



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Value of Hong Kong's domestic exports continues to rise	1
Ngau Tau Kok clearance has been successfully completed ahead of schedule	3
Pleasant country path will be constructed leading from North Point to Tai Tam reservoir for picnickers and hikers	4
Two-month survey to be carried out to ascertain the number of profit-making child care centres	5
Badges for swimming proficiency are another new feature in the "Let's Swim '73" programme	6
Gough Hill Path in the Peak area will be closed to traffic	7
Nigerian immigration matters will in future be handled by the Liaison Office of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	7
An 18-year-old jewel robber sentenced to eight years' imprisonment	8
Sample survey will be carried out to determine whether there is a need for an additional sub-treasury on Hong Kong Island	9
Dispute involving 1,300 redundant wig factory workers settled	10

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 1 -

VALUE OF TRADE CONTINUES TO RISE

Assistant Director of the Commerce and Industry Department, Mr. M.D. Sargent, today described as "very satisfactory" Hong Kong's trade figures for the past three months (March to May).

During this period domestic exports had increased by 19.7 per cent, imports by 17.5 per cent and re-exports by 43.8 per cent over the same period in 1972.

Mr. Sargent said the figures extended further the favourable trend that was developing earlier.

Provisional trade figures published today by the Census and Statistics Department showed that domestic exports for the month of May were valued at \$1,473 million -- an increase of 15.4 per cent or \$196 million over May last year.

Imports, worth \$2,164 million, rose 15.9 per cent or \$297 million. But the biggest increase was again recorded in the re-export sector which jumped by 30.5 per cent.

This represented an increase of \$100 million to \$430 million over the same month last year.

Details of the figures are:

MERCHANDISE:

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 2 -

MERCHANDISE: Domestic Exports : \$1,473 million
 Imports : \$2,164 million
 Re-exports : 430 million

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

	May 1973 \$ Mn.	May 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %	
Domestic Exports	1,473	1,277	+ 196	+ 15.4
Imports	2,164	1,867	+ 297	+ 15.9
Re-exports	430	329	+ 100	+ 30.5

	Mar.-May 1973 \$ Mn.	Mar.-May 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %	
Domestic Exports	4,080	3,409	+ 671	+ 19.7
Imports	6,207	5,284	+ 923	+ 17.5
Re-exports	1,288	896	+ 392	+ 43.8

	Jan.-May 1973 \$ Mn.	Jan.-May 1972 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease \$ Mn. %	
Domestic Exports	6,540	5,663	+ 877	+ 15.5
Imports	9,981	8,383	+1,598	+ 19.1
Re-exports	2,010	1,465	+ 545	+ 37.2

- - - - 0 - - - -

/3

NGAU TAU KOK CLEARANCE IS OVER

The clearance operation at Ngau Tau Kok involving the demolition of some 148 industrial undertakings, 31 shops and more than 40 domestic huts has been successfully completed ahead of schedule.

The Public Works Department is now preparing the site for the construction of the main maintenance depot of the mass transit railway.

About 360 eligible domestic residents from the site have already moved into public housing estates at Lam Tin, Sau Mau Ping and Kwai Chung and another 120 ineligible domestic residents have taken up licensed area accommodation in Junction Road.

Some 85 eligible factory operators have re-established their undertakings in government factory units in Kwai Chung and Kwun Tong. Over 350 flatted factory units were allocated to them.

Factory operators who were not eligible have been referred to the New Territories Administration for help in finding suitable sites to re-establish their business.

More than \$186,000 has been paid to 17 shopowners.

Commenting on the operation a Housing Department spokesman said:

"An important factor in the smoothness of the clearance was the co-operation we had from residents, proprietors and workers in the area.

"It was particularly gratifying that heavy machinery was moved from the site by owners making the job of demolishing the structures so much easier," he added.

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Note to Editors: Photographs of the cleared area are boxed this evening.

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 4 -

OPENING UP HONG KONG FOR PICNICKERS

Picnickers and hikers will soon be able to "span" Hong Kong Island by way of a pleasant country path leading direct from North Point to Tai Tam reservoir.

A one-mile concrete footpath will be constructed from Quarry Gap to Tai Tam dam by means of joining various beaten tracks on the hillside.

The footpath will link up with another path leading from Mount Parker Road near Quarry Bay to form a walkway with a standard width of 10 feet.

Barbecue pits, landscaping, nature walks, tables and benches, and toilet facilities will be provided along the footpath, which is expected to be completed by next summer.

The project is a part of a five-year development programme recommended by the New Territories and Hong Kong Island Advisory Committee for Recreational Development and Nature Conservation, which aims at providing easily accessible picnic spots with various facilities for the use of large numbers of visitors.

Other projects planned on Hong Kong Island include picnic spots in Pok Fu Lam, Mount Davis and Wong Nei Chung. Country parks have also been planned in the New Territories at Shing Mun, Lion Rock, Pak Sha Wan and on Lantau Island.

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/5

SURVEY OF PROFIT-MAKING CHILD CARE CENTRES

A survey is to be conducted over the next two months to find out the number of profit-making child care centres for children under the age of six including nurseries, play centres, and creches in Hong Kong.

The survey, to be carried out by the Social Welfare Department, will also look into the existing standards of services provided.

Miss Chan Joy-yin, Principal Social Welfare Officer (Research and Statistics), said the aim is to get first hand information on the situation in these child care centres to which social welfare legislation will probably be applied.

Initially three university students have been recruited to carry out the survey during their summer vacation. Those centres which are known to the department have already been sent letters informing them of the survey.

"Centres which have not received letters are invited to contact the Research and Evaluation Unit of the Social Welfare Department in Lee Gardens," Miss Chan said.

The information obtained in the survey will be used to assess the present situation in these centres and the number of staff required for the implementation of the proposed legislation for the control of such child care centres.

The legislation will cover profit-making and non-profit-making centres and will require them, by a given time, to maintain prescribed standards of accommodation and health, safety measures and staff qualifications.

The introduction of this legislation is one area of development in the field of Family Welfare Services in the Five Year Plan.

LOCAL PROFICIENCY AWARDS FOR SWIMMERS

A local Badge Scheme for swimming proficiency will be introduced for the first time in Hong Kong.

This is a step to provide swimmers with a chance to qualify for proficiency and survival awards offered by internationally recognised bodies, such as for life-saving awards offered by the Royal Life Saving Society (Hong Kong Branch).

This is another of the many projects launched in the Urban Council's "Let's Swim '73" Campaign.

The theme of the campaign is to make people aware of the importance of water safety this summer.

A spokesman for the Urban Council said: "The Local Badge Scheme is planned to encourage those who have recently learnt to swim to improve their swimming techniques and confidence in the water, and to provide an incentive to achieving related awards in this area of endeavour."

"The scheme aims at three levels of achievement of proficiency at the junior, intermediate and senior levels, which are linked to the awards of bronze, silver and gold badges," he continued.

The tests in the Badge Scheme are planned by the Education Department, in conjunction with the Hong Kong branch of the Royal Life Saving Society and examiners qualified to test candidates will be appointed jointly by the council, the department and the society.

Other sponsors and organisers of the project are the South China Morning Post and the Hong Kong Life Guard Club.

Application forms to join the Local Badge Scheme are obtainable from all schools, City District Offices and Urban Council swimming pools.

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 7 -

CLOSURE OF GOUGH HILL PATH

Gough Hill Path on the Peak will be closed to traffic from 10 a.m. on Monday (July 9).

This arrangement is made as a safety measure because of the limited width of the road.

Car owners who require access to premises on the road can obtain permission from the Commissioner for Transport.

They should apply in writing to the Commissioner at Blake Block, 101 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Telephone enquiries can also be made to 5-282724, extension 32.

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IMMIGRATION FACILITIES FOR NIGERIAN

The Director of Immigration has announced that Nigerian immigration matters previously handled by his department will be taken over by the Liaison Office of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The Liaison Office is on the 12th floor of Goldfield Building, 42-44 Connaught Road West, telephone 5-445171.

It will start its work from Sunday (July 1).

- - - - 0 - - - -

/8

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 8 -

ROBBER JAILED FOR EIGHT YEARS

An unemployed youth was jailed for eight years by Mr. Commissioner de Basto in the Supreme Court today for robbing a shop of a quantity of jewellery worth about \$570,000 in Kowloon late last year.

The defendant, Luk Keung, 18, was found guilty two weeks ago when Mr. Commissioner de Basto deferred sentence until today pending reports from a probation officer and training centre.

The defendant had two previous convictions including one of robbery.

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/9

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 9 -

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL TREASURY FACILITIES TO BE INVESTIGATED

A sample survey is to be carried out to determine whether there is sufficient demand for additional Treasury facilities on Hong Kong Island.

It will be conducted at both the Treasury headquarters in Central and the Causeway Bay Sub-Treasury from July to September.

Organised by the Secretariat for Home Affairs, the Census and Statistics Department and the Treasury, the survey will be undertaken by undergraduates of the Hong Kong University.

The aim is to establish whether there is a positive need for another sub-treasury on the Island and if so, the best possible location for it.

To ensure that the survey is a success, members of the public are urged to co-operate by giving their views when approached while making payment of their rates, water charges and other government accounts at the two Treasury collection centres.

A similar sample survey held at the Kowloon Sub-Treasury last year provided some useful information and the government is now considering opening another branch in Kowloon.

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/10

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 10 -

WIG FACTORY DISPUTE SETTLED

The four-week old Gilda Fashions dispute was settled today at a meeting held in the headquarters of the Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department in Queensway.

Under the agreement reached, the 1,300 workers formerly employed by the wig factory at Tsuen Wan -- now in receivership -- will be paid a total of \$390,000 in severance pay.

The head of the Labour Relations Service, Mr. T.F. Tsui, who chaired the meeting said the back wages to the workers would be paid in the factory tomorrow (Thursday) morning in the presence of officers of the Labour Relations Service.

The \$390,000 in severance pay would be handed over to the workers next Wednesday in the Tsuen Wan office of the Service.

The dispute began on June 8 when the company gave the workers one month's notice saying that the factory was to be closed because of lack of business.

The workers demanded severance pay, but the management would not meet their demands.

The Labour Relations Service subsequently arranged a series of meetings between the workers' representatives and the company's receivers. The last three meetings in the series were also attended by the former head of Gilda Fashions Ltd.

/During

Wednesday, June 27, 1973

- 11 -

During the course of these meetings, representatives of the Legal Aid Department also made themselves available to offer advice, but this was declined by the workers.

Mr. Tsui also announced that the dispute involving 400 workers of the Kwun Tong wig factory of N. Wagman and Company Ltd. was settled today at a meeting held in the San Po Kong Office of the Labour Relations Service.

In this agreement, each worker will receive \$320 as severance pay. The employers will pay over the money at the Service's San Po Kong Office on July 3.

The dispute began on June 15 when the management announced that it would cancel the workers' guaranteed monthly basic wage.

The workers protested against the ruling and a series of conciliation meetings was subsequently arranged by the Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department.

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Release time: 8.30 p.m.