



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL: 5-233191

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1979

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1979

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TRADE GAP CONTINUES TO NARROW

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THE VALUE OF HONG KONG'S TOTAL EXPORTS LAST MONTH (SEPTEMBER) WAS \$7 051 MILLION AND IMPORTS WERE WORTH \$7 648 MILLION, GIVING A VISIBLE TRADE DEFICIT OF \$597 MILLION FOR THE MONTH, ACCORDING TO THE PROVISIONAL TRADE FIGURES RELEASED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TOTAL EXPORTS ARE MADE UP OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS, WHICH WERE VALUED AT \$5 316 MILLION LAST MONTH, AND RE-EXPORTS WORTH \$1 734 MILLION.

COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR, THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS ROSE BY 43 PER CENT, DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY 42 PER CENT, RE-EXPORTS BY 45 PER CENT AND IMPORTS BY 39 PER CENT.

DURING THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR COMPARED WITH THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR, THERE WAS A GROWTH OF 38 PER CENT IN THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS, 54 PER CENT IN RE-EXPORTS, 42 PER CENT IN TOTAL EXPORTS AND 38 PER CENT IN IMPORTS.

COMMENTING ON THESE FIGURES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT LAST MONTH WAS THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE MONTH WHEN THE GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL EXPORTS WAS HIGHER THAN THAT OF IMPORTS.

+THE TRADE FIGURES FOR LAST MONTH CONFIRM THAT THE VISIBLE TRADE GAP, THAT IS THE PROPORTION OF THE VALUE OF IMPORTS WHICH IS NOT PAID FOR BY TOTAL EXPORT EARNINGS, IS STILL ON A NARROWING TREND,+ HE SAID.

FOR THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, THE TRADE GAP WAS 11.5 PER CENT COMPARED WITH 13.6 PER CENT FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

+THE FACT THAT THE DEFICIT IN ABSOLUTE TERMS IS SLIGHTLY LARGER THAN IT WAS THIS TIME LAST YEAR, IS, OF COURSE, THE RESULT OF THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE VALUE OF THE TRADE INVOLVED,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS IN RECENT MONTHS, APART FROM BEING LESS THAN THE GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL EXPORTS, WAS CHARACTERISED BY THE PRESENCE OF UNUSUALLY LARGE SHIPMENTS OF CAPITAL GOODS.

+SO THE MORE DETAILED STATISTICS TO BE AVAILABLE SHORTLY ARE LIKELY TO SHOW THAT THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS OF CONSUMER GOODS HAS CONTINUED TO SLOW DOWN,+ HE SAID.

/THE FOLLOWING .....

## THE FOLLOWING ARE COMPARATIVE TRADE FIGURES :

<u>LATEST 3 MONTHS</u>	<u>JULY-SEPT.</u> 1979	<u>JULY-SEPT.</u> 1978	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS	16 280	11 290	+ 4 989	+44.2
RE-EXPORTS	5 141	3 396	+ 1 745	+51.4
TOTAL EXPORTS	21 421	14 686	+ 6 735	+45.9
IMPORTS	22 515	15 844	+ 6 671	+42.1
TRADE BALANCE	- 1 094	- 1 158	+ 64	
<u>SAME MONTH LAST YEAR</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u> 1979	<u>SEPTEMBER</u> 1978	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	5 316 (75.4%)	3 736 (75.7%)	+ 1 580	+42.3
RE-EXPORTS	1 734	1 200	+ 534	+44.5
TOTAL EXPORTS	7 051	4 936	+ 2 114	+42.8
IMPORTS	7 648	5 505	+ 2 143	+38.9
TRADE BALANCE	- 597	- 569	- 28	
<u>LAST MONTH</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u> 1979	<u>AUGUST</u> 1979	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	5 316 (75.4%)	5 806 (76.8%)	- 489	- 8.4
RE-EXPORTS	1 734	1 757	- 23	- 1.3
TOTAL EXPORTS	7 051	7 563	- 512	- 6.8
IMPORTS	7 648	7 348	+ 300	+ 4.1
TRADE BALANCE	- 597	+ 215	- 812	
<u>CALENDAR YEAR TO-DATE</u>	<u>JAN.-SEPT.</u> 1979	<u>JAN.-SEPT.</u> 1978	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	39 688 (73.5%)	28 758 (75.5%)	+10 930	+38.0

/RE-EXPORTS .....

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RE-EXPORTS	14 337	9 324	+ 5 013	+53.8
TOTAL EXPORTS	54 025	38 083	+15 942	+41.9
IMPORTS	61 031	44 098	+16 933	+38.4
TRADE BALANCE	- 7 006	- 6 015	- 991	

<u>LAST 12 MONTHS</u>	OCT. 1978 TO SEPT. 1979	OCT. 1977 TO SEPT. 1978	INCREASE OR DECREASE	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS	51 641	38 291	+13 350	+34.9
RE-EXPORTS	18 210	12 064	+ 6 145	+50.9
TOTAL EXPORTS	69 851	50 355	+19 495	+38.7
IMPORTS	79 989	57 617	+22 372	+38.8
TRADE BALANCE	-10 138	- 7 262	- 2 876	

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POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF COUNTRYSIDE BECAUSE OF  
HIGH FIRE RISK

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DURING THE FIRST THREE WEEKS OF OCTOBER MORE THAN 100 000 TREES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED OR DAMAGED AS A RESULT OF COUNTRYSIDE FIRES, THE COUNTRY PARKS AUTHORITY, MR. TED NICHOLS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

AND AS A RESULT OF THIS DAMAGE, MR. NICHOLS HAS REQUESTED VISITORS NOT TO GO TO THE SHING MUN COUNTRY PARK NOR THE TAI PO KAU SPECIAL AREA THIS WEEKEND AS THEY MAY HAVE TO BE CLOSED AT SHORT NOTICE BECAUSE OF THE FIRE RISK.

THE BARRIERS AT THE TAI LAM CHUNG AND KAM SHAN COUNTRY PARKS WILL ALSO BE CLOSED THUS PROHIBITING VEHICLES FROM ENTERING THE PARKS.

+IF PEOPLE WISH TO VISIT THE COUNTRY PARKS DURING THE WEEKEND THEY ARE ADVISED TO GO TO PLOVER COVE AND SAI KUNG INSTEAD,+ MR. NICHOLS SAID.

DURING THE WEEKEND -- PARTICULARLY SUNDAY AND MONDAY -- POLICE WILL BE MAKING REGULAR PATROLS OF BARBECUE AND PICNIC SITES AND ENTRY POINTS TO THE PARKS.

THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SOME 400 PERSONNEL ON DUTY AND THERE WILL BE ANOTHER 270 CIVIL AID SERVICES PERSONNEL ASSISTING THE DEPARTMENT.

/MR. NICHOLS .....

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MR. NICHOLS SAID THE COUNTRY PARKS IN CENTRAL NEW TERRITORIES ARE HEAVILY WOODED AND ONE SINGLE ACT OF CARELESSNESS COULD DESTROY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF PLANTATIONS AS WELL AS UPSETTING THE BALANCE OF NATURE.

IT IS PREDICTED THAT THE HUMIDITY WILL BE LOW DURING THE WEEKEND AND WITH THE ABSENCE OF RAIN FOR THE PAST 28 DAYS, THE FIRE RISK IS VERY HIGH.

+THE RISK IS EVEN GREATER WITH LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE USING THE PARKS,+ MR. NICHOLS SAID.

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SIR MURRAY TO OPEN HONG KONG'S LONGEST HIKING TRAIL  
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A 100 KILOMETRE-LONG (62 MILES) HIKING TRAIL STRETCHING ACROSS THE NEW TERRITORIES WILL BE OPENED ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 26) BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE.

THE MACLEHOSE TRAIL — NAMED AFTER SIR MURRAY, WHO HAS TAKEN A KEEN INTEREST IN CONSERVATION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE — IS HONG KONG'S FIRST LONG DISTANCE HIKING ROUTE PASSING THROUGH THE FINEST SCENERY OF EIGHT COUNTRY PARKS BETWEEN TUEN MUN AND THE SAI KUNG PENINSULA.

THE TRAIL IS DIVIDED INTO 10 SECTIONS, FOR SHORT DISTANCE HIKING, AND HAS A NUMBER OF CAMPSITES AND OTHER FACILITIES TO ASSIST HIKERS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER TO COVER THE OPENING OF THE MACLEHOSE TRAIL BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, AT THE COUNTRY PARKS MANAGEMENT CENTRE AT ROUTE TWISK, ABOUT HALF-A-MILE NORTH OF THE 12 MILESTONE AT 3 P.M. ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 26).

GOVERNMENT TRANSPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE NEWS MEDIA. IT WILL LEAVE KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER AT TSIM SHA TSUI FOR THE CENTRE AT 1.30 P.M. SHARP. SENIOR INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, MR. MARK PINKSTONE, WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST THE MEDIA.

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FIRE SERVICES CENTRALISED  
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IN OPERATION  
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THE FIRST STAGE OF THE FIRE SERVICES \$8.5 MILLION CENTRALISED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM HAS GONE INTO OPERATION.

+THE KOWLOON FIRE CONTROL CENTRE WENT ON TO THE NEW SYSTEM ON MONDAY (OCTOBER 22) AND THE HONG KONG ISLAND, THE NEW TERRITORIES AND THE AMBULANCE CONTROL CENTRES WILL BE BROUGHT INTO THE SYSTEM OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS,+ A FIRE SERVICES SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO PERMIT BETTER MOBILISING OF THE DEPARTMENT'S RESOURCES OF 5 000 MEN AND MORE THAN 500 VEHICLES.

HE SAID: +WHEN THE NEW SYSTEM BECOMES FULLY OPERATIONAL IN MARCH NEXT YEAR, IT WILL ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR COMMUNICATIONS STAFF AT FIRE AND AMBULANCE STATIONS TOTALLING ABOUT 200 MEN WITH AN ANNUAL SAVING IN SALARY OF \$6 MILLION.+

+AT THE SAME TIME, THE NEW SYSTEM IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND BRING A FURTHER REDUCTION IN RESPONSE TIME TO EMERGENCIES,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, LINKING ALL HONG KONG'S 54 FIRE AND AMBULANCE STATIONS, WOULD CENTRALISE ALL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS ON THE SIXTH-FLOOR CENTRE OF TSIM SHA TSUI FIRE STATION.

+THE NETWORK CONSISTS OF DIRECT CALL-OUT LINKS TO ALL FIRE AND AMBULANCE STATIONS AND A COMPUTER-OPERATED VEHICLE STATUS AND LOCATION SYSTEM FOR MOBILISING AMBULANCES.+

+IT IS EXPECTED TO CUT THE DESPATCHING TIME BY HALF,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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BUILDING CONTRACTORS FACE UP TO NOISE CONTROL  
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BUILDING CONTRACTORS ARE BEGINNING TO RECOGNISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CONTROL OF NOISE, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN COMMENTING ON A REPORT Tabled THIS WEEK AT A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPCOM).

THE REPORT REVIEWED THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OPERATION OF LEGISLATION AMENDED LAST JULY TO LIMIT NOISE MADE BY CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES AT NIGHT AND ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION WAS TO DECREASE THE NOISE NUISANCE CAUSED BY CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS.

/THE SPOKESMAN .....

THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED: +A CONTRACTOR WISHING TO CONTINUE WORKING AFTER 7 P.M. OR ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, INCLUDING SUNDAYS, MUST NOW APPLY TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT FOR A PERMIT BY SUBMITTING A LIST OF EQUIPMENT HE WISHES TO USE, A LOCATION PLAN OF HIS SITE AND BY SPECIFYING THE HOURS HE WISHES TO WORK.

+THESE FACTORS ARE ASSESSED IN RELATION TO THE BACKGROUND LEVEL OF NOISE IN THAT GENERAL LOCATION AND THE PROXIMITY OF PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE DISTURBED BY THE NOISE AND ALSO THE NECESSITY FOR THE WORK.

+AS A RESULT A PERMIT MAY BE ISSUED AND THE APPLICANT MAY OPERATE SUCH MACHINERY AS THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (PWD) JUDGES REASONABLE FROM THE NOISE POINT OF VIEW FOR THAT PARTICULAR SITE.

+THE PROCEDURE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS IS STANDARDISED THROUGHOUT PWD IN THAT ALL PERMIT ISSUING OFFICERS FOLLOW A CAREFULLY PREPARED SET OF PERMIT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES.+

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED: +IN GENERAL, WE TRY TO ADOPT A FLEXIBLE, PRACTICAL AND REASONABLE APPROACH TO THE ISSUE OF PERMITS.+

HE HOPED THAT THE GRADUAL INTRODUCTION OF TOUGHER MEASURES TO CURB NOISE FROM CONSTRUCTION SITES WOULD LEAD TO A MORE EXTENSIVE USE OF PROPERLY SILENCED EQUIPMENT.

HE SAID: +THE IDEA IS TO LIMIT NOISE DISTURBANCE, NOT TO STOP WORK.+

BY OCTOBER 16, 961 PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF POWERED MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT (OTHER THAN PILING) DURING THE PROHIBITED HOURS HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY THE PWD OF WHICH SLIGHTLY OVER ONE HALF WERE FOR PRIVATE SECTOR PROJECTS AND SLIGHTLY OVER ONE THIRD WERE FOR PWD PROJECTS. THE REMAINING APPLICATIONS WERE FOR HOUSING DEPARTMENT PROJECTS.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE LEGISLATION IS A POLICE RESPONSIBILITY AND ONE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NEW AMENDMENT TO THE LEGISLATION CAN BE DETERMINED IS BY ANALYSING THE STATISTICS OF COMPLAINTS AND THE NUMBER OF FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS BY POLICE.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID: +ALTHOUGH IT IS EARLY DAYS YET TO FORM ANY SOLID CONCLUSIONS FROM THESE STATISTICS, THE SIGNS ARE DEFINITELY ENCOURAGING AND IT IS FELT THAT CONTRACTORS ARE BEGINNING TO RECOGNISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CONTROL OF NOISE.+

THE CONTROL OF NOISE NUISANCE IN HONG KONG IS VERY MUCH A CONTINUING AND EVOLVING PROCESS WHICH INVOLVES STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN WHAT THE GENERAL PUBLIC WANT OR FEEL THAT THEY NEED AND WHAT SUCH SECTORS AS THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY CAN REASONABLY ACCOMMODATE.

EPCOM WAS ALSO INFORMED THAT PREPARATORY DRAFTING OF THE NEW NOISE ABATEMENT BILL WOULD INCLUDE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO CONSTRUCTION NOISE.

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LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD ELECTION

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THE ANNUAL ELECTION OF EMPLOYEES' REPRESENTATIVES TO THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD WILL TAKE PLACE BY SECRET BALLOT TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT 10.30 A.M. AT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S REGIONAL OFFICE IN NEW RODNEY BLOCK, QUEENSWAY.

THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD IS A NON-STATUTORY BODY WHICH ADVISES THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR ON MATTERS REFERRED TO IT BY HIM INCLUDING LEGISLATION AND INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. IT COMPRISES SIX EMPLOYERS' REPRESENTATIVES AND SIX EMPLOYEES' REPRESENTATIVES, WITH THE COMMISSIONER AS CHAIRMAN.

THREE OF THE EMPLOYEES' REPRESENTATIVES ARE ELECTED BY REGISTERED EMPLOYEES' UNIONS AND THREE ARE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT 10 CANDIDATES HAD BEEN NOMINATED FOR ELECTION AND THEIR NAMES HAD BEEN SENT TO ALL EMPLOYEES' UNIONS FOR INFORMATION.

+A REGISTERED EMPLOYEES' TRADE UNION WISHING TO VOTE SHOULD SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ELECTION. THE REPRESENTATIVE MUST BRING WITH HIM A LETTER OF AUTHORISATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF HIS UNION AND A COPY OF THE CIRCULAR LETTER DATED OCTOBER 8, 1979 FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ON THE SUBJECT,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE HELPS STUDENTS

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LIBRARIES SHOULD BE USED AS A TOOL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND A STEPPING STONE TO SELF-EDUCATION, THE LIBRARIAN OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, MRS. BARBARA LUK, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT A SHORT COURSE FOR OVER 80 RECENTLY APPOINTED HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON THE LIBRARY SERVICE, SHE SAID THROUGH SCHOOL LIBRARIES STUDENTS SHOULD BE EQUIPPED WITH THE BASIC SKILLS TO HELP THEM +LEARN HOW TO LEARN, SO THAT IN CASE THERE IS A NEED FOR STUDENTS TO STUDY ON THEIR OWN AFTER GRADUATION THEY CAN DO SO WITH CONFIDENCE AND SUCCESS.+

MRS. LUK ALSO MENTIONED THE TEACHER LIBRARIAN SCHEME WHICH WAS STARTED IN THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR IN GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH OVER 18 CLASSES.

SO FAR MORE THAN 80 SCHOOLS HAD APPOINTED TEACHER LIBRARIANS TO BE IN CHARGE FULL-TIME OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY, AND THIS NUMBER WOULD EVENTUALLY RISE TO OVER 200.

ON THE AIM OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES, MRS. LUK SAID THAT THE ULTIMATE TARGET SHOULD BE THE FORMATION OF LIFE-LONG READING HABITS AND THE ACQUISITION OF BASIC RESEARCH SKILLS FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING AND PRESENTATION.

THE SHORT COURSE FOR THE SCHOOL HEADS IS BEING HELD AT THE LECTURE THEATRE OF THE GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION. IT BEGAN ON OCTOBER 13 AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL NOVEMBER 3.

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MARINE DEPARTMENT HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENT

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THE MARINE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT ITS PORT COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE, THE VICTORIA SMALL CRAFT LICENSING SECTION AND THE OFFICES OF ITS MACAU FERRY WHARF UNIT WILL REMAIN OPEN ON MONDAY (OCTOBER 29), WHICH IS A PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

ON THAT DAY, THE SMALL CRAFT LICENSING OFFICE WILL OPERATE FROM 9 A.M. TO 11 A.M., AND THE MACAU FERRY WHARF UNIT FROM 7.30 A.M. TO 1.30 A.M. THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE PORT COMMUNICATION CENTRE WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE ROUND THE CLOCK.

IN ADDITION, THE FOUR PUBLIC CARGO WORKING AREAS IN WAN CHAI, YAU MA TEI, KWUN TONG AND TSUEN WAN WILL REMAIN OPEN ON MONDAY.

ALL OTHER SECTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE CLOSED ON THAT DAY.

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WATER CUT IN WONG CHUK HANG

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN WONG CHUK HANG WILL BE SUSPENDED FOR SEVEN HOURS FROM 11 P.M. ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 26) TO 6 A.M. THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR A LEAKAGE TEST.

THE AREA TO BE AFFECTED IS BOUNDED BY NAM LONG SHAN ROAD, SHUM WAN ROAD, POLICE SCHOOL ROAD, OCEAN PARK ROAD, WELFARE ROAD, HEUNG YIP ROAD, 42-62 WONG CHUK HANG ROAD, YIP FAT STREET INCLUDING THE OCEAN PARK, POLICE TRAINING SCHOOL AND WONG CHUK HANG ESTATE.

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