	-	-
Po Hgai	-	-
Chu Cho	-	-
<u>Thai Rice</u>	-	-
100% Whole	-	-
10-15% Broken	-	-
A1 Super Extra	-	-
A1 Super	Good	1.42
Whole Glutinous	-	-
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.74
<u>Australian Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	Good	1.47

/Supplies and *****

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Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Marine Fish

<u>Species</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>		
		<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>
Golden Thread	Good	5.30	3.50	4.20
Big-Eyes	Good	2.70	0.80	1.80
Squid	Limited	6.00	3.50	4.00
Hair-Tails	Good	3.00	1.00	1.80
Lizard Fishes	Good	2.40	1.10	1.80
Croakers	Normal	2.50	1.20	1.80
Conger-Pike-Eels	Good	2.80	2.00	2.30
Melon Coat	Normal	2.80	1.30	1.80
Breams	Limited	5.20	3.50	4.50
Yellow Belly	Normal	1.60	0.80	1.20
Mackerels	Good	4.80	3.50	4.00
Red Goat Fish	Good	2.20	0.70	1.80
Fork-Tail	Normal	1.60	1.20	1.40
Horse-Head	Normal	5.50	3.80	4.50
Melon Seed	Normal	2.80	2.00	2.60
Pomfrets	-	-	-	-
Garoupas	Normal	6.00	5.00	5.50
Yellow Croaker	-	-	-	-

/Supplies and

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Supplies and Wholesale Prices of

Locally Produced Vegetables

<u>Type</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>		
		<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>
Flowering cabbage	Limited	2.4	0.8	1.6
White cabbage	Normal	0.6	0.2	0.4
Chinese Lottuce	Normal	0.8	0.2	0.5
Chinese Kale	Limited	1.8	0.8	1.4
Spring onion	Good	0.5	0.2	0.4
Spinach	Normal	1.2	0.3	0.8
Water cress	Normal	1.0	0.2	0.6
Loaf mustard cabbage	Limited	0.7	0.3	0.5
Tomato	Limited	1.5	0.5	1.0

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price</u>
		<u>(\$/ picul)</u>
		(Average)
Pork	Good	300