



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Guidelines on Selection Committee strike a balance .....	1
Agreement on water prices endorsed .....	1
Two lots sold for \$552 million at land auction .....	2
ED to follow up on S6 admission cases .....	3
Hong Kong to participate in child abuse congress .....	3
New HKMA Executive Director (Reserves Management) appointed .....	4
"Backbone" of Route 3-Kwai Chung Viaduct in place .....	5
Night closure of Tuen Mun Road for blasting modified .....	7
Business prospects for the second half of 1996 .....	8
Fresh water cut in Yau Tong .....	9
Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations .....	10

Guidelines on Selection Committee strike a balance

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In response to press enquiries about comments made by the NCNA on the Civil Service Branch circular on participation by civil servants in the Selection Committee, a government spokesman said today (Wednesday) that the government was satisfied that the guidelines did not go against the Bill of Rights and strike the right balance.

He said that it was necessary on the one hand to ensure that the public remained confident that those civil servants who were involved in policy formulation and promulgation; enforcement of public order and policy making roles, were seen not to be involved in political activities, which might lead to conflict of interest situations.

"On the other hand, the government does not want to restrict unnecessarily the ability of civil servants to participate in public affairs. The Government therefore has issued to civil servants guidelines on who can and who cannot sit on the Selection Committee," the spokesman said.

Noting that those restrictions in the guidelines were nothing new, the spokesman said: "They have been promulgated in 1990 and are well understood and accepted by staff. There is no need to make an exception to them on this occasion".

End

Agreement on water prices endorsed

\* \* \* \* \*

The agreement reached on water prices by the two parties representing Hong Kong Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government during their meeting in late June in Hong Kong has been endorsed by the respective Governments, a spokesman for the Water Supplies Department said today (Wednesday).

The agreed unit prices for the next three years are:

- \* \$2.613 per cubic metre for the period January 1, 1997, to December 31, 1997;
- \* \$2.839 per cubic metre for the period January 1, 1998, to December 31, 1998;
- \* \$3.085 per cubic metre for the period January 1, 1999, to December 31, 1999.

The current water price is \$2.405 per cubic metre and the new prices represent an annual increase of 8.65 per cent in the next three years, said the spokesman.

"The increase is due to an escalation in the operation costs of the Guangdong Authority," he explained.

"The annual price increase was very close to the 1995 inflation figure of 8.7 per cent in the territory."

End

#### Two lots sold for \$552 million at land auction

\* \* \* \* \*

Two lots of Government land were sold for a total of \$552 million at a public land auction held by the Lands Department this (Wednesday) afternoon. This was the first land auction held this fiscal year.

Of the lots sold, the first one, located in area 30, Tai Po, was sold to Henderson Land Development Co. Ltd. at \$535 million, with bidding opening at \$380 million. It has an area of about 21,200 square metres for private residential use. The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 10,176 square metres on or before September 30, 2001.

The second lot in Shek O Headland, Shek O, was bought by Sino Land Company Limited at \$ 17 million, with bidding opening at \$12 million.

With an area of about 276 square metres, this lot is also for private residential use.

The developer has to complete a gross floor area of not less than 124 square metres on or before September 30, 1999.

Held in the Concert Hall of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui, the auction was conducted by Government Land Agent, Mr Allan Hay.

End

ED to follow up on S6 admission cases

\* \* \* \* \*

Officers of the Education Department will brief the Salesian English School (Secondary Section) in the Eastern District on how the School Management Initiative (SMI) can help the school to handle the recent S6 admission cases which have aroused public concern.

Assistant Director of Education (Schools), Mr Kwan Shu-tsun, today (Wednesday) said: "SMI can strengthen the management of a school in terms of transparency of its administration. Views from concerned parties such as teachers, parents and alumni can be sought before making important decisions.

"The two students who were not admitted to S6 in their own school have secured places in other schools. Counselling services by our educational psychologists have been proposed to one of the students, but his parents declined our offer. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep closely in touch with the student and his parents. We are ready to give help at any time.

"With regard to complaints about the school's disciplinary and counselling services, the department will maintain contact with the school to look into the cases. We will offer professional advice accordingly.

"We are following up the two cases with the school but we do not comment on individual cases."

Mr Kwan noted that a total of 289 schools have joined the SMI since 1991 when the initiative was first launched. The concept and spirit of SMI are well received by members of the public.

End

Hong Kong to participate in child abuse congress

\* \* \* \* \*

Hong Kong will take part in the 11th International Congress of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect to be held in Dublin, Ireland, from August 18 to 21.

A 12-member delegation, led by the Director of Social Welfare, Mr Ian Strachan, left for Belfast late last (Tuesday) night prior to attending the congress.

The delegates, comprising social workers from both government and non-government sectors, a clinical psychologist, a police officer and a Crown counsel, are all specialised in child abuse cases.

During their short stay in Belfast, they will visit child care and family centres, and a police unit that deals in sexual offences investigations.

In the Dublin congress which will be attended by representatives from many countries, the Hong Kong team will present a paper on multi-disciplinary approach to child protection.

End

#### New HKMA Executive Director (Reserves Management) appointed

\* \* \* \* \*

The Financial Secretary has appointed Miss Amy Yip York-tak as the new Executive Director to head the Reserves Management Department of Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), it is announced today (Wednesday).

Miss Yip will replace Mr John Nugée, who will leave HKMA tomorrow (Thursday) to return to the Bank of England, from where he has been on secondment to the Hong Kong Government and HKMA since 1992.

Chief Executive of HKMA, Mr Joseph Yam, thanked Mr Nugée for the considerable contribution he had made in the management of the Exchange Fund over the past 3-3/4 years.

"We have benefited a great deal from the expertise and experience of Mr Nugée. The HKMA's management of the Exchange Fund is professionally run and widely respected." he said.

"The Fund and our Foreign Exchange Reserves have shown excellent and sustained growth in the last few years. Much of the credit for this should go to Mr Nugée and the team he has built at the HKMA."

In welcoming Miss Yip to HKMA, Mr Yam said: "Miss Yip has many years of solid experience and distinguished record in the financial industry, with a specialisation in investment and fund management in the last 10 years.

"Her wide experience will undoubtedly be valuable to the HKMA, and her private sector experience will add to the HKMA's expertise."

Miss Yip is currently a vice president of Citibank N A. She will join HKMA on October 1.

Following is a curriculum vitae of Miss Yip:

Miss Yip was educated in Hong Kong and the US. She received her MBA degree from Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts.

She spent eight years with J P Morgan before joining Rothschild Asset Management in 1988 as Executive Director.

In 1991, Miss Yip joined Citibank N A and was Business Manager for five years before taking up her current post in March this year as Planning Director, Citibank Private Bank, Asia Pacific.

End

"Backbone" of Route 3-Kwai Chung Viaduct in place

\* \* \* \* \*

The "backbone" of the Route 3-Kwai Chung Viaduct (KCV) has been formed after the last of the 954 precast U-shape overhead beams for the elevated expressway was lifted into position today (Wednesday).

The KCV is part of the Airport Core Programme and will form part of the expressway link to the new airport being built at Chek Lap Kok. With all the 954 U-beams in place, construction of the dual four-lane three-kilometre viaduct has reached a major milestone since work began in 1993.

The KCV straddles the busy Kwai Chung Road and Container Port Road from Lai King to Mei Foo. With a width of up to 65 metres, it is the widest viaduct structure ever built in Hong Kong.

Work on lifting the heavy concrete U-beams into position started 18 months ago, and this was by no means an easy job.

The U-beams are up to 160 tonnes in weight and 38 metres in length. Due to their size and weight, manoeuvring them, mainly at night, required skill and expertise.

Highways Department's Chief Engineer in charge of the Route 3 project, Mr Duncan Siu, said that an innovative manoeuvring method had been adopted for the job. The method required a special transport vehicle to move the U-beams from the casting yard to the location of beam erection under police escort. Then a 103-metre long tailor-made launching girder was used for lifting and positioning the U-beams. The girder is self-propelled and can be moved along the column crossheads to suit job requirements.

"This method has removed the need for a lot of temporary supports which would otherwise be required for traditional cast-in-situ construction which would cause disruption and inconvenience on the busy Kwai Chung Road. Using this method, the U-beams have been put in place more quickly with up to nine beams placed in one night, thereby shortening the total construction period. It also has the advantage of minimising disruption to vehicular traffic and allowing all lanes to remain open to traffic during the day," Mr Siu noted.

With all the U-beams in place, overhead construction works for the bridge deck will continue, and extensive ground-level works, such as drainage connections, laying of the road surface and landscaping will now commence.

In conjunction with the viaduct construction, an elevated airport railway structure of total length 3.6 kilometres comprising some 2,000 precast segmental units, each of weight up to 80 tonnes, was completed last month for handing over to the MTRC for track-laying works.

The KCV will also greatly ease traffic flow in the Kwai Chung, Tsing Yi and Container Port areas when it is opened to traffic.

The viaduct will provide an expressway link to the West Kowloon Expressway and the Western Harbour Crossing to the south leading to Hong Kong Island. To the west, the KCV will link up with the Lantau Fixed Crossing via the Route 3 Rambler Channel Bridge and Cheung Ching Tunnel, leading to the new airport at Chek Lap Kok and Tung Chung new town.

End

### Night closure of Tuen Mun Road for blasting modified

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The night closure of Tuen Mun Road Ting Kau section for rock blastings will be modified from Friday (August 16) after a review on a trial scheme held between 1 am and 1.30 am on August 1 and 2, the Transport Department announces today (Wednesday).

The closure is to facilitate rock blasting operation under the Ting Kau Bridge and Approach Viaduct Project.

The traffic diversion operation for rock blastings will begin 30 minutes earlier and finish 15 minutes later. The modified programme will commence on Friday.

Under the modified scheme, Tuen Mun Road Tuen Mun-bound between Tsuen Wan and Sham Tseng Interchange will be fully closed from 0.30 am to 1.45 am on the day.

Tuen Mun Road Kowloon-bound between Sham Tseng Interchange and Tsuen Wan will be fully closed between 0.30 am and 5 am on Friday for the clearing road surfaces after blasting.

As a result of the full closure of Tuen Mun Road, the following access roads to Tuen Mun Road will also be temporarily closed on Friday for the periods specified:

- \* Tsuen Wan Road Tuen Mun-bound between its exit slip road to Hoi Hing Road Roundabout and Tuen Mun Road between 0.30 am and 1.45 am;
- \* the slip road from Hoi Hing Road Roundabout to Tsuen Wan Road Tuen Mun-bound between 0.30 am and 1.45 am;
- \* the slip road from Castle Peak Road to Tuen Mun Road Tuen Mun-bound between 0.30 am and 1.45 am; and
- \* the slip road from Castle Peak Road to Tuen Mun Road Kowloon-bound at Sham Tseng Interchange between 0.30 am and 5 am.

During the closure of Tuen Mun Road Tuen Mun-bound between 0.30 am and 1.45 am, all vehicles including public buses, green minibuses and New Territories taxis in Tsuen Wan heading for Tuen Mun should use Hoi Hing Road, Hoi On Road and Castle Peak Road until reaching Sham Tseng Interchange where they can access to Tuen Mun Road Tuen Mun-bound.

Motorists on Castle Peak Road heading for Tuen Mun should remain on the road until reaching Sham Tseng Interchange for access to Tuen Mun Road Tuen Mun-bound.

When the Kowloon-bound carriageway of Tuen Mun Road closes between 0.30 am and 5 am, all vehicles including public buses, green minibuses and New Territories taxis on Tuen Mun Road Kowloon-bound heading for Tsuen Wan will be diverted to Castle Peak Road via Sham Tseng Interchange.

At the same time, motorists on Castle Peak Road heading for Tsuen Wan should remain on the road as access to Tuen Mun Road Kowloon-bound at Sham Tseng Interchange will be banned.

To better prepare for the blastings, a section of the Kowloon-bound slow lane of Tuen Mun Road near Ting Kau will be closed from 8 pm on Friday to 6 am the next morning.

End

#### Business prospects for the second half of 1996

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Manufacturers generally expect the volume of orders to remain stable in the second half of 1996 compared with the same period in 1995, according to the results of a recent half-yearly business prospects survey released today (Wednesday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

Analysed by manufacturing industry, manufacturers in the electronic and electrical products and electrical machinery industries, the printing industry and the fabricated metal products industry expect a moderate increase in volume of orders.

On the other hand, manufacturers in the wearing apparel industry and the textiles industry anticipate a slight decrease in volume of orders.

In general, manufacturers expect capacity utilisation to remain stable in the second half of 1996 compared with the first half. Profit margins, however, are foreseen to be lower in the second half of 1996 compared with the same period a year ago.

Exporters anticipate a slight increase in both the values of domestic exports and re-exports in the second half of 1996 compared with the same period last year. Bankers are generally more optimistic than exporters. They expect a more notable increase in the value of total exports in the second half of 1996.

Looking ahead, construction firms generally expect a moderate increase in the volume of construction output in the second half of 1996 compared with the same period in 1995.

The Business Prospects Survey is held on a half-yearly basis, covering about 300 firms from major manufacturing industries, the import/export trades, the banking industry and the construction sector.

It collects views of firms on the short-term prospects of the various major business sectors covered and aims at providing a quick reference, with a minimum time lag, for assessing the short-term future economic performance of Hong Kong.

A spokesman of the department pointed out that in a survey of this nature, the results should be interpreted with caution as it is difficult to establish precisely the extent to which respondents' perception of the future accords with the underlying trends.

The survey results are published in greater detail in the Report on Half-yearly Business Prospects Survey, July 1996, which is now available for sale at \$13 a copy at the Government Publications Sales Centre, Low Block, ground floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

It is also available 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 results may be made to the General Economic Surveys Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2805 6642.

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#### Fresh water cut in Yau Tong

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The fresh water supply to some premises in Yau Tong will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Saturday (August 17) to 6 am the following day for waste detection work on watermains.

The suspension will affect all premises in Ko Fai Road, Shung Tak Wai, Tung Yuen Street, Shung Wo Path and Yan Yue Wai.

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	1,527	0930	+435
Closing balance in the account	1,952	1000	+435
Change attributable to :		1100	+435
Money market activity	+425	1200	+435
LAF today	NIL	1500	+435
		1600	+425

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 123.8 \*+0.0\* 14.8.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills

EF notes

Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.96	2 years	2808	6.00	99.84	6.18
1 month	5.03	3 years	3907	6.80	100.93	6.55
3 months	5.17	5 years	5106	7.23	101.09	7.08
6 months	5.30	7 years	7305	7.60	101.63	7.42
12 months	5.62	5 years	M502	7.30	100.27	7.35

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$13,118 million

Closed August 14, 1996

End