



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Recall of Vitasoy and Vita products

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The recall of paper-packed Vitasoy and Vita products has been smooth and public awareness of the process is high, a spokesman for the Department of Health said today (Monday).

The spokesman said the department and the two municipal services departments had mobilised more than 300 health inspectors since the recall was launched to monitor the recall process and to conduct special inspections at retail outlets.

"So far, 4,500 retail outlets had been visited and a total of 2,700 advisory letters had been issued. The latest inspections found that almost all retailers were aware of the recall and co-operated by not selling the products in question.

"As at 5 pm today, the Vitasoy International Holdings Ltd reported that a total of 12.1 million packs of Vitasoy and Vita products had been recalled.

"The Government is satisfied with the progress of the recall so far and will continue to monitor the process through its routine inspections," the spokesman added.

The Department of Health also announced the findings of the 296 tests conducted on 260 samples collected since the incident occurred.

Two types of bacteria which are non-pathogenic were found in five packets of Vitasoy products. There were *Bacillus* species (including *Bacillus polymyxa* and *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens*) in four packets of Vitasoy produced in Hong Kong and *Corynebacterium* species (including CDC group 4) in one packet of Malt Vitasoy produced in Shenzhen.

"Both types of bacteria found belong to non-pathogenic strains and are commonly present in the environment," the spokesman stressed.

"Other samples taken were all found to be normal according to laboratory analysis," he added.

Meanwhile, an Ad Hoc Working Group, comprising Urban and Regional Councillors and representatives of the two municipal services departments, will be set up under the Department of Health's Hygiene Services Committee to study the investigation reports to be submitted by the company.

End

Iron and manganese content of Dongjiang water

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In response to today's (Monday) newspaper reports claiming that the iron and manganese content of Dongjiang water had exceeded international standards and might affect public health, a spokesman for the Water Supplies Department said the reports have failed to confirm whether the samples of Dongjiang water were collected through proper procedures.

At the same time, these samples were collected at individual tributaries and did not represent the overall water quality at the vast source of Dongjiang water supplied to Hong Kong, the spokesman added.

He said: "In fact, testings of samples collected by our department through proper procedures at the Muk Wu Pumping Station at the border have indicated that the iron, lead and manganese content of the Dongjiang water supplied to Hong Kong are far lower than the level as reported. The water is also in line with the standards laid down for raw water."

A table listing the average value and related standards for Dongjiang water and treated water for the year 1994-95 is attached for reference.

The spokesman added that the Water Supplies Department was well equipped with sufficient manpower to monitor the quality of raw and treated water as well as quality control.

"Our Water Science Division is staffed by more than 100 professionals including chief chemist, senior chemists and technicians," he said.

"At the same time, the laboratories of the Water Supplies Department are equipped with the state-of-the-art instrument to carry out various tests regularly on samples collected from Dongjiang water as well as treated water including tests on heavy metals and carcinogenic substances.

"Up till the present, results of these tests have indicated that these two categories of substances are far lower than the standards laid down by the World Health Organisation on water quality," he said.

The spokesman also pointed out that iron and manganese are the two most commonly found metals in the nature. They were not the kind of heavy metals usually associated by the general public as harmful to human beings.

"At the same time, iron and manganese are elements which human beings need to absorb daily. The slight amount of iron and manganese contained in water is therefore absolutely unharmed to health.

"All raw water transmitted to the water treatment plants under the Water Supplies Department is fully treated and disinfected. The water supplied to consumers after treatment fully complies with the chemical and bacterial standards laid down by the World Health Organisation," he stressed.

Content of lead, iron and manganese in Dongjiang water and in treated water (1.4.94 - 31.3.95) - Average values

	Dongjiang water*	Environmental Quality Standard for Surface Water GB-3838-83 Class II, People's Republic of China	Treated water in Hong Kong	World Health Organization Guideline Standard
Lead	less than 0.004	0.05	less than 0.004	0.01
Iron	0.12	not applicable	0.02	0.3#
Manganese	0.18	not applicable	0.01	0.1#

- Note: 1. The unit for the above values is mg/litre
2. * - Based on water samples taken at Muk Wu Pumping Station
3. # - These standard values are established for aesthetic and not for health reasons.

End

Expert talks on defence and public order

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The 19th round of talks between experts on the British and Chinese sides of the Joint Liaison Group to discuss matters relating to Hong Kong's future defence and public order will be held in Hong Kong on January 16. The British team will be led by British Representative Mr Alan Paul. The Chinese team will be led by Chinese Representative Mr Chen Zou'er. They will be assisted by experts from the two sides.

End

TCM practitioners urged to join enrolment exercise

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The enrolment exercise for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners launched by the Preparatory Committee on Chinese Medicine (PCCM) would close on Sunday (January 21), a spokesman for the committee said today (Monday).

"With an aim of collecting information on local TCM practitioners, the exercise is essentially a general statistical survey targeted at both full-time and part-time TCM practitioners in Hong Kong, including herbalists, bone-setters and acupuncturists.

"It should not, however, be confused with statutory registration," he said.

To be eligible for enrolment, one must be a Hong Kong resident and be either a full/part-time local TCM practitioner practising the profession or engaging in TCM education prior to January 1, 1995 or a holder of a full graduation diploma issued by a TCM training college or institute. Documentary support for such claims is required.

Up till now, about 5,800 applications for enrolment have already been received by the committee's secretariat.

"We wish to remind all TCM practitioners who have not yet handed in the application to do so immediately," the spokesman added.

Enrolment forms are available at all District Offices and the PCCM secretariat, first floor, Shun Feng International Centre, 182 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai.

The completed form, together with copies of the relevant documents and the applicant's identity card must be submitted in person or by mail to the PCCM secretariat on or before January 21, 1996. Enquiries can be made on 2527 8391.

"To facilitate the delivery of completed enrolment forms to the Secretariat, the office will remain open from 9 am to 5 pm on Sunday (January 21) which is the deadline for submission of enrolment forms," the spokesman added.

The TCM Practitioner Sub-Committee of PCCM will notify each applicant in writing as to whether his/her application is accepted.

End

Index of industrial production for third quarter of 1995

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The index of industrial production for the third quarter of 1995 increased slightly by 0.7% over the same quarter of 1994, according to the results of a survey released today (Monday) by the Census and Statistics Department. This represented continued increases for five consecutive quarters.

The production in the industry group of electrical and electronic products, machinery, professional equipment and optical goods continued to surge by 12%. Within this group, the production of machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components increased significantly by 21.3%, but the production of consumer electrical and electronic products decreased slightly by 1.2%.

A slight increase of 0.9% was also recorded in the wearing apparel (except footwear) industry.

On the other hand, a decrease of 8.8% was registered in the industry group of chemical, rubber, plastic and non-metallic mineral products. Within this group, the production of plastic products decreased markedly by 18.6%.

Decreases were also recorded in the industry groups of basic metals and fabricated metal products (-6.7%); paper products and printing (-3.1%); textiles (including knitting) (-1.7%); and food, beverages and tobacco (-0.6%).

Compared with the second quarter of 1995, the index of industrial production showed a notable increase of 11.7%. This increase was, however, partly seasonal as manufacturing activities usually entered into peak season in the third quarter.

The index of industrial production reflects changes of local manufacturing output in real terms. In other words, it measures the volume of local production after discounting the effect of price changes.

More detailed information can be obtained from the "Quarterly Index of Industrial Production, 3rd Quarter 1995" report, which is on sale at \$11 a copy at the Government Publications Sales Centre, Low Block, ground floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong or at the Census and Statistics Department Publications Unit, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai. Regular subscription may also be arranged.

Enquiries about the survey result may be directed to the General Economic Surveys Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2805 6643.

Indices of industrial production by industry group and
selected component industry
(1986 = 100)

Industry group / Selected component industry	Index for 3rd Qtr. 1995	% change over	
		3rd Qtr. 1994	2nd Qtr. 1995
1. Food, beverages and tobacco	163	-0.6	+3.0
2. Wearing apparel (except footwear)	126	+0.9	+18.3
3. Textiles (including knitting)	133	-1.7	+22.3
4. Paper products and printing	306	-3.1	+6.6
5. Chemical, rubber, plastic and non-metallic mineral products	65	-8.8	+0.9
within which : Plastic products	(40)	(-18.6)	(+5.0)
6. Basic metals and fabricated metal products	97	-6.7	+5.9
within which : Fabricated metal products (except machinery and equipment)	(96)	(-7.7)	(+6.7)
7. Electrical and electronic products, machinery, professional equipment and optical goods	191	+12.0	+13.7
within which : Consumer electrical and electronic products	(125)	(-1.2)	(+7.2)
: Machinery, equipment, apparatus, parts and components	(293)	(+21.3)	(+19.6)
8. Miscellaneous manufacturing industries	84	-4.1	+6.2
ALL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES	137	+0.7	+11.7

Notes : 1. Four selected component industries, which carry relatively large weights and are major components of their relevant industry groups, are also included in the above table. For easy reading, the figures of these selected component industries are shown in brackets.

2. As from the first quarter of 1992, the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) is used to form the industry groups and selected component industries presented in the above table. For the exact coverage of the industry groups and component industries in terms of HSIC codes, please refer to the publication 'Quarterly Index of Industrial Production, 3rd Quarter 1995'.

End

Postmaster General leads delegation to China

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The Postmaster General, Mr Robert Footman, leads a delegation of senior officers of the Hong Kong Post Office to pay a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of China in Beijing today (Monday).

The delegation will also visit the Post Office in Shanghai.

"The Hong Kong Post Office works closely with the postal authorities in China on postal business," a spokesman for the Hong Kong Post Office said.

"Mr Footman's visit, the first after his appointment as Postmaster General, will further enhance co-operation and communication between the two sides."

End

Youth resource centre opens

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A Youth Resource Centre under the Commission on Youth is now available for public use.

A spokesman for the commission said today (Monday) that the Youth Resource Centre was set up as a repository for information on youth matters.

The centre, which occupies an area of about 100 square metres, is located on second floor, Tung Sun Commercial Centre, 194-200 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, adjacent to the Civic Education Centre.

Facilities of the centre include a library; a reading room; and an audio-visual room equipped with a TV set, a video-tape recorder, a cassette-tape recorder, a slide projector and a photocopier. A micro-computer has also been installed recently.

About 1,000 reference books, reports and publications on a variety of youth related subjects such as education, youth services and welfare are kept at the centre.

Additionally, video tapes on moral education and a variety of youth related journals and magazines are also available at the centre.

The centre also keeps a catalogue of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service's reference library to help users locate reference materials that may not be available in the centre. A reciprocal arrangement has also been made with the council.

The spokesman urged members of the public to make full use of the centre, which is open Monday through Friday, 9 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm; and from 9 am to 12 pm on Saturdays.

End

Tender for the 10th issue of Three-Year Exchange Fund Notes

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The Hong Kong Monetary Authority announced today (Monday) that the tender for the 10th issue of Three-year Exchange Fund Notes will be held on Monday, January 22, 1996 for settlement on Tuesday, January 23, 1996.

Similar to the previous issue, an amount of HK\$500 million Three-year Notes will be on offer. In addition to that, another HK\$100 million will be held as reserve by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority for supply to Market Makers in the secondary market. The Notes will mature on January 25, 1999 and will carry interest at the rate of 5.57% per annum payable semi-annually in arrears.

Members of the public who wish to tender for the Notes may do so through any of the Market Makers or Recognised Dealers on the published list which can be obtained from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, 30th floor, 3 Garden Road, Hong Kong (or Tel 2878 8150). Each tender must be for an amount of HK\$50,000 or integral multiples thereof.

Hong Kong Monetary Authority
Exchange Fund Note Programme
Tender Information

Tender information for the 10th issue of Three-year Exchange Fund Notes -

- Issue Number : 3901
- Tender Date and Time : Monday, 22 January 1996,
9.30 am to 10.30 am
- Issue and Settlement Date : Tuesday, 23 January 1996
- Amount on Offer : HK\$500 million plus an additional HK\$100 million
as reserve stock for the Monetary Authority
- Maturity : Three years
- Maturity Date : 25 January 1999
- Interest Rate : 5.57% per annum payable semi-annually in arrears
- Interest Payment Dates : 23 Jul 1996, 23 Jan 1997,
23 Jul 1997, 23 Jan 1998,
23 Jul 1998, 25 Jan 1999
- Tender Amount : Each tender must be for an amount of HK\$50,000 or
integral multiples thereof. Members of the public who
wish to tender for the Notes may approach Market
Makers or Recognised Dealers on the published list
- Other details : Please see Information Memorandum published or
approach Market Makers or Recognised Dealers

End

ACP contract for airmail centre approved

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The Secretary for the Treasury, on the advice of the Central Tender Board, has approved the award of an Airport Core Programme (ACP) contract for the construction of an airmail centre at the new airport at Chek Lap Kok.

The contract, valued at \$327 million, will be awarded to Yau Lee Construction Co Ltd by the Architectural Services Department.

It includes the construction of a two-storey office building structure, a large hall which houses all the airmail functions, a parking yard and ancillary facilities for the Post Office.

End

Land auction scheduled for February cancelled

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The Lands Department announced today (Monday) that the land auction scheduled for February 14 will be cancelled.

The cancellation is due to the objection procedures in respect of the zoning of two sites originally scheduled for auction in the current financial year have not been completed.

The two sites are a 6,438-square metre residential site in Wan Hoi Street in Hung Hom originally scheduled for auction on February 14 and a 6,700-square metre residential site in Town Park Road in Yuen Long originally scheduled for auction on March 18.

The last land auction for this financial year will be held at 2.30 pm on March 18 (Monday) at the Concert Hall of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui.

Four sites will be put up for auction. The sites are a 16,000-square metre site at the Hung Hom Bay Reclamation for commercial/residential purpose; a 1,591-square metre site in Hong Man Street in Chai Wan for commercial/residential purpose; a 1,585-square metre site in Arbuthnot Road, Central for commercial purpose and a 466-square metre site in Area 2, Tai Po for residential purpose.

End

Water storage figure

Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 80.3 per cent of capacity or 470.854 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 417.951 million cubic metres of water, representing 71.3 per cent of capacity.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,787	0930	+219
Closing balance in the account	1,897	1000	+219
Change attributable to :		1100	+219
Money market activity	+180	1200	+222
LAF today	-70	1500	+222
		1600	+180

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 123.4 *+0.1* 15.1.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.48	2 years	2711	5.60	100.46	5.40
1 month	5.45	3 years	3810	6.15	101.63	5.58
3 months	5.41	5 years	5012	6.38	102.01	5.99
6 months	5.39	7 years	7211	6.82	103.66	6.25
12 months	5.35	5 years	M502	7.30	104.51	6.30

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$22,097 million

Closed January 15, 1996

End