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HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, October 31, 1972

DETAILS RELEASED ON TEXTILES AGREEMENT WITH BRITAIN

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The Director of Commerce and Industry, Mr. D.H. Jordan, today released details of the agreement which has been reached with the British Government on the future of Hong Kong's exports of polyester cotton textiles to the United Kingdom.

This followed endorsement by the Governor in Council this morning of the arrangements which were negotiated by senior officials of the Commerce and Industry Department, with the assistance of the Textiles Advisory Board, in Hong Kong and London during August and September.

The agreement covers the 15 month period from October 1, 1972 to December 31, 1973 and relates principally to exports of fabrics, made-ups and garments of polyester/cotton blends (that is from fabrics in which polyester and cotton are blended together in proportions where the weight of polyester is equal to or greater than the weight of the cotton or any other fibre that might be present in the blend). Polyester cotton yarns are not covered by the agreement.

During the term of the agreement, the Hong Kong Government has agreed to limit exports of polyester/cotton textiles to approximately 95 million square yards with sub-limits on certain categories of goods to prevent undue concentration of shipments in particular items.

/Mr. Jordan .....

Mr. Jordan said that an important feature of the agreement had been the recognition by both sides of the fact that cotton and polyester/cotton goods were often acceptable substitutes for each other: in other words they tend to serve the same consumer market.

This principle had been translated into practice by combining the restraints on polyester/cotton with those which currently apply to exports of cotton textiles to the United Kingdom. As a result of this Hong Kong's total quota for 1973 for restrained textiles (i.e. cotton and polyester/cotton) had been increased to approximately 277 million square yards, with various sub-limits on certain categories within this overall amount.

"In theory," Mr. Jordan said, "this would mean that we could ship all 277 million square yards as either cotton or polyester/cotton in 1973.

"However, in view of the particular difficulties of the United Kingdom industry at the present time, and after some pretty hard bargaining - in which of course the advice of our Textiles Advisory Board was especially valuable - we agreed that we would not ship up to the limits exclusively in either cotton or polyester/cotton.

"These limitations are expressed as sub-limits on cotton and polyester/cotton within the aggregate 277 million square yards and as a result of their application we can ship up to 250 million square yards of cotton and up to 90 million square yards of polyester/cotton in 1973," he said.

Mr. Jordan pointed out that 250 million square yards of cotton represented a 50 million square yards increase on the present cotton quota limits, while the 90 million square yards of polyester/cotton which is available, roughly equates with Hong Kong's exports in the year ending immediately before the start of the new restraints.

/However, ...

However, if either of these amounts was to be fully utilised, it would be necessary to "borrow" yardage from the other limit, thereby reducing the amount available for shipment within that limit. "This is an additional safeguard for the British industry that we have agreed to," he said.

Mr. Jordan said he was sorry that it had been necessary to suspend export licensing without notice on October 7, and was aware that this had caused some hardship to many local exporters and manufacturers. However it had been possible to get the trade moving again on October 23 under the interim arrangements already announced to the trade, and the staff of the Commerce and Industry Department were working "round the clock" to introduce the definitive arrangements for the rest of this year and for 1973 and to allocate final quotas within the next two weeks.

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NEW MARINE COURT TO INVESTIGATE "FATSHAN" SINKING

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A new Marine Court has been appointed by the Governor to continue the investigation into the cause of the sinking of s.s. Fatshan during the passage of Typhoon Rose in August last year.

The new Court has been appointed because of a necessary change in the membership of the former Court which comprised Judge W.S. Collier as president, and Captain R.B. Weeks and Mr. Li Fook-hing as assessors.

The previous enquiry was adjourned while the possibility of salvage was examined. As a result of the delay, Captain Weeks is no longer available to serve.

In his place Captain Maurice Douglas Burbidge has been appointed an assessor of the new Marine Court, with Judge Collier as president and Mr. Li as the other assessor.

Captain Burbidge has consented to the new Court adopting the evidence already given before the former Court during its hearings from February 28 to March 6 this year, so that the witnesses who have given evidence will not have to be recalled to repeat it.

The new Marine Court will commence hearing on Friday (November 3) at 2.30 p.m. in Room 150, Central Government Offices, Main Wing, Central.

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BIG INCREASE IN DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN SEPTEMBER

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Hong Kong's domestic exports for September reached $1,486 million -- an increase of 19 per cent or $237 million compared with the corresponding month last year.

Commenting on the figures, a spokesman for the Census and Statistics Department said the rise occurred chiefly in the clothing and machinery sectors.

He said two factors had a bearing on the increase - monetary instability and dock and rail strikes around the months of June and July.

"These two factors made many exporters delay their normal shipments, resulting in unusually large quantities of goods being exported in September," he said.

At the same time, the value of imports jumped 16.8 per cent or $274 million to $1,905 million. The value of re-exports also rose 36.4 per cent or $105 million to $393 million over those of September last year.

During the three month period from July to September this year, domestic exports totalled $4,214 million, imports $5,660 million and re-exports $1,134 million.

Compared with the corresponding figures last year, these show increases of 10.4 per cent 14.9 per cent and 31.8 per cent respectively.

Figures for the 9-month period from January to September show increases over the same period last year of 10 per cent for domestic exports, 6.5 per cent for imports and 20.7 per cent for re-exports.

/The provisional .....

The provisional figures for September are:

MERCHANDISE: Domestic Exports: $1,486 million

Imports : $1,905 million

Re-exports : $ 393 million

COMPARATIVE FIGURES:

	September, 1972 $ Million	September, 1971 $ Million	Increase or decrease $ Million	Per Cent
Domestic Exports	1,486	1,249	+ 237	+ 19.0
Imports	1,905	1,631	+ 274	+ 16.8
Re-exports	393	288	+ 105	+ 36.4

	July-Sept. 1972 $ Million	July-Sept. 1971 $ Million	Increase or decrease $ Million	Per Cent
Domestic Exports	4,214	3,818	+ 396	+ 10.4
Imports	5,660	4,926	+ 734	+ 14.9
Re-exports	1,134	860	+ 274	+ 31.8

	Jan.-Sept. 1972 $ Million	Jan.-Sept. 1971 $ Million	Increase or decrease $ Million	Per Cent
Domestic Exports	11,201	10,187	+ 1,014	+ 10.0
Imports	15,968	14,994	+ 974	+ 6.5
Re-exports	2,954	2,447	+ 507	+ 20.7

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FINDINGS OF POST OFFICE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

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A large segment of the business community of Hong Kong finds the existing postal service generally satisfactory and efficient.

This is revealed in the findings of a public opinion survey conducted during July and August among the business sector by the Post Office.

Out of about 2,000 commercial firms interviewed, over 67 per cent considered the postal service they received satisfactory or better than before; 27 per cent regarded it fair; 2 per cent were dissatisfied, while the remaining 4 per cent offered no comment.

The establishments contacted ranged from banking to professional organisations, representing a wide cross-section of the business community.

A spokesman for the Post Office described the survey as an attempt to acquire a better insight into the needs of the commercial and business sector. The results would also help in the future planning and development of local postal services.

The survey stressed four aspects -- the importance of the postal service; the attitude towards collection services and posting habits; opinions about postal delivery; and the attitude towards counter services.

Over one-third of the respondents considered the postal service much better than that of five years ago; 37 per cent found it similar while only 3 per cent thought it worse.

/Regarding .....

Regarding the times of delivery at their premises, over 81 per cent expressed satisfaction, 13 per cent gave no comment and 6 per cent favoured a change in the times.

Nearly 97 per cent considered the working attitude of their delivery postmen satisfactory or better. Twenty per cent described their delivery postmen as courteous.

On the times of posting, 71 per cent would not mind the system of posting before 3 p.m. for first delivery the next day and 59 per cent opted for the deadline of 12 noon for the same standard of service.

A fair level of criticism was levelled at the counter service. Nearly 40 per cent regarded the waiting time, particularly at registration and parcel counters, as unreasonable.

A similar degree of dissatisfaction applied to the counter staff. Thirty-seven per cent complained they did not receive courteous service although 63 per cent found the service satisfactory.

Commenting on the findings, the spokesman said: "The Post Office is particularly concerned over the poor image of its counter services and this aspect will be given added emphasis in the new staff training programmes which are to be implemented."

He added that the result of the survey was most encouraging and that various other comments offered by the respondents outside the context of the questionaires would be given due and thorough consideration.

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GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR MORE SPORTING EVENTS

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A sum of $160,000 has been earmarked by the Government to promote sports in Hong Kong during the remaining part of the current financial year.

The money will be used to meet applications from various local sports associations for funds to help enable them to organise sports events in Hong Kong or to participate in overseas competitions.

Announcing this today, a Government spokesman said that an allocation committee, comprising representatives of the Finance and the Social Services Branches of the Colonial Secretariat, has been set up to consider such applications.

"The creation of a separate vote to be administered by the allocation committee is intended to expedite the processing of applications and to enable assistance to be given to more sporting events than in the past," he added.

The spokesman pointed out that for many years financial assistance in the form of grants has been given to local sports associations.

All applications will be routed through the Education Department whose advice will be taken into account by the allocation committee.

/Each .....

Each application will be judged on its merits, but consideration will be given to such factors as the benefit to Hong Kong in the case of international sporting events, the degree of popularity in the case of local sporting activities and competitions, the reliability of the association and competing claims in relation to funds available.

Assistance in the form of block grants will not in normal circumstances exceed 50 per cent of the total estimated cost.

Organisations seeking financial assistance of this kind should address their applications giving full details to the Secretary, Sports Subvention Allocation Committee, Colonial Secretariat, Hong Kong.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

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Restrictions on motor vehicles which have been in force since the June rainstorms on a section of Conduit Road will be lifted as from tomorrow (November 1).

This means that the road will be open to all traffic and not just for holders of special permits.

From 10 a.m. on Thursday (November 2) several streets in Kowloon Tong will be re-routed to improve local traffic circulation.

The section of Knight Street between Belfran Road and Boundary Street will be routed one-way northbound; all vehicles will be prohibited from making a right turn from Knight Street into Prince Edward Road; and the section of Duke Street between Embankment Road and Knight Street will be routed one-way eastbound.

Traffic signs will be erected to guide motorists.

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AUXILIARY MEDICAL SERVICE HONOURS FIRE HERO

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Officers and members of the Auxiliary Medical Service, Hong Kong Island, have collected $2,300 for presentation to the widow and family of the late fireman, Wong Pong-wong, who died while on duty at the scene of the recent department-store gas explosion.

A cheque for this sum will be presented by Mr. Watt Yiu-wah, Chief Supervisor AMS (HK Island), to Mr. A.E.H. Wood, Director of Fire Services, for transmission to Mrs. Wong at a ceremony in the Fire Services headquarters building tomorrow (November 1).

The idea for the donation came directly from officers and members of the AMS (HK Island), many of whom had helped firemen to give first-aid to the injured at the scene of the disaster.

"Some AMS members and their families were in the department store and witnessed the late Mr. Wong's steadfast actions in endeavouring to get the public out of the store before the explosion," said Mr. G.F. Doggett, Medical Defence Staff Officer, Auxiliary Medical Service.

"All AMS officers and members were greatly impressed by his devotion to duty and courage."

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Note to Editors: ... You are invited to have the presentation ceremony covered. It will be held at 3.30 p.m. in Mr. Wood's office, Fire Services Headquarters.

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UNOFFICIALS TO SPEAK IN LEGCO

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Six Unofficial Members of Legislative Council will speak tomorrow (Wednesday) afternoon to a motion of thanks for the Governor's address.

They are Mr. P.C. Woo, Mr. Wilfred S.B. Wong, Mrs. Ellen Li, Mr. Wilson T.S. Wang, Mr. H.J.C. Browne and Dr. S.Y. Chung.

Except for Mrs. Li, who will be speaking in Cantonese, the other five will deliver their speeches in English.

On Thursday, Mr. Q.W. Lee will speak in Cantonese while Mr. Oswald Cheung, Mr. T.K. Ann, Mr. R.H. Lobo, Mrs. Joyce Symons, Mr. P.G. Williams and Mr. James Wu will speak in English.

One Unofficial Member, Mr. Szeto Wai, will not be speaking as he is away from Hong Kong.

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BUILDING PLANS APPROVED

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The Building Authority approved 110 new building plans of all types in September and certified 70 completed buildings for occupation.

Of the plans approved, 44 were on Hong Kong Island, 18 in Kowloon, 16 in New Kowloon and 32 in the New Territories.

They included plans for a 24-storey commercial building at the junction of Harcourt Road and Murray Road; a 25-storey bank and office building in Nathan Road; and two 25-storey apartment/commercial buildings in Tsuen Wan and Yuen Long.

Buildings certified for occupation included seven for domestic use, 24 for non-domestic, and 39 for domestic and non-domestic purposes.

In addition, the Building Authority approved the demolition of 58 buildings -- 35 on Hong Kong Island, 14 in Kowloon, seven in New Kowloon and two in the New Territories.

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FOREIGN SECRETARY TO ARRIVE ON THURSDAY

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The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, will arrive in Hong Kong by R.A.F. VC 10 from Peking on Thursday (November 2) and will leave on the following day. He will be accompanied by Lady Douglas-Home.

Sir Alec will be met on arrival at Kai Tak by the Governor and Lady MacLehose and the Political Adviser, Mr. R.J. Stratton.

The Foreign Secretary and Lady Douglas-Home will be the guests of the Governor and Lady MacLehose at Government House.

Sir Alec's party will include Sir Denis Greenhill, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, and Mr. K.M. Wilford, Assistant Under-Secretary of State.

During his visit, Sir Alec will have discussions with the Governor and Members of the Executive and Legislative Councils.

The Foreign Secretary will be meeting press, radio and television representatives before he leaves on November 3 to return to London.

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PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

Note to Editors: Except for the Press Conference to be held in Beaconsfield House at 2.20 p.m. on Friday, November 3, all photographers, TV and newsreel cameramen covering the visit will require special accreditation, which will be in the form of lapel badges.

/An application .....

An application form is attached. This should be completed and returned to the Press Officer, Information Services Department, NOT LATER THAN 1 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1. Press lapel badges will be ready for collection from the G.I.S. Press Room the same afternoon and the following morning.

The following summary of press arrangements is issued to assist editors in planning photographic coverage of the visit:

Thursday, November 2, 1972

1830 hours — Arrival at Kai Tak. Photographs only. There will be no press conference on arrival. Photographers and cameramen with hand-held cine cameras will be positioned by the side of the aircraft steps.

Friday, November 3, 1972

1420 hours to 1450 hours (approx.) — Press Conference to be held in the G.I.S. Theatre on the 5th floor of Beaconsfield House.

1815 hours — Board R.A.F. VC10. The Foreign Secretary and Lady Douglas-Home will be seen off by the Governor and Lady MacLehose and the Political Adviser, Mr. R.J. Stratton. No press conference. Photographers positions will be the same as for the arrival. Photographers covering the departure are requested to assemble outside the Airport Press Room NOT LATER THAN 1745 hours. They will be escorted into the Airport restricted area by GIS staff.

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Release Time: 8.00 p.m.

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VISIT OF THE FOREIGN SECRETARY

November 2-3, 1972

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Application Form For Lapel Badges

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To: The Press Officer,
Information Services Department,
Beaconsfield House,
Queen's Road, Central,
HONG KONG.

We wish to nominate the following representatives to cover the visit of the Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, between November 2 and 3, 1972:

KAI TAK ARRIVAL (Nov. 2)

Position A (For photographers and cine-cameramen using hand-held cameras)

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Position B (For photographers and cine-cameramen using cameras on tripods)

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KAI TAK DEPARTURE (Nov. 3)

Position A (For photographers and cine-cameramen using hand-held cameras)

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Position B (For photographers and cine-cameramen using cameras on tripods)

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Signed .....

Capacity on newspapers,
news agency, etc. _____

Date: _____

Hong Kong.