



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, January 11, 1974

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Release time: 7.15 p.m.

OFFICIAL STATUS FOR CHINESE LANGUAGE

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Chinese and English are to be formally made official languages of Hong Kong under new legislation which will shortly be introduced into the Legislative Council.

Both will have equal status and will be the official languages in communications between the government and the public.

The Official Languages Bill 1974, published in today's gazette also makes it possible for Chinese, besides English, to be used in Magistrates' and Juvenile Courts, in Labour Tribunals and Tenancy Tribunals, and in any inquiry by a coroner.

Commenting on the Bill, a government spokesman said today it embodied the final and main recommendation of the Chinese Language Committee to confirm by law the equal status of English and Chinese.

"The recommendation has been under consideration since the report of the Committee was published but it was felt inappropriate to change the law until a pool of trained interpreters and translators was more readily available to take up the important work," the spokesman said.

"Since last April when the Home Affairs Department took over the administration of government translation and interpretation services, a new division -- the Development, Training and Research Division -- has been set up to improve translation standards, over and above a big expansion of the Translation Services Division itself.

"Ten new senior Interpreter/Translator and 28 additional Interpreter/Translator posts have been created and two prominent scholars have joined to head the two translation and interpretation Divisions.

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"The use of Chinese will continue to be extensively adopted in government business," he added.

"The Official Languages Bill, in addition to confirming the status of the Chinese language, provides as far as practicable for its use in judicial proceedings," the spokesman continued.

"Under the provisions of the new Bill, ordinances of Hong Kong will continue to be published and enacted in the English language, but Chinese words or terms may be used in any ordinance and a Chinese translation of the ordinance may also be published.

"Proceedings in a Magistrates' Court, a Juvenile Court, a coroner's inquiry or a Labour or Tenancy Tribunal may be conducted in either English or Chinese at the discretion of the court. Other courts may be included in the list by an order of the Governor on the advice of Executive Council."

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NEW CHINESE LANGUAGE AUTHORITY ANNOUNCED

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The Director of Home Affairs has been appointed as the Chinese Language Authority in place of the Secretary for Home Affairs, it was announced in today's gazette.

This is because the functions of the Chinese Language Authority, which are executive in nature, have remained with the Home Affairs Department, rather than with the Secretary for Home Affairs, after the incorporation of the latter's post into the Colonial Secretariat.

Mr. Augustine Chui Kam has been appointed as Deputy Director of Home Affairs (Special Duties), in addition to his appointment as Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary (Public Affairs), with effect from January 8, 1974.

Mr. Chui's principal task is to obtain and assess public views and reactions to Government policies and plans.

Amongst his other duties, he will be responsible for the management of the Chinese Language Branch and for ensuring that Government's declared intention of using the Chinese language as widely as possible in official business is implemented.

Mr. Chui will work in the Home Affairs Department headquarters in International Building.

He will be assisted by Mrs. Katherine Fok, who has been appointed Assistant Director of Home Affairs. Mrs. Fok was City District Officer (Mong Kok) before her present appointment.

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NEW FORMS FOR COMPUTERISED DRIVING LICENCE RECORDS

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New driving licence application forms will be introduced by the Transport Department from next Monday (January 14) in preparation for the coming computerisation of all licensing records.

The forms will be for the initial issue and renewal of driving licences (except provisional driving licences and instructor's licences), the issue of duplicate licences, and for notifying changes of particulars.

Any applications presented on the old form after Sunday (January 13) will not be accepted by the department. This is to ensure that all future licensing information can be immediately transferred to the computer data processing system.

Copies of the new forms are available from any City District Office, the Hong Kong or Kowloon Licensing Offices of the Transport Department, or major post offices.

The notes printed on the reverse side of the forms explain how they are to be completed. In addition, specimens of completed forms will be posted in the Hong Kong and Kowloon Licensing Offices to assist those who attend in person.

Applications should continue to be sent to the Hong Kong Licensing Office at its present address at Rumsey Street Reclamation until January 19, when the office is expected to move to new accommodation at No. 2, Murray Road.

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LARGER PASSPORTS FOR FREQUENT TRAVELLERS

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New large-size passports will soon be made available to Hong Kong residents who travel very frequently, to reduce inconvenience caused by having to renew standard-size passports at short intervals.

These large-size passports will have 94 pages, compared with 30 pages on the standard-size ones. They will cost \$120 each while the old ones will still cost \$60.

Regulations prescribing the fee for these large-size passports are published under the Immigration (Amendment) Regulations 1974 in today's Gazette.

Explaining the new provision, a spokesman for the Immigration Department said this was based on the recent introduction of similar passports in the United Kingdom on a limited and experimental basis.

He made it clear that the large-size Hong Kong passports will only be issued to people who can establish a genuine need. Others will still be issued with the old standard-size passports.

"Both types will conform with the standard format of United Kingdom-type passports," he added.

Five thousand of the large-size passports have been ordered and the shipment is expected to arrive next month, after which they will be ready for issue immediately.

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POWER OF ARREST FOR PREVENTIVE SERVICE OFFICERS

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Officers of the Preventive Service can now arrest a person suspected of committing an offence under the Copyright Ordinance and the Dangerous Goods Ordinance.

Preventive Service officers are already empowered to arrest people suspected of offences under nine other ordinances listed in the Preventive Service Ordinance.

The Preventive Service (Amendment of Second Schedule) Order 1974 gazetted today adds to the list the Copyright Ordinance and the Dangerous Goods Ordinance.

Explaining the order, a government spokesman said that many of the offences under the Copyright Ordinance were committed by petty smugglers, seamen and vendors who traded in pirated tapes.

"It is essential," he said, "that the raiding and search parties have power to arrest an offender before he absconds."

At present, Preventive Service officers who conduct raids and searches for goods that infringe copyright and dangerous goods do not have the power to arrest. So the chances of bringing an offender before a court is often lost.

The order is made to remedy the situation.

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LIONS YOUTH CENTRE

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Note to Editors: The Lions Youth Centre in Tai Po will be officially opened by the District Commissioner, New Territories, Mr. David Akers-Jones at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

The centre will be presented to Mr. K.C. Lim, Chairman of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, by Mr. Raymond Y.K. Kan, Deputy District Governor, Lions International, District 303.

Members of the press and TV and radio stations are cordially invited to cover the presentation and opening ceremony. Transport will be provided. A Government van AM 2132 will leave from behind the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office (E & M sub-pool) at 1.35 p.m.

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INFORMATION OFFICER FOR FIRE SERVICES

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Note to Editors: Mr. Donald Strange, Senior Information Officer, has been seconded from the Government Information Services to the Fire Services Department to handle its press and public relations.

His office is at the Fire Services Headquarters at 323 Java Road, North Point. His telephone number is 5-612211, ext. 216.

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POLICY ON TENANCY AGREEMENTS EXPLAINED

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Commenting on a newspaper report today that shop-tenants of North Point Estate have expressed dissatisfaction over the new tenancy agreement the Housing Authority has asked them to sign, Mr. Frank Carroll, Deputy Director of the Housing Department, said that the tenants appeared to have either misunderstood the intentions of the Authority or its policy.

Mr. Carroll said: "It has always been the policy of the Housing Authority to have tenancy agreements for shops in all 'Group A' estates renewed once every three years on the expiry of the agreements.

"In the case of the shop tenants of North Point Estate, their existing agreement is due to expire on March 31, 1974, and therefore we informed them on December 31, 1973 that they would have to renew these tenancy agreements with a reasonable rent adjustments."

Mr. Carroll stressed that they were only asked to renew their tenancy agreement and were not asked to sign a different tenancy agreement and there were no changes to its terms except the rent adjustments which were assessed and considered reasonable by the Commissioner for Rating and Valuation.

The new rent of about \$2 per square foot or less is about 60 to 80 per cent higher than the existing rate, which is very much below the prevailing market rent in that area.

"Tenants had been allowed to transfer their tenancy to members of their family in appropriate cases in the past and this will continue to be the case when they have taken up their new tenancy," Mr. Carroll said.

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"They will also be allowed to change their trade under appropriate circumstances as they have enjoyed in the past. However they had never been permitted in the past to transfer their shops and this will continue to be the case."

Mr. Carroll went on: "It has now been decided to extend the date given to shop tenants to indicate their willingness to renew their tenancy to February 15 since many of them have indicated that they could not make their decision by January 15, the date originally given in a notice dated December 31 last year."

A notice informing them of the extension will be delivered to them at the earliest.

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CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

Daily Guide To Wholesale Market Prices And Supplies

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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 Mew -- old crop	Good	1.72
-- new crop		
S.C.Jion -- old crop	Good	-
Po Ngai	Good	1.42
Chu Cho	Good	-
<u>Thai Rice</u>		
100% Whole	Good	1.52
10-15% Broken	Good	1.50
A1 Super Extra	Good	1.45
A1 Super	Good	1.37
Whole Glutinous	Good	1.52
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.62
<u>Australian Rice</u>	Good	-
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	Good	-
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	Good	-

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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	Limited	6.2	3.5	4.7
Big-Eyes	Good	2.7	0.6	2.0
Squid	Normal	6.5	3.5	5.0
Hair-Tails	Good	2.4	1.8	2.0
Lizard Fishes	Normal	2.8	0.9	2.0
Croakers	Good	2.2	1.1	1.5
Conger-Pike-Eels	Normal	2.9	2.1	2.4
Melon Coat	Limited	3.2	1.8	2.4
Breams	Normal	4.7	4.1	4.5
Yellow Belly	Good	1.5	0.8	1.2
Mackerels	Normal	4.8	3.5	4.0
Red Goat Fish	Good	2.7	0.65	1.5
Fork-Tail	Good	1.5	0.8	1.2
Horse-Head	Scarce	7.2	4.2	5.2
Melon Seed	Normal	3.5	1.6	3.0
Pomfrets	Scarce	12.0	9.0	9.5
Groupers	Normal	6.8	5.0	5.8
Yellow Croaker	-	-	-	-

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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	Normal	1.8	0.6	1.4
White cabbage	Normal	1.1	0.3	0.8
Chinese Lettuce	Normal	0.8	0.2	0.5
Chinese Kale	Good	0.7	0.2	0.4
Spring onion	Limited	2.2	0.8	1.8
Spinach	Normal	1.5	0.5	1.0
Water cress	Normal	1.5	0.35	1.0
Leaf mustard cabbage	Scarce	0.8	0.3	0.5
Tomato	Limited	1.8	0.8	1.2

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price</u>
		<u>(\$/ picul)</u>
		(Average)
Pork	Good	285

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