



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, January 15, 1974

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Daily guide to wholesale prices and supply of basic food commodities

Release time: 7.45 p.m.

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PWD PUTS "QUICK-BUILD" METHODS INTO ITS LATEST HOUSING ESTATE

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Two of the latest mechanized construction methods are to be used in the construction of the first stage of the Tuen Mun (Castle Peak) Housing Estate, the contract for which was signed today in the Public Works Department.

These features represent another major step forward in the adoption of "quick-build" methods which will play an important part in attaining the 10-year target of 1.8 million to be housed by 1983 set by the Governor in late 1972.

During the past six months, the Director of Public Works, Mr. Alexander Robertson has stressed that these and similar sophisticated techniques will be needed to keep the development of the three new towns, which will house most of the 1.8 million people, on schedule; and his words have been echoed by other heads of departments.

A Public Works spokesman disclosed today that in anticipation of this need senior staff of P.W.D.'s Architectural Office several years ago began an unofficial "missionary" information exercise designed to familiarise interested sections of Hong Kong's building industry with the advantages of such methods.

One of the men who took a part in this campaign was Chief Architect Joseph Lei. And it was Mr. Lei who, on behalf of the government, today signed the Stage I contract for the Tuen Mun Estate.

Signing on behalf of the successful contracting firm was Mr. Lawrence Y.W. Lee, managing director of the Far East Engineering and Construction Co. Ltd.

/This company .....

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This company has already gained experience of the "quick-build" methods in its current work on the Pak Tin and Tung Tau Estates in Kowloon, where the techniques have enabled the time spent on building to be cut from 21 days to six days per floor.

As at those two estates, the methods to be applied at Tuen Mun are the use of mechanized steel forms, instead of the traditional wooden forms, for the walls; and of the "Omnia" slab system for the floors. The effect at Tuen Mun is to reduce what would previously have been a normal contract period of 36 months to 28 months.

The spokesman added that as well as saving time and manpower and facilitating the speedy training of labour, the new methods result in a far better and smoother finish to the walls and floors.

The contract signed today is valued at \$82.4 million. In financial terms, this makes it the biggest single contract ever put out by P.W.D's Architectural Office. The work should be completed by the end of June 1976.

The Tuen Mun Estate will embody the most progressive features of integrated public housing, with ample social and recreational amenities built into the complex.

Overall, it will house 47,000 people in five 30-storey cruciform (or cross-shaped) blocks and one 7-storey block and will include such features as primary and secondary schools and kindergartens, a welfare hall and associated facilities, a restaurant, market and shop, recreation areas, and car parking spaces.

Stage I of the project covers the construction of four of the housing blocks, the restaurant, some shops, the welfare hall, three primary schools and three kindergartens.

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HONG KONG COINS TO BE REVIEWED

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A special committee has been set up to determine present and future requirements for coinage in Hong Kong and to relate these requirements to coins currently in circulation.

The Coinage Review Committee is headed by the Accountant General, Mr. Douglas Blye, and will report its findings to the Financial Secretary.

Announcing the formation of the committee, a government spokesman said the decision to undertake the review was taken in the light of the increasing costs of maintaining an adequate supply of coins and because it was considered in some quarters that the range of coins did not meet present day needs.

It was also felt, he added, that the introduction of a 20-cent or 25-cent coin and perhaps \$2 and \$5 coins would be a convenience for the public.

"The cost of minting and of the metals used in the manufacture of Hong Kong's coin has increased considerably in recent years and storage costs have followed a similar pattern," the spokesman explained.

"Furthermore, in Hong Kong there are still comparatively few types of machines or meters which take coins but, judging from what has happened in other parts of the world, vending machines may soon become part of our way of life," he said citing the Mass Transit Railway as one potential user.

"Before this happens it is clearly desirable that the range of coins in circulation is as closely geared to present and future needs as possible."

/The spokesman .....

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The spokesman noted however that any changes to the present coinage were unlikely to be implemented before the latter part of 1975.

Members of the public, particularly operators or those with an interest in the use of coin-operated machines, are invited to offer their comments or suggestions.

They may do so either by writing to the Secretary of the Coinage Review Committee, c/o The Treasury, Central Government Offices (West Wing), Ice House Street, Hong Kong, or through the City District Offices.

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#### CHINESE CHESS TOURNAMENT

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This month's Chinese Chess Tournament organised by the Princess Alexandra Community Centre of the Social Welfare Department, will be held on Thursday (January 17) at 7.30 p.m.

Anyone living in Tsuen Wan who is interested in participating should apply to the Group Work Unit on the second floor of the Community Centre in Tai Ho Road, Tsuen Wan.

The tournament will be held in the Centre's hall so that there will also be room for spectators.

Because of its popularity, the Community Centre has been organising monthly chess tournaments as part of its programme of activities for people in the town.

As a further development and to encourage greater interest in Chinese chess, the Centre has also organised a quiz on solving chess problems. Prizes will be awarded to the first three people who can guess the correct solutions.

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MORE BUILDING PROJECTS IN NEW TERRITORIES

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A Yaumtei ferry water-taxi service pier off Connaught Road Central and two hotels in Silvermine Bay and in Shatin were among the 98 building plans approved by the Building Authority in November last year.

Building plans for the New Territories showed a marked rise with a total of 41, compared with 31 in October 1973 and 16 in November 1972. They included a 23-storey commercial-cum-apartment building in Tai Po, and two similar complexes in Yuen Long.

During the month, 62 buildings with a total construction cost of more than \$175 million were certified for occupation. These included twin block staff quarters in the Shatin compound of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and two school buildings in Sheung Shing Street, Kowloon.

A hospital in Dyer Avenue in Kowloon and a L.P.G. plant facility in Lai Chi Kok were among the 50 building projects that were given permission in November to commence work.

Approval was also given for the demolition of 74 buildings and 17 dangerous blocks.

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CLOSURE OF LION ROCK TUNNEL

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The Lion Rock Tunnel is to be closed to all traffic between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Thursday (January 17). However, emergency vehicles of the Fire Services and the police as well as K.M.B. buses will still be permitted to pass through the tunnel.

The closure is necessary to allow essential work by the China Light and Power Company to improve its operation and network system. This will involve cutting off power to a section of the tunnel.

A spokesman for the Transport Department explained today that it was not possible to allow the tunnel to be fully operational during times when the exhaust extractor fans are not able to function properly.

This will be the case with the power shut down on Thursday.

The spokesman advised motorists to use the alternative route along Tai Po Road during the closure hours. Special traffic signs will be set up at various locations to guide motorists.

However, he warned that with the re-routing of traffic a certain amount of congestion is expected to occur on Tai Po Road and for this reason motorists should restrict their journeys to essential ones only.

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HONG KONG EMBARKING ON BIGGEST SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPANSION

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The Board of Education will be asked, in due course, to take a view on the various comments being collated on the Education Green Paper and advise the government, the Director of Education, Mr. Jack Canning said today.

"A White Paper will then be prepared which should be a blue print for expansion of secondary education," he said on the occasion of the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Szeto Ho Secondary School of the Five Districts Business Welfare Association.

"If the targets are approved by the government it will mean that Hong Kong will be embarking on the biggest expansion facilities in the secondary sector of education that it has ever tackled.

"It is also clear that if the targets are to be achieved they will be achieved only with the help of the responsible people of Hong Kong and the various non-profit making agencies which are now active in the field of education," the Director said.

Mr. Canning pointed out that organisations such as the Five Districts Business Welfare Association would, through their co-operation with the government, largely determine the success of the programme.

The proposed secondary school, he said, was a solid re-assurance that the association was prepared to do its part in the expansion programme.

The association, under the leadership of Sir Kenneth Ping-fan Fung, is very actively involved in education in Hong Kong. At present it is offering education to some 10,000 students at primary and middle school level.

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The new secondary school is being built on a piece of land granted free to the sponsors by the government. In addition, the government will give a capital grant towards construction costs, of up to 84 per cent of the total cost of building and equipment.

Mr. Szeto Ho and his wife made a generous donation of \$400,000 towards the remaining portion of the costs, and Mr. Canning thanked them "for their very public spirited action."

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#### REPORT ON PROPOSED PETROCHEMICAL PLANT BEING STUDIED

##### Note to Editors:

A Government spokesman said today that no decision has been made on the building of an oil refinery and petrochemical complex on Lamma Island.

"The report from Cremer and Warner on the siting of a petrochemical plant on North Lamma is now in Government hands," he said.

It is being studied by relevant government departments and will be sent to the applicant companies. At the same time its findings will be reported to the residents of the villages of North Lamma by the District Commissioner, New Territories.

In addition, copies of the report will be sent to interested organisations and to the press as soon as possible.

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SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE FOR UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Two overseas university students have found jobs in Hong Kong through the "Special Register" of the Labour Department's Local Employment Service.

The special register is a complementary service to assist both local university graduates and Hong Kong graduates from universities overseas to obtain employment.

One graduate from an American university was placed in an administrative post in a leading bank with starting salary of \$1,800 and the other - a United Kingdom graduate - was placed with a well-known trading company as electrical engineer at \$2,000 a month.

The Senior Labour Officer in charge of the Employment Division, Mrs. SOO Mok Sau-ha said that although the register had only just been started, it had already registered 70 graduates from universities in the U.K., U.S.A., Canada, Australia as well as the two in Hong Kong. "A number of the registrants are immediately available for interview," she added.

The Special Register, she explained, not only provided free facilities to graduates but also served the needs of employers.

She urged employers in industrial, commercial and the service sectors to recruit professional, administrative and executive staff through the Special Register.

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"Local employers frequently complain of the brain-drain. The establishment of the Special Register of the Local Employment Service is a measure aimed at tackling this problem and we are now attracting Hong Kong people back from abroad," she said.

Graduates looking for suitable employment and prospective employers wishing to recruit graduates are welcome to contact the officer in charge of the Special Register whose office is at New Rodney Block, 99 Queensway, Hong Kong (Tel. No. 5-282523 Ext. 49 and 79).

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CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

Daily Guide To Wholesale Market Prices And Supplies

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The following prices were realised today (Tuesday) at sales under the Rice Control Scheme and at the Vegetable Marketing Organisation Wholesale Market and the Fish Marketing Organisation Wholesale Market at Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon:

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Rice

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>
<u>China Rice</u>		<u>Average</u>
See Mew -- old crop	Good	
-- new crop		1.72
S.C.Jion -- old crop	-	-
Po Hgai	-	-
Chu Cho	-	-
<u>Thai Rice</u>		
100% Whole	Good	1.52
10-15% Broken	-	-
A1 Super Extra	Good	1.45
A1 Super	Good	1.22
Whole Glutinous	-	-
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.62
<u>Australian Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	-	-

/Supplies and \*\*\*\*\*

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Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Marine Fish

<u>Species</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>		
		<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>
Golden Thread	Good	4.50	3.20	4.00
Big-Eyes	Good	2.50	0.80	1.50
Squid	Limited	6.70	3.50	5.00
Hair-Tails	Good	2.20	1.20	1.80
Lizard Fishes	Normal	3.40	1.20	2.00
Croakers	Good	2.00	1.20	1.60
Conger-Pike-Eels	Good	3.20	2.50	2.80
Melon Coat	Good	2.30	1.60	2.00
Breams	Normal	4.20	3.50	4.00
Yellow Belly	Good	1.50	0.90	1.20
Mackerels	Normal	4.70	3.50	4.30
Red Goat Fish	Normal	2.85	0.80	2.00
Fork-Tail	Normal	1.75	1.10	1.50
Horse-Head	Normal	5.20	3.50	4.40
Melon Seed	Limited	3.50	2.00	2.50
Pomfrets	Scarce	11.00	8.50	9.50
Grouper	Limited	8.00	6.00	7.50
Yellow Croaker	-	-	-	-

/Supplies and .....

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Supplies and Wholesale Prices of

Locally Produced Vegetables

<u>Type</u>	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price (\$/catty)</u>		
		<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>
Flowering cabbage	Normal	1.8	0.6	1.2
White cabbage	Normal	0.8	0.3	0.5
Chinese Lottuce	Good	0.8	0.2	0.5
Chinese Kale	Good	0.7	0.15	0.45
Spring onion	Normal	1.8	0.6	1.2
Spinach	Normal	1.2	0.3	0.8
Water cress	Normal	1.4	0.3	0.8
Leaf mustard cabbage	Limited	0.6	0.2	0.4
Tomato	Limited	1.8	0.8	1.2

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price ( \$/ picul)</u>
		(Average)
Pork	Good	285