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Judicial independence a reality and a priority for HK people

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Judicial independence is not a privilege enjoyed by judges : it is a privilege of, and protection for, the people, the Chief Justice Sir Ti Liang Yang said today (Monday), at the ceremonial opening of the 1995 Legal Year.

He said Hong Kong had an excellent record in the past on this score which no one could take away and which everyone recognised needed to be preserved through 1997 and beyond.

Emphasising that judicial independence had not even been an issue in Hong Kong in his time, he said: "I am a living witness on that score. During my 39 years of service with the Judiciary, I have not been once approached by the Administration over the conduct of any trial before me. Nor have I heard from my colleagues of any such interference."

"As Chief Justice, let me tell you that I have never discussed with successive Governors any matter relating to a judicial decision. This is off limits to the Administration," he said.

Sir Ti Liang pointed out that in addition to the independence from the executive, another aspect of judicial independence, less understood in Hong Kong, was the independence of each judge from other judges, including the Chief Justice himself.

He said there was a public misconception that he can or should 'discipline' or 'correct' judges, which was not so except in the extreme sense of behaviour.

"There is a proper process of appeal," he said, "but outside that a magistrate or judge is, and must be, adequately powerful in his judgments. This power is symbolic of the rule of law and underpins judicial independence."

On the use of Chinese in courts, Sir Ti Liang said: "With July 1, 1997 only two and a half years away, this is an issue that needs to be tackled with a sense of urgency, pragmatism, flexibility, realism and determination."

He had appointed last September a steering committee under High Court Judge Patrick Chan to advise him on the overall implementation of the use of Chinese in the Courts.

The Chief Justice warned of the many practical difficulties facing the use of Chinese in the courts and allayed fears that a Chinese-only system would be imposed.

"We must not forget that ours is a common law jurisdiction and that the common law is founded on English," he said. "Let us not forget too," he added, "that Hong Kong is, will, and should remain an international business and financial centre where English is the main medium of communication."

"Equally, we must not forget that even our local lawyers are trained in English and probably think in English too," he added.

Nevertheless, the steering committee was taking a pragmatic step-by-step approach with a view to putting in place, as far as possible, a bilingual system in court proceedings before July 1, 1997. It had drawn up a tentative strategy for the phased implementation of the use of Chinese in the District Court and above.

Sir Ti Liang said the steering committee had also studied closely the feasibility of using simultaneous interpretation with the aim of achieving a truly bilingual system.

"The findings indicate that whilst simultaneous interpretation is feasible for some parts of a trial, it is well-nigh impossible for the evidence stage which constitutes the crux of a trial," he said.

"Nevertheless, bearing in mind that appeal cases do not normally involve the giving of evidence, the steering committee has recommended that a limited pilot scheme on providing simultaneous interpretation for the hearing of appeal cases should be launched to ascertain its feasibility."

On the localisation of the Bench, Sir Ti Liang said: "Currently, the Judiciary is over 45% localised. This is not far from our target of achieving an overall localisation of 50% by 1997. And I am confident of meeting this target."

However he pointed out that the Judiciary environment is fundamentally different from the Civil Service as judges had security of tenure as the "cornerstone of the independence of the Judiciary. There is therefore no question of removing an expatriate judge simply to make room for a local judge. After all, the Judiciary still needs to recruit the best legal brains both locally and overseas in the foreseeable future."

"The international dimension of the bench is a strength rather than a weakness of our Judiciary. Indeed this factor is relevant to the argument over the composition of the future Court of Final Appeal," he added.

On the "quiet management revolution" within the Judiciary, the Chief Justice paid tribute to his new Judiciary Administrator, Ms Alice Tai.

The list of efficiency improvement measures introduced or being pursued within the Judiciary in recent months ran into some 30 items and ranged from the small to the big: from providing extra public telephones in court premises, through the introduction of state-of-the-art computerisation, a more efficient and flexible listing system, to a fresh approach in its interface with the public symbolised by the Serving the Community pledge.

"An important and ready indicator of judicial efficiency is court waiting time," he said. "I am glad to say that with the fine-tuning of our listing system and the appointment of a Listing Judge in the High Court since last November, the situation has improved considerably and is continuing to improve."

High Court criminal case waiting time had for example dropped significantly over the last year from an average of seven months to four.

The Chief Justice warned that a key factor in keeping court waiting times within reasonable limits and in enhancing judicial efficiency would be more control over the progress of cases by judges themselves.

"In the vast majority of cases, delays occur because of unnecessarily long examination of witnesses, prolix submissions, frequent and prolonged adjournments and the vast number of documents and witnesses," he explained.

"There is a growing body of opinion both here and in jurisdictions elsewhere, that the trial judge should take a more interventionist approach in proceedings, exercising more control over the conduct of cases to avoid time-wasting and repetition, and cutting down on delays and costs."

Sir Ti Liang affirmed that "we need a more robust case management culture" and promised that the Judicial Studies Board would be looking into it in the months ahead.

On sentencing policy, the Chief Justice warned against dictation by public opinion instead of the law as it is, the facts of the case and the background of the accused.

"It would be a sad day," he said, "if a judge were to hand down sentences merely on the strength of, and in the light of, media or public opinion. This would not help the administration of justice and the independence of the Judiciary."

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Public to be consulted on legal services

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A consultation paper on legal services will be issued in the near future to seek the community's views on a number of issues relating to lawyers' services provided to the public, the Attorney General, Mr Jeremy Mathews, said at the Legal Year opening ceremony today (Monday).

The paper will cover a number of important issues, including questions of monopolies enjoyed by lawyers, restrictive practices, access and advertising, fees, the business structure of lawyers practices, quality and remedies, and legal services in respect of conveyancing.

Mr Mathews said there was a growing demand within the community for a legal system that was accessible, effective, affordable and credible and these issues were too important to leave to the lawyers alone.

He said: "All these issues are matters of public interests, and the views expressed by members of the public on the paper will have an important bearing on the formulation of Government policy."

Turning to localisation of the Legal Department, Mr Mathews stressed that targets were set with care to ensure that localisation was not pursued at the expense of quality.

He pointed out that the target of having officers on local terms to hold 60 per cent of posts overall was reached in October last year, a full 14 months ahead of schedule, and the other target of 50 per cent localisation of the directorate would be achieved by the end of the year.

He was confident that the localisation policies, namely the Double Ladder Scheme, Development Posts Scheme, Legal Trainee Scheme and Succession Posts Scheme, were the right ones.

They ensured a steady, carefully calibrated pace of localisation consistent with the maintenance of high standards, he said.

On the issue of the Court of Final Appeal (CFA), the Attorney General said the establishment of the CFA before 1997 would enable the Court to gain acceptance and to build up a track record of jurisprudence and eliminate any uncertainty about what sort of a court would be set up after 1997.

He said: "Were a CFA not to be set up now, there would be complete uncertainty as to what form the legislation would take, whether it would be based upon existing and familiar principles or not, and as to who the judges of the court would be.

"Moreover, there would be a very damaging judicial vacuum, of possibly two to three years, during which there would be no right of appeal due to the absence of a court with the necessary jurisdiction."

Mr Mathews said the Government was firmly of the view that the 1991 Joint Liaison Group Agreement on the composition of the court - the so-called 4 + 1 formula was in conformity with the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

He pointed out that neither the Joint Declaration, nor the Basic Law conferred an unfettered discretion on the CFA to invite judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on the court.

Instead they established a general principle that the CFA was to have a power to invite such judges to sit on the court, but left the precise scope of that power to be defined in the course of implementation of that general principle, he said.

Mr Mathews also noted that careful consideration was being given to the comments of the Bar Association on the draft Court of Final Appeal Bill and the Administration would soon seek Executive Council's advice on whether to make any amendments to the technical and practical aspects of the draft bill.

The aim remained to introduce the finalised bill into the Legislative Council as early as possible this year, thus allowing adequate time for discussion of the bill in the Council before the end of the current session in July, he added.

End/Monday, January 9, 1995

AG appoints audit team to review payment of fees to counsel on BMFL case

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The Attorney General, Mr Jeremy Mathews, today (Monday) appointed an internal audit team within the Legal Department to review the payment of fees to counsel briefed by the department to work on the Bumiputra Malaysia Finance Ltd (BMFL) case.

The team comprises the Senior Assistant Crown Solicitor, Mr Kenneth Somerville, and the Treasury Accountant, Mr Simon Chan.

The Attorney General has asked the team to submit an initial report to him before the end of this month with a view to producing a final report by the end of February.

A spokesman for the Legal Department said since the Director of Audit has indicated that he is looking at the arrangement for the briefing out system in general, including the monitoring procedures and allocation of cases, rather than on any particular case, it is considered that it is incumbent upon the Legal Department to carry out a full audit of fees concerning the BMFL case.

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53 nominations received today

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A total of 53 nominations of candidates were received today (Monday), the first day of the nomination period, for the Municipal Council Elections to be held on March 5.

The breakdown of nominations received by district is as follows:

Central and Western	3
Wan Chai	0
Eastern	5
Southern	1
Yau Tsim Mong	2
Sham Shui Po	2
Kowloon City	3
Wong Tai Sin	6
Kwun Tong	9
Tsuen Wan	0
Tuen Mun	2
Yuen Long	5
North	2
Tai Po	3
Sai Kung	2
Sha Tin	6
Kwai Tsing	2
Islands	0

Total	53

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Insurance Authority appoints joint managers for insurance company

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The Commissioner of Insurance, Mrs Pamela Tan, in her capacity as the Insurance Authority, has today (Monday) given a direction under section 35(2)(b) of the Insurance Companies Ordinance to Vahinkovakuutusosakeyhtiö Kansa International (Kansa General International Insurance Company Ltd) that, with immediate effect and until further notice, its affairs, business and property in Hong Kong shall be managed by Messrs David Richard Hague and Paul F Winkelmann.

Messrs David Richard Hague and Paul F Winkelmann are appointed the Joint Managers of the Company in Hong Kong by the Insurance Authority today pursuant to the said section 35 (2) (b).

Such arrangement is considered necessary in the light of the declaration of the Company's bankruptcy by a District Court in Finland and the appointment of interim receivers.

The Insurance Authority is of the view that the appointment of Joint Managers in Hong Kong would "ring-fence" the Company's local assets to meet its Hong Kong liabilities, hence protect the interests of the Hong Kong policy holders.

The Company, which was incorporated in Finland in 1920, has established a branch in Hong Kong since 1979. The Company is engaged in general insurance business including employees' compensation insurance in Hong Kong.

As the Insurance Authority, Mrs Tan has already taken into her custody a substantial portion of the Hong Kong assets of the Company.

She believes that these assets, coupled with the Guarantee Funds operated by the Employees' Compensation Assistance Scheme, would provide a high level of security to the Hong Kong policy holders and persons with insurance claims against the Company.

Policy holders and other creditors of the Company who have any queries regarding their policy or position should contact the Joint Managers at 2826 2111 or the Insurance Authority at 2867 3511 during office hours.

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US special 301 negotiations against China

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In response to press enquiries on the preliminary assessment of the possible impact on Hong Kong's re-export trade if the US did implement retaliation against Chinese products under Special 301 provisions, a spokesman for the Trade and Industry Branch said the preliminary study suggested that, based on statistics on Hong Kong's re-export of Chinese products to the US in 1993, about US\$1.45 billion of Hong Kong's re-export could be affected if the US did implement the proposed retaliation list in full.

"However, it is expected that even if the US did implement retaliation, the proposed retaliation list would not be implemented in full," he said.

According to the press statement issued by the US Trade Representative (USTR) on December 31, 1994, the USTR estimates that China's exports to the US of the products on the proposed list amounted to about US\$2.8 billion a year.

In the event of a final determination for retaliation, the affected products would be drawn from the proposed retaliation list and would be subject to increased tariffs up to 100 per cent.

"The USTR has indicated that he would narrow the list and target US\$1 billion of Chinese products for the increased tariffs if the US and China could not agree on steps to address US's intellectual property rights concerns," the spokesman said. The Hong Kong re-export items that might be hardest hit if the proposed retaliation list was implemented in full include electrical products and plastic articles.

In 1993, the value of the US imports of these two categories of products from China amounted to US\$1.16 billion, slightly more than the US\$1 billion worth of Chinese products which the USTR would target for retaliation.

Of these US\$1.16 billion worth of Chinese products, the value of the products that were re-exported to the US through Hong Kong amounted to US\$827 million in 1993.

"This amount (US\$827 million) represents only a very small portion of Hong Kong's trade: 3.8 per cent of Hong Kong's re-export of Chinese products to the US in 1993, or 0.3 per cent of Hong Kong's total global trade in 1993," the spokesman said.

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No nomination received for DB by-election

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No nomination of candidates was received today (Monday), the first day of nominations, for the by-election of a district board member for the Yau Ma Tei constituency in Yau Tsim Mong district.

The nomination will last until January 23.

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Appointments to the Working Party on Kindergarten Education

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Appointments to the Working Party on Kindergarten Education with an expanded membership have been made by the Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mr Michael Leung, for a two-year period from January 1, 1995 to December 31, 1996.

Announcing this today (Monday), a Government spokesman said the main task of the expanded Working Party was to examine the practicalities of unifying all pre-primary services and submit their recommendations to the Secretary for Education and Manpower and the Secretary for Health and Welfare by the end of 1995.

"To equip it with the necessary expertise, the expanded Working Party includes four new members from the Social Welfare Department, the child care sector and the Health and Welfare Branch," he said.

The Working Party will be co-chaired by the Deputy Director of Education, Miss Elaine Chung, and the Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Mrs Louise Wong.

Other members of the Working Party are:

Sister Lam Sau-ling and Mr Yip Wah who are experienced in operating kindergartens;

Miss Wong Lai-kuen and Miss Mariana Chan Wai-yung representing the childcare sector;

Ms Diana Mak, Head of Department, Department of Applied Social Studies, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Dr K C Pang, Deputy Director, Hong Kong Institute of Education who are experienced in training; and

a representative each from the Education and Manpower Branch and Health and Welfare Branch.

The Working Party will convene its first meeting next month.

The spokesman pointed out that the Working Party on Kindergarten Education was first set up in 1990 following the consideration of the recommendations of the Education Commission's Report No. 2 by the Executive Council.

"The Working Party was tasked to give priority to improvements in kindergarten education. This it has done during the past four years.

"Its remaining task is to look at the question of unifying all pre-primary services," the spokesman added.

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First tunnel unit floated out

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The first concrete unit for the Western Harbour Crossing has been successfully towed today (Monday) from the casting basin in Shek O quarry to a temporary mooring area in Tseung Kwan O.

This 35,000-tonne unit is one of the first four tunnel units which have been cast since mid-1994 at the specially constructed casting basin.

The Western Harbour Crossing, one of the 10 projects in the Airport Core Programme, is being developed under a 30-year build-operate-transfer franchise awarded by the Government to the Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited in September 1993.

"Construction work is progressing very well, and provided there is no major difficulty during the sinking and jointing of the units, the tunnel will be opened to traffic on target by mid-1997," the Chief Engineer of the Highways Department, Mr Eric Glenville, said.

Mr Glenville said the central portion of the project comprised an immersed tube tunnel with a total length of 1,363 metres.

The tunnel will consist of 12 pre-cast concrete units, each weighing about 35,000 tonnes and measuring 113.5 metres long, 33.4 metres wide and 8.5 metres high. They are being cast in three batches at the Shek O casting basin.

With completion of the first four units, preparatory work has been carried out since November last year to prepare them for floating and towing.

"This included the flooding of the 13-hectare casting basin to sea level and immersion checks on the units to ensure that there were no leaks and that they were properly balanced. The sand and sheet pile bund at the mouth of the basin was then removed, and some minor dredging carried out", Mr Glenville said.

"The floating and towing of the first unit began at 8 am today and the whole process took about eight hours to complete.

"The other three units will be floated out and towed to Tseung Kwan O within the next two weeks, after which the casting basin will be sealed and drained for casting of the next four tunnel units," he said.

Meanwhile, at Tseung Kwan O, additional work will be carried out on the first four units to prepare them for sinking and jointing.

"We expect the first of these tunnel units to be ready for positioning within a few weeks, when they will be towed into the harbour, carefully lowered into a dredged trench and then joined together," Mr Glenville said.

When completed in 1997, the Western Harbour Crossing will be Hong Kong's third cross harbour road crossing. It will carry six lanes of traffic, running a total length of two kilometres between Sai Ying Pun on Hong Kong Island and the reclaimed land in West Kowloon.

All of the design and construction works are being carried out by Nishimatsu Kumagai Joint Venture, the main contractor to the franchisee.

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BD acts on dangerous and abandoned cooling towers and supporting racks

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In the interest of public safety the Buildings Department will take action against owners of air-conditioning cooling towers and supporting frames which are in a poor state of repair or abandoned if they should ignore the letters advising their removal.

Buildings Department's staff have conducted inspections in San Po Kong and Chai Wan and have found :

- * cooling towers and supporting frames in poor condition;
- * six abandoned cooling towers with rusty and damaged supporting frames;
and
- * abandoned rusty supporting racks.

The department is issuing advisory letters to owners and occupiers of the factory units concerned.

These advisory letters allow six to eight weeks for removal of the unsatisfactory or abandoned cooling towers and supporting racks. If they are ignored, then the Buildings Authority will serve statutory orders under section 24(1) of the Buildings Ordinance on the registered owners to effect removal.

Experience gained from this exercise would be valuable to the department for considering similar activities in other areas.

The department's priorities for taking action against cooling towers are:

- * where there is apparent danger to life and property;
- * where works are in progress or newly completed.

Large-scale clearance operations, such as "Operation Catherine Wheel" and "Operation Rolling Stone", will also remove such cooling towers when they are found to be unauthorised.

The Director of Buildings, Mrs Helen Yu, said: "There is no need for structures to be unauthorised, including cooling towers. The law provides for proper procedures for submitting plans and seeking approval from the Building Authority."

Mrs Yu appealed to the owners of these structures to fulfil their obligations not only to design and construct them properly, but also to maintain them in a safe and sound condition.

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Taxi fare conversion table for collection

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The Transport Department today (Monday) announced that taxi fare conversion tables showing the existing fare scales as against the new fare scales to be effective from January 15 this year would be available for collection by taxi owners from Wednesday (January 11).

A spokesman for the department said the fare increase was still subject to the Legislative Council's consent.

These tables should be displayed at a prominent position inside the taxi before taximeters are recalibrated, tested and sealed by the Transport Department during their half-yearly inspections, the spokesman said.

Those taxi associations which wish to collect fare conversion tables in a lot for distribution to their members should approach the Public Vehicles Section of the Transport Department.

Hong Kong and Kowloon taxi operators can collect the tables at all Licensing Offices of the Transport Department, the Public Vehicles Section of the Transport Department, third floor, United Centre, 95 Queensway, Hong Kong; and Public Enquiry Service Centres of all urban District Offices and Sha Tin, Kwai Tsing and Tsuen Wan District Offices.

New Territories taxi operators can collect the tables at the department's Licensing Offices, the Public Vehicles Section of the department; and Public Enquiry Centres of the North, Sai Kung, Tai Po, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun District Offices.

Taxi owners are also reminded that the taxi fare tables at the interior nearside rear door and the front dashboard on the passenger side or the front nearside door should show the new fare scale starting from the effective date of January 15.

A special meter sealing exercise for urban and New Territories taxis in connection with the taxi fare increase will be conducted with effect from January 16.

Taxi owners are requested to make telephone bookings during office hours for testing and resealing of taxi meters from Thursday (January 12) for this special sealing exercise. The addresses and telephone numbers of the vehicle examination centres are:

* for urban taxis:

(i) Kowloon Bay Vehicle Examination Centre I :

- (a) 5 pm - 9 pm from Mondays to Fridays, and
- (b) 9 am - 5 pm on Saturdays (except public holidays)

(ii) To Kwa Wan Vehicle Examination Centre

Additional taxi meter recalibration inspections will be accepted during normal working hours telephone booking No. : 2759 7573

* for New Territories taxis :

Sheung Kwai Chung Vehicle Examination Centre

- (a) Additional taxi meter recalibration inspections will be accepted during normal working hours from Mondays to Fridays; and
- (b) 8.30 am - 1 pm on Saturday (except public holidays).
Telephone Booking No.:2426 9085

Those who have made appointments through their respective taxi associations should not make any telephone appointment.

The taxi owners are reminded that this special arrangement is for meter testing and sealing only. Appointment for annual inspections and bi-annual meter checks will be made in the normal manner.

Those taxi owners who have already made appointment for taxi meter checking in January and February 1995 should stick to their original bookings and should not make any telephone appointment under this special arrangement.

The spokesman said taxi meter should be recalibrated before they were tested and sealed by staff of Transport Department.

"Wherever possible, the existing gearbox seal underneath the taxi should be left intact when the taxi is presented for the special sealing arrangement," he said.

"Taxi owners are requested to arrange for early recalibration of taxi meters so as to reduce unnecessary complaints arising from any possible misunderstanding of the public on the use of fare conversion tables," the spokesman added.

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Manufacturers urged to join awards scheme

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The Director-General of Industry, Miss Denise Yue, today (Monday) urged manufacturers to enter into competition of the Hong Kong Awards for Industry, the highest recognition of the pursuit of excellence for the Hong Kong manufacturing industry.

Established in 1989 and expanded over the years, the awards scheme (formerly known as the Governor's Award for Industry) aims at encouraging and recognising excellence in different aspects of industrial performance.

"The new name 'Hong Kong Awards for Industry' would help promote the awards scheme as well as the quality image of Hong Kong's products in major overseas markets," Miss Yue said.

"The manufacturing industry is and will remain an important sector of the Hong Kong economy. The pursuit of excellence in manufacturing would help maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness in the local and overseas markets. No doubt, the awards scheme will continue well into the 21st century.

"The Organising Committee of the Hong Kong Awards for Industry has therefore decided that as from 1995 the awards scheme should be renamed 'Hong Kong Awards for Industry' to facilitate transition beyond 1997.

"In line with the established practice, the Governor will present the awards at the presentation ceremony scheduled for September," she added.

The awards scheme covers six categories. Each category is run by a different organisation.

The Consumer Product Design Award category, organised by the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, encourages innovative design in consumer products.

The Machinery and Equipment Design Award category, administered by the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, encourages upgrading in the design and production of machinery and equipment.

The Productivity Award category, run by the Hong Kong Productivity Council, promotes endeavours to achieve improved productivity.

The Quality Award category, organised by the Industry Department, recognises quality achievements in manufacturing operations.

The Environmental Performance Award category, run by the Private Sector Committee on the Environment, recognises attention to protection of the environment in manufacturing.

The Export Marketing Award category, organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, recognises the importance of export marketing strategies, methods and techniques in expanding and opening markets abroad.

Entries are invited every year and the best entry in each award category will be presented with the Hong Kong Award for Industry.

Organisers of the various categories may also give their own awards in each award category or confer certificates of merit on deserving entries.

The closing date for entries this year is April 10. The presentation ceremony will be held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on September 28.

As regards the Quality Award organised by the Industry Department, Miss Yue said: "All companies located in Hong Kong and, in the year before the closing date for entries, manufactured products which qualify for a certificate of Hong Kong origin are eligible to enter the competition."

Entries for the Quality Award will be evaluated on two main criteria.

The first is the quality of the company's products, in terms of fitness for purpose, consistency in performance, packaging/appearance, environmental protection aspects, value for money and safety.

The second is the company's quality culture and the extent to which a company's quality management system is applied to design, materials sourcing, production and testing; and how far it eliminates delays and rejections during the manufacturing process and consumer complaints afterwards.

Entry forms and brochures on the Quality Award are obtainable from the Industry Department or by calling 2736 2306.

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Lung Cheung Road and Ching Cheung Road improvements

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Roads and footways will be closed from Friday (January 13) to facilitate the construction of the Phase II works of Lung Cheung Road and Ching Cheung Road improvement project.

They are :

- (i) the footways along the northern and southern sides of Lung Cheung Road between Tai Po Road and Lion Rock Tunnel Road;
- (ii) a section of slip road at and a section of access near the junction of Lung Cheung Road and Nam Cheong Street and the footway along the eastern side of Nam Cheong Street northbound to Lung Cheung Road and southbound at Cornwall Street Roundabout;
- (iii) the footway along the northern and southern sides of Lung Ping Road; and
- (iv) the footbridge across Lung Cheung Road near Phoenix House.

Details of a notice of the closure has been gazetted last Friday (January 6).

Plans showing the roads and footways to be closed can be seen at:

- * the Central and Western District Office, Public Enquiry Services Centre, Ground Floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong;
- * the District Lands Office/Kowloon West, Yau Ma Tei Car Park Building, 10th floor, 250 Shanghai Street, Kowloon;
- * the District Lands Office/Kwai Tsing, 10th Floor, Tsuen Wan Station Multi-storey Carpark Building, 174-208 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories;
- * Sham Shui Po District Office, sixth floor, 290 Un Chau Street, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon;
- * the Kowloon City District Office, 141-143 Kau Pui Lung Road, first floor, Kowloon and

- * the Kwai Tsing District Office, 10th floor, Kwai Hing Government Offices Building, 166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories.

As from the date of the closure, all public or private rights in, upon, under or over these sections of the roads and footways shall be extinguished.

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Volume and price movements of external trade in October 1994

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In the first 10 months of 1994, the volume of re-exports increased by 14% over the same period last year, while the volume of domestic exports decreased by 2.6%, according to the statistics released today (Monday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

Taking re-exports and domestic exports together, the volume of total exports increased by 11%. Meanwhile, imports increased by 14% in volume.

The growth in the volume of trade is derived from the growth in trade values with the effect of price changes being discounted.

As regards price changes over the same period of comparison, the prices of re-exports and domestic exports increased by 1.1% and 1.4% respectively. Import prices increased by 2.2%.

Price changes are reflected by changes in unit value indices, which are compiled based on average unit values or, for certain commodities, based on specific price data.

The terms of trade index, defined as the ratio of total export price index to import price index, decreased by 1.1% in the first 10 months of 1994 over the same period last year.

Comparing October 1994 with October 1993, the volume of re-exports continued to increase markedly, by 16%, while that of domestic exports returned to a moderate increase of 6.1%. Taken together, the volume of total exports increased by 14%. Meanwhile, the volume of imports grew by 20%.

Over the same period of comparison, the prices of re-exports and domestic exports increased by 2.2% and 1.9% respectively. Import prices increased by 4.2%.

The changes in the value, unit value and volume of re-exports by end-use category are shown in Table 1.

Comparing October 1994 with October 1993, the volume of re-exports of most end-use categories recorded increases of various magnitudes: capital goods (+27%), raw materials and semi-manufactures (+23%), foodstuffs (+18%) and consumer goods (+10%). The volume of re-exports of fuels decreased by 8.2%.

Over the same period of comparison, increases in the prices of re-exports were noted of foodstuffs (+2.9%), raw materials and semi-manufactures (+2.8%), consumer goods (+2.2%) and capital goods (+1.6%). The prices of re-exports of fuels however remained virtually unchanged.

The changes in the value, unit value and volume of domestic exports by principal commodity group are shown in Table 2.

Comparing October 1994 with October 1993, commodity groups which recorded increases in volume of domestic exports included metal ores and scrap (+35%); and electronic components (+21%).

The volume of domestic exports of radios of all kinds and footwear decreased by 25% and 24% respectively.

Commodity groups which recorded increases in domestic export prices included textile made-ups and related articles (+15%); and metal ores and scrap (+6.3%).

Decreases in domestic export prices were recorded for footwear (-6.9%) and radios of all kinds (-1.1%).

The changes in the value, unit value and volume of imports by end-use category are shown in Table 3.

The import volume of foodstuffs increased by 14% in October 1994 compared with October 1993.

Significant increases were recorded in the import volume of soya bean oil, peanut oil, vegetable oil and lard; wheat and flour; and cereals and cereal preparations (other than rice, wheat and flour). However, decreases were recorded in the import volume of rice; tea and coffee; and vegetables.

Over the same period of comparison, the import volume of consumer goods increased by 18%.

Commodity items with considerable increases in import volume included passenger motor car; and radios, television sets, gramophones, records, tape recorders and amplifiers.

Decreases in the import volume were noted of watches and miscellaneous made-up articles of textile materials.

The import volume of raw materials and semi-manufactures increased by 19% in October 1994 compared with October 1993.

Significant increases in import volume were noted of man-made fibres; chemical elements and compounds; and wood, lumber and cork.

Imports of fuels increased markedly by 34% in volume in October 1994 compared with October 1993.

As regards capital goods, the import volume increased by 26% in October 1994 over October 1993.

Notable increases were recorded in the import volume of office machines; and scientific, medical, optical, measuring and controlling instruments and apparatus. The import volume of construction machinery and textile machinery declined.

Comparing October 1994 with October 1993, the import prices of most end-use categories increased: raw materials and semi-manufactures (+5.4%), consumer goods (+4.3%), foodstuffs (+4.0%) and capital goods (+2.8%). The import prices of fuels decreased by 7.9%.

Details of the above statistics are published in the October 1994 issue of the "Hong Kong Trade Index Numbers".

The report will be available on sale from Wednesday (January 11) at \$9 per copy at either the Government Publications Centre on the Ground Floor, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway; or the Publications Section of the Census and Statistics Department on the 19th Floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

Enquiries regarding regular subscription to this report may be directed to the Information Services Department at French Mission Building, 1 Battery Path, Hong Kong on tel 2842 8802 and enquiries on trade indices to the Census and Statistics Department on tel 2582 4918.

Table 1 : Changes in re-exports by end-use category

End-use category	Comparing OCT 1994 with OCT 1993			Comparing JAN-OCT 1994 with JAN-OCT 1993		
	% changes			% changes		
	Value	Unit	Volume	Value	Unit	Volume
Foodstuffs	21.7	2.9	18.5	19.9	2.0	18.1
Consumer goods	13.4	2.2	10.4	11.8	1.2	10.4
Raw materials and semi-manufactures	27.4	2.8	23.2	22.0	0.3	21.4
Fuels	-9.7	-0.2	-8.2	4.6	-10.2	14.1
Capital goods	27.0	1.6	26.6	14.8	2.0	13.4
ALL COMMODITIES	19.1	2.2	16.4	15.0	1.1	14.1

Table 2 : Changes in domestic exports by principal commodity group

Commodity group	Comparing OCT 1994 with OCT 1993			Comparing JAN-OCT 1994 with JAN-OCT 1993		
	% changes			% changes		
	Value	Unit	Volume	Value	Unit	Volume
Clothing	6.6	3.6	2.5	1.7	2.0	0.1
Textile fabrics	-2.4	2.5	-4.1	-8.7	-1.9	-7.1
Textile yarn and thread	15.7	2.9	12.8	-0.7	0.8	-0.6
Textile made-ups and related articles	10.1	14.7	-6.4	12.9	4.6	6.0
Radios of all kinds	-35.0	-1.1	-24.7	-57.8	0.8	-56.5
Electronic components	23.3	0.3	20.9	5.8	3.3	1.9
Footwear	-22.7	-6.9	-24.1	-19.8	-3.9	-20.2
Metal manufactures	-4.7	2.8	-7.1	-0.3	2.1	-0.4
Metal ores and scrap	47.6	6.3	35.2	-0.7	0.3	-3.3
Watches and clocks	18.5	1.9	15.0	-5.0	1.9	-6.0
Travel goods, handbags and similar articles	-18.6	1.4	-18.4	-4.2	3.3	-6.7
Domestic electrical appliances	12.5	3.5	8.1	-13.0	1.7	-17.1
ALL COMMODITIES	8.5	1.9	6.1	-1.0	1.4	-2.6

Table 3 : Changes in imports by end-use category

End-use category	Comparing OCT 1994 with OCT 1993			Comparing JAN-OCT 1994 with JAN-OCT 1993		
	% changes			% changes		
	Value	Unit Value	Volume	Value	Unit Value	Volume
Foodstuffs	18.5	4.0	14.2	17.0	1.0	16.1
Consumer goods	21.6	12.8	2.7	11.2	4.3	17.8
Raw materials and semi-manufactures	26.1	5.4	19.1	19.8	2.9	15.9
Fuels	20.0	-7.9	33.6	23.3	-14.3	41.7
Capital goods	28.3	2.8	25.5	13.6	2.1	11.4
ALL COMMODITIES	24.2	4.2	19.6	15.6	2.2	13.6

End/Monday, January 9, 1995

1995 Crime Victimization Survey

A Crime Victimization Survey will be conducted by the Census and Statistics Department starting from Wednesday (January 11).

The survey is conducted under the auspices of the Fight Crime Committee. The main purpose is to collect up-to-date information about crimes, victims and crime reporting last year.

This is the fifth time that a Crime Victimization Survey is conducted in Hong Kong. The first such survey was conducted in 1979 and similar surveys were conducted in 1982, 1987 and 1990.

The survey is conducted under Part IIIA of the Census and Statistics Ordinance (Cap. 316, Laws of Hong Kong) and is notified in the Government Notice No. 3762 in the Gazette of October 7 last year.

In accordance with the provision of the Ordinance, all data collected in the survey relating to individual persons or households will be treated in strict confidence and will not be released to any other parties including Government departments. Only statistics will be published.

A sample of about 20,000 living quarters has been selected scientifically from all living quarters in Hong Kong. The Census and Statistics Department has sent letters to the selected households notifying them of the survey.

From January 11 to 25, enumerators will visit the sampled households and interview all household members aged 12 or above to collect data on personal characteristics and any crimes which happened to them last year.

Household heads will also be asked to supply information on household characteristics and any criminal acts which affected the household.

During visits to households, all enumerators will each carry a card identifying them as staff for the survey and a certificate issued by the Census and Statistics Department authorising them to conduct the survey. Such identification documents will be available for inspection by the householders.

If household members have any queries about the survey or the identity of enumerators, please call the Census and Statistics Department at 2887 5569.

As the findings of the survey will be very useful to the Fight Crime Committee and the Police in evaluating the effectiveness of existing crime prevention and anti-crime measures and in devising new measures, the Commissioner for Census and Statistics appeals to all selected households for their co-operation in the survey.

End/Monday, January 9, 1995

Fresh water cuts in Yau Ma Tei and Sheung Shui

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Fresh water supply to some premises in Yau Ma Tei and Sheung Shui will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Wednesday (January 11) and Thursday (January 12) respectively to 6 am the following day to facilitate water mains leakage detection.

The suspension will affect all the premises at Kansu Street, Canton Road, Saigon Street, Shanghai Street, Reclamation Street, Battery Street and Pak Hoi Street in Yau Ma Tei.

In Sheung Shui, the affected areas will include Po Wan Road, Fu Tei Au Road, Man Kam To Road, Jockey Club Road, Hing Yan Tsuen and Sheung Pak Tsuen.

End/Monday, January 9, 1995

Water storage figure

Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 71.7 per cent of capacity or 420.294 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 388.162 million cubic metres of water, representing 66.2 per cent of capacity.

End/Monday, January 9, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,449	0930	+384
Closing balance in the account	1,788	1000	+384
Change attributable to :		1100	+354
Money market activity	+349	1200	+351
LAF today	-10	1500	+351
		1600	+349

LAF rate 3.75% bid/5.75% offer TWI 121.6 *+0.0* 9.1.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/Hong Kong Government bonds				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.11	17 months	2605	6.35	98.62	7.57
1 month	5.23	23 months	2611	6.90	98.53	7.91
3 months	5.70	28 months	3704	6.15	96.18	8.15
6 months	6.46	34 months	3710	7.25	97.80	8.30
12 months	7.14	60 months	5912	8.15	98.54	8.70

Total turnover of bills and bonds - \$33,914 MN

Closed January 9, 1995

End/Monday, January 9, 1995