



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Service of ICAC Commissioner extended

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) that the service of the existing Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Mr Michael Leung Man-kin, has been extended for a period of three months until March 31, 1997. Mr Leung's current contract will expire on January 2, 1997.

"Mr Leung has done a first-class job and we are pleased that he has accepted this extension," a Government spokesman said.

"The extension will provide time to identify the next Commissioner," he said.

End

Financial eligibility limits for legal aid to be revised

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The Legal Aid (Amendment) Bill 1996, which aims to increase the financial eligibility limits for legal aid, will be gazetted on Friday (December 27).

Under the proposed Bill, the financial eligibility limit for applicants under the Standard Legal Aid Scheme will be increased from \$144,000 to \$169,700. The lower and upper financial eligibility limits for the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme will be raised from the present \$144,000 and \$400,000 to \$169,700 and \$471,600 respectively.

A Government spokesman said today (Tuesday) it was committed to reviewing the financial eligibility limits for the two schemes every two years to take account of inflation. Similarly, the rates of contribution to legal costs and the amounts that may be waived by the Director of Legal Aid are also reviewed regularly in line with inflation.

"The accumulated inflation rate for the period from July 1994 to June 1996 was 17.9 per cent," he added.

The Bill further proposes that the Legislative Council be given the power to adjust by resolution the maximum amount of maintenance payment that may be exempted from the Director of Legal Aid's first charge as well as the maximum amount paid by the aided person to the Director that may be reduced by the Director.

This will mean that in future these inflation adjustments can be made by subsidiary legislation rather than primary legislation, the spokesman said.

The draft Legal Aid (Assessment of Resources and Contributions) (Amendment) Regulation 1996 which sets out the new contribution rates payable by aided persons under the Standard Legal Aid Scheme, has been approved in principle by the Executive Council. It will be referred back to the Council for final approval after the Legal Aid (Amendment) Bill 1996 has passed into law.

The Bar Association, the Law Society and the Legal Aid Services Council have been consulted on the draft Bill and Regulation.

End

Views on revised draft of Telecom Bill sought

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The Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) issued today (Tuesday) a revised draft of the Telecommunication (Amendment) Bill and invites further views from the telecommunications industry and interested parties before finalizing the Bill for introduction into the Legislative Council in the first half of 1997.

"On August 12, 1996, we issued a consultation paper inviting comments from the telecommunications industry and interested parties on a draft of the Telecommunication (Amendment) Bill before its introduction into the Legislative Council," a spokesman for OFTA said.

"In response to this consultation paper, we received 23 submissions. We have considered these submissions in detail and a revised draft of the Bill has now been prepared taking into consideration the comments in the submissions as appropriate.

"We believe that the draft Bill is now improved as a result of the consultation exercise. We would now like to take the opportunity to invite further comments, if any, on the revised draft before introducing the Bill into the Legislative Council," the spokesman said.

The revised draft of the Bill is available from OFTA's office on 29th floor, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai or can be downloaded from the OFTA Internet home page at <http://www.ofa.gov.hk>.

Comments on the revised draft should be submitted to OFTA on or before Friday, January 24, 1997.

End

Fire-fighters commended for outstanding performance

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Eight fire-fighters were awarded the Director's Commendation for their distinguished performance displayed at the fire-fighting and rescue operation at the Garley Building fire on November 20.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony today (Friday), the Director of Fire Services, Mr Peter Cheung, praised the recipients for their professionalism displayed in the operation.

"They demonstrated their high standard of skill, courage, co-operation in team work and dedication in handling the incident," he said.

Fire-fighters successfully rescued 85 persons trapped inside the Garley Building.

Mr Cheung said he had recommended to the Government another 11 fire-fighters who had outstanding performance in the incident to receive higher commendations and honour.

The recipients of Director's Commendation are Principal Firemen Ma Chan-bor, Yuen Kam-ming and Lam Chi-wai; Senior Firemen Wong Fai-nam and Lau Muk-sin; and Firemen Chung Kam-chuen, Ng Kwok-wai and Koo Kun-leung.

The 11 fire personnel who have been recommended for higher commendations include Deputy Director Tsang Kwong-yu, Senior Divisional Officer Fung Kam-wah, Senior Firemen Yip Kit and Lai Hing-hung; Acting Senior Fireman Mak Wing-lam, Firemen Chu Chee-leung, Yim Yun-hung, So Chi-wing, Lau Chi-leung, Leung Yee-hung and Chung Kiu-sun.

End

New drug addiction treatment centre at Chi Ma Wan

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A total of 227 female prisoners have been transferred to the newly completed drug addiction treatment centre (DATC) at Chi Ma Wan, to provide much-needed relief to the extreme over-crowded situation in women penal institutions.

The conversion of the Chi Ma Wan (Lower) Detention Centre into a Drug Addiction Treatment Centre (DATC) for women, at an estimated cost of nearly \$15 million, was completed last week.

A total of 159 prisoners from the drug addiction treatment centre of Tai Lam Centre for Women and 68 inmates from the Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution were transferred there during the past week.

Work on the project at Chi Ma Wan (Lower) started at the beginning of this year and was completed earlier this month to provide accommodation for 250 inmates.

Prior to this week's transfers, the Tai Lam Centre for Women had 801 prisoners, which was 188 per cent above its certified accommodation, while the Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution with 263 inmates was 64 per cent above its occupancy rate. The Chi Ma Wan Correctional Institution, which is located above the new DATC, with 701 inmates is 93 per cent over its certified accommodation.

A spokesman for the Correctional Services Department said various facilities in the former detention centre had been renovated and upgraded to provide a vocational training/education complex, three workshops, improved kitchen facilities, a sick bay and clinic, shower rooms and changing space.

"Among the female prison population, about 14 per cent are drug addicts and the number of such prisoners has been on the increase in recent years.

"We have noticed that there is a daily average of about 20 to 40 female offenders on remand in DATCs for assessment of their suitability for detention there. The increasing number of female offenders in this category had further stretched the existing staff resources and facilities at DATCs of Tai Lam Centre for Women and Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution.

"Chi Ma Wan (Lower) Detention Centre was originally a football field and was converted into a detention for Vietnamese Migrants since 1978. It comprises 10 dormitories which had been converted into prison accommodation, workshops and other essential facilities required of a DATC.

"The open ground is ideal for the physical training of female drug addicts," the spokesman said.

End

Two government lots to let

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The Lands Department is inviting tenders for the short-term tenancy of two pieces of government land on HK Island and in Kowloon.

The first lot at Fung Mat Road, Western Reclamation, Hong Kong, has an area of about 4,792 square metres. The tenancy is for one year, renewable quarterly.

The lot is intended for use as a public fee-paying car park for the parking of goods vehicles, container vehicles with containers, container tractors and trailers.

The second lot is located at West Kowloon Reclamation Area. It has an area of about 4,570 square metres and is also intended for use as a fee-paying public car park. The tenancy is for three years, renewable quarterly.

The tender offers will close at noon on January 10 (Friday).

Tender forms, tender notices and conditions can be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong, and the respective District Lands Offices of Hong Kong West and Kowloon.

Tender plans can also be inspected at these offices.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	:	24 December 1996
Paper on offer	:	EF Bills
Issue number	:	Q064
Issue	:	27 December 1996
Maturity date	:	22 January 1997
Amount applied	:	HK\$6,810 MN
Amount allotted	:	HK\$5,000 MN
Average yield accepted	:	4.31 PCT
Highest yield accepted	:	4.35 PCT
Pro rata ratio	:	About 33 PCT
Average tender yield	:	4.33 PCT

Tender date : 24 December 1996
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : Q652
Issue : 27 December 1996
Maturity date : 26 March 1997
Amount applied : HK\$5,750 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$2,000 MN
Average yield accepted : 4.53 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 4.54 PCT
Pro rata ratio : About 30 PCT
Average tender yield : 4.55 PCT

Tender date : 24 December 1996
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : Y697
Issue : 27 December 1996
Maturity date : 24 Decemner 1997
Amount applied : HK\$2,190 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$500 MN
Average yield accepted : 5.08 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 5.08 PCT
Pro rata ratio : About 98 PCT
Average tender yield : 5.10 PCT

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority interbank liquidity

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		TIME	AGGREGATE BALANCE OF SETTLEMENT ACCOUNTS
OPENING AGGREGATE BALANCE	977 MN	0930 HR	9,627 MN
CLOSING AGGREGATE BALANCE	555 MN	1000 HR	13,254 MN
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100 HR	17,858 MN
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	- 8 MN	1200 HR	24,882 MN
LAF REVERSAL	+7,386 MN	1500 HR	26,489 MN
LAF TODAY	- 7,800 MN	1600 HR	28,762 MN

LAF RATE 4.00% BID/6.00% OFFER TWI 125.0 *+0.0* 24.12.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF Bills		EF Notes/MTRC Notes				
Terms	Yield	Terms	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.31	2 years	2811	5.72	100.21	5.68
1 month	4.32	3 years	3910	6.28	100.67	6.10
3 months	4.53	5 years	5112	6.57	99.55	6.79
6 months	4.75	7 years	7311	6.80	99.11	7.08
12 months	5.07	10 years	1610	7.37	101.11	7.34
		5 years	M503	7.35	101.64	7.05

TOTAL TURNOVER OF EF BILLS AND NOTES - \$5,069 MN

CLOSED DECEMBER 24, 1996

End