



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, August 31, 1973

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NEW TENANCY SYSTEM NO THREAT TO SHOP TENANTS

The Housing Department today assured shop tenants in public housing estates who are being asked to sign long-term tenancy agreements that the new policy is not a threat to their existence.

The new tenancy agreement which is to replace the former tenancy card system issued on a month-to-month basis, is for two years in the first instance and renewable for another three years.

Mr. Ralph Husband, Deputy Director of Estates Management, said today that some shopkeepers seemed to think that the agreement would mean immediate rent increases and an end to their tenancy after two years.

"There is no question of tenancies being terminated," he stressed. "We are always reluctant to end tenancies and it would have to be a consistent non-payment of rent or repeated breaking of rules that would lead us to take that sort of action.

"In the former Housing Authority and low cost housing estates there are about 800 shops which from the start have been on two or three-year agreements," said Mr. Husband.

"The majority have occupied their shops since the estates were first opened -- in some cases as long as 15 years. The same sort of thing will apply to shopkeepers in the older estates who are now being asked to sign agreements," he said.

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On the question of rents Mr. Husband said that in the past former Resettlement Department shop rents were adjusted each year. The last change was in April 1972. "What is now proposed," he said, "is virtually a rent freeze at this present level until December 1975 at least.

"Shop rents on estates are considerably subsidised and low compared to those in the private sector and a rent freeze of two years must be a very attractive proposition to any shop tenants."

Mr. Husband went on: "As is well known, the new Housing Department was formed in April as an amalgamation of the former Resettlement Department and the Housing Division of the Urban Services Department and it is hoped that conditions in ex-resettlement estates will be eventually made similar to those found in former Housing Authority estates. This is one move in that direction."

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MORE PARKING SPACES AT KAI TAK

Temporary parking facilities will be provided at Hong Kong International Airport as an interim measure pending the construction of a permanent multi-storey car park which will eventually provide 1,400 spaces.

In the short term, three car parks are to be built providing a total of 1,170 spaces. Work on the project is expected to start in October and should be completed in four months.

The scheme involves the expansion of the existing airline industry and staff car park at the western side of the terminal to provide 570 parking spaces for use by the general public.

For airline industry and staff, two small car parks -- with an accommodation of 600 cars and lorries -- will be built at the permit area.

The whole scheme comprises the construction of 25,000 square yards of asphalt pavement together with associated security and drainage works.

Commenting on the project, a spokesman for the Public Works Department noted that the arrangements were only temporary and said that the existing airline staff and industry car park would revert to that use once the multi-storey car park was completed.

The majority of the parking areas to be provided at the Permit area would be retained for use in association with maintenance and catering, he added.

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EXPORTS CONTINUE UPWARD TREND

The value of Hong Kong's domestic exports continues to show a marked increase over that of the corresponding months last year.

According to provisional trade statistics released today, domestic exports last month were worth \$1,637 million -- an increase of 24.9 per cent or \$326 million over July 1972.

The value of imports increased by \$484 million or 26 per cent to \$2,344 million.

However, the biggest increase -- 48.8 per cent -- was in re-exports which were worth \$551 million, a rise of \$181 million over the corresponding month last year.

Mr. M.D. Sargant, Assistant Director of the Commerce and Industry Department, said that the figures for the three-month period, May to July 1973, showed increases over the same period in 1972 of 21.4 per cent for domestic exports, 21.9 per cent for imports and 42 per cent for re-exports.

Figures for the seven-month period, January to July 1973, represented increases over the same period in 1972 of 18.3 per cent for domestic exports, 20.9 per cent for imports and 40.5 per cent for re-exports.

The provisional trade figures for July are given in the table below with comparison figures.

MERCHANDISE

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MERCHANDISE: Domestic Exports : \$1,637 million
 Imports : \$2,344 million
 Re-exports : \$ 551 million

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

	July 1973 \$ Mn.	July 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %
Domestic Exports	1,637	1,311	+ 326 + 24.9
Imports	2,344	1,860	+ 484 + 26.0
Re-exports	551	370	+ 181 + 48.8
	May-July 1973 \$ Mn.	May-July 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %
Domestic Exports	4,748	3,912	836 + 21.4
Imports	6,890	5,652	+1,238 + 21.9
Re-exports	1,497	1,054	+ 443 + 42.0
	Jan.-July 1973 \$ Mn.	Jan.-July 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %
Domestic Exports	9,815	8,298	+1,516 + 18.3
Imports	14,707	12,168	+2,539 + 20.9
Re-exports	3,077	2,190	+ 887 + 40.5

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NEW SOCIAL WELFARE DIRECTOR BEGINS WORK

Mr. K.W.J. Topley today assumed his new duties as Director of Social Welfare.

Mr. Topley, who is 50, has had a distinguished career with the Hong Kong government having served in a number of responsible posts.

He first joined the public service in 1950 as a Cadet Officer in the Malayan Civil Service before transferring to Hong Kong in 1955. He was promoted to Senior Administrative Officer in 1959 and became Assistant Commissioner for Resettlement that same year.

He had served as Commissioner for Co-operative Development and Fisheries for several years. In 1964, he was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Labour.

Mr. Topley joined the Census and Statistics Department in 1967 as Deputy Commissioner and two years later became Commissioner, a post he held until his appointment as Director of Social Welfare earlier this month.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph of Mr. Topley are boxed for collection.

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TVB'S LICENCE EXTENDED

The government announced today that the licence issued to Television Broadcasts Limited will be valid for a period of 15 years from the date of the coming on air of the second wireless television licensee, subject to satisfactory renewal in 1980.

This brings the period of validity of TVB's licence into line with the licences to be issued to the two new wireless television companies.

The 15-year term of the licences which will be issued to the two new television companies will be subject to a mid-way review at the end of 1980 and, subject to satisfactory service, the remainder of the 15-year licence term will be confirmed at that time.

TVB's new licence will also be subject to satisfactory renewal on the same date.

This will enable not only the individual performances of each licensee to be examined but also the overall pattern of television progress in Hong Kong to be reviewed.

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ZOO TO BE ENLARGED

The mini zoo at the Botanic Gardens will be reconstructed and expanded later this year to provide a more attractive display of wild mammal species.

The expansion scheme, which has been approved by the Recreation and Amenities Select Committee of the Urban Council, involves the construction of seven separate animal enclosures and a small food preparation shed on the lawn surrounding the bandstand north of the existing mammal enclosures.

Wild mammals presently displayed include various species of monkeys, black bears, deer, porcupines, squirrels and black apes, but it is envisaged that new species of gibbon and marmosets will soon be added to the collection.

According to Mr. J.D. Romer, Curator of Mammals in charge of the expansion scheme, the new enclosures would provide better and larger accommodation for the wild mammals as well as facilitate public viewing.

At present, the mammal enclosures are situated in one long structure which is divided into seven partitions.

Mr. Romer said the new cages would be big enough to accommodate breeding groups of animals to increase both the educational and conservation value of the exhibits.

Work on the project is expected to start within a few weeks and should be completed in three months.

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\$118 MILLION SURPLUS RECORDED IN MAY

The Hong Kong government accounts for the month of May 1973 show a surplus of \$118 million, compared with a deficit of \$13 million in May last year.

This has resulted in a total surplus of \$103 million for the first two months of this financial year.

Total revenue for the month at \$450 million was \$200 million more than in May 1972. The total revenue for the first two months of the financial year was \$774 million - \$234 million more than the same period last year.

Total expenditure amounted to \$332 million, an increase of \$70 million over the same month last year.

This brings the total expenditure for the first two months of the financial year to \$642 million, which was \$130 million more than the same period last year.

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LABOUR COMMISSIONER TO VISIT TO KWA WAN FACTORY

Note to Editors: The new Commissioner of Labour, Mr. I.R. Price, will mark his first full day in office on Monday (September 3) by a visit to industry.

He will visit the Wintex Knitwear Company Limited at Kapok Mansion, 11th floor, 373 To Kwa Wan Road at 2.30 in the afternoon.

The theme of the visit will be improving management-worker relations, and Mr. Price intends to speak both to management and to workers on the production line.

If time allows, he may make impromptu calls at other factories after the Wintex visit.

You are invited to sent a reporter and/or photographer to cover the occasion. Press representatives should assemble at the entrance to Kapok Mansion at 2.20 p.m.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.