



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Drainage channel

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Govt to spend more on new non-Airport Core Programme projects

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The Government intends to start work on 114 new non-Airport Core Programme projects at a total cost of \$2.9 billion in 1995-96 to further uplift the Public Works Programme (PWP), the Secretary for Works, Mr James Blake, said today (Friday).

Mr Blake said: "Expenditure on these public works projects outside the Airport Core Programme (ACP) in 1995-96 will be 70 per cent more than that for 1994-95.

"The effort to uplift our performance for the betterment of Hong Kong people is reflected in an 8 per cent increase in the 1995-96 PWP expenditure in real terms, excluding land acquisition and purchase of properties."

In the longer term, Mr Blake said the Government planned to spend \$105 billion between 1994 and 1999 on non-ACP capital works.

Major projects due to begin in 1995-96 or after include the Lantau Port Development Phase I, Tseung Kwan O Hospital, Tin Shui Wai reserve zone development and the South Tsing Yi Duplicate Bridge.

On the Lantau Port Development, Mr Blake said: "It is important that we should continue our forward planning and implementation of projects to maintain our competitiveness and to meet the growing demand for port facilities."

He noted that port activities in Hong Kong had been growing at an average annual rate of 20 per cent in the past five years. They account for 20 per cent of the GDP in Hong Kong.

"The Lantau Port scheme will be developed progressively in the next few years. It will expand the Western Harbour Anchorage significantly by way of building a 4,300-metre breakwater between Lamma Island and Cheung Chau, and reclamation to provide land for four new container terminals with 17 berths and port related industries, transport infrastructure and marine support services.

"The scheme will also considerably enhance our ability to handle the fast growing river trade with China.

"The Government has commissioned consultancy studies on the design of the reclamation and terminal quay structures. In parallel, detailed planning and design of ancillary works are being undertaken. We hope the first new berths will be ready for use by early 1998."

On other major projects, he noted that the Tin Shui Wai Reserve Zone Development would produce about 40,000 residential units in the private and public sectors.

The Tseung Kwan O Hospital will provide 450 beds upon completion in 1999. Work on the South Duplicate Tsing Yi Bridge is targeted to begin later this year for completion in early 1999.

Turning to PWP expenditure, Mr Blake said: "The actual spending for 1994-95 will be about 96 per cent of the Budget estimate.

"This will be the second consecutive year that we are able to keep the PWP spending so close to the estimate. It is a big improvement when you compare with the 39 per cent underspending in 1991-92 and 23.9 per cent in 1992-93 before a package of measures was put in place to strengthen our control and monitoring of PWP spending.

"Certainly, we are not complacent with this figure and would continue to improve our management and ability to deliver the PWP programme on time and within budget," Mr Blake said.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Banking licence of BCCHK revoked

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The banking licence of the Bank of Credit and Commerce Hong Kong Limited (BCCHK) has now been revoked, a Government spokesman announced today (Friday).

He emphasised that the revocation of BCCHK's banking licence was merely a technical step and would not prejudice the interests of creditors with outstanding claims on the bank.

The BCCHK has ceased to carry on banking business and is being wound up in pursuant to an order by the High Court in March 1992.

The spokesman explained that Monetary Authority had not sought an earlier revocation of BCCHK's banking licence for the purpose of retaining its statutory powers in relation to the bank, including the power to gather information about the institution's affairs.

"The joint Special Managers also found it useful to retain the banking status in pursuing claims on behalf of the BCCHK," he added.

"With the liquidation at a very advanced stage, the Monetary Authority is now of the view that the need to retain the BCCHK's status as a licensed bank is no longer necessary and this is also agreed by the Official Receiver who is the liquidator," the spokesman said.

At present, there are 179 licensed banks in Hong Kong, of which 148 are incorporated outside the territory.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Broadcasting Authority approves of Pearson's acquisition

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The Broadcasting Authority has approved an application by Pearson plc, a British company, for the acquisition of 10 per cent of the issued share capital of TVB.

"In approving the application, the Broadcasting Authority has taken account of the fact that after the acquisition, Pearson, a company not ordinarily resident in Hong Kong, will have no significant influence or control over the affairs of TVB which will remain very substantially in the hands of persons who are ordinarily resident in Hong Kong," a spokesman for the Authority said.

Pearson is an international media group listed on the London Stock Exchange. According to information provided by Pearson to the Broadcasting Authority, its interests include the Financial Times, the Economist Group (50%), Thames Television, BSkyB (14.9%) and Yorkshire - Tyne Tees Television (14%).

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Broadcasting Authority to delete provisions

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The Broadcasting Authority decided at its meeting yesterday (Thursday) to delete, from the television codes of practice, certain provisions which were no longer appropriate.

First, the provision prohibiting programmes containing any matter which "is likely to be injurious to community well-being or morality, or otherwise undesirable in the public interest" is deleted because it is too vague and possibly inconsistent with the Bill of Rights.

Second, the restriction on the repeat of feature films is abolished.

A spokesman for the Broadcasting Authority said: "The Broadcasting Authority considered the restriction an unwarranted interference in the programming of the licensees.

"With the increase in the number of TV channels in Hong Kong, TV stations should be allowed to adjust their programme scheduling in response to the market force at play."

Third, advertisements on female sanitary products may be broadcast at any hour of the day.

However, the present restriction of two such advertisements in any hour (except in women's programmes where no more than three may be broadcast in a half-hour programme or five in a one-hour programme) should remain unchanged.

The spokesman said these changes arose from the mid-term review of the licences of TVB and ATV.

They had been made after considering public opinions and the views of the TV stations concerned. "The changes will take effect from March 13, 1995," the spokesman said.

The Broadcasting Authority also considered a number of complaints against TV and radio programmes.

It decided to advise TVB, in respect of a promo for "Focus on Focus" showing excerpts of a male strip show, that material unsuitable for children's viewing should not have been screened in close proximity to the family viewing hours.

Wharf Cable would be advised that a music video containing violence sequences should have been advertised as not suitable for children in both the programme guide and on screen prior to its broadcast.

The Broadcasting Authority also decided to advise ATV, in connection with a lucky draw contest for the programme "The Most Popular TV Commercial Awards Live", to observe more closely the provision in the Television Ordinance that the results of a television contest should be determined by the skill or knowledge of the participants and not by chance.

At yesterday's meeting, the Broadcasting Authority also gave approval for Wharf Cable Ltd. to establish a wholly-owned subsidiary, to be known as "New Television Ltd.", to produce and distribute programmes as well as to develop new channels for Wharf Cable.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Trade Department to review need for additional rice stockholders at year end

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The Trade Department said today (Friday) there was no urgent need to register any new rice stockholders upon the de-registration of a stockholder in January this year but the department would review the position at the end of this year.

During the annual renewal of registration of stockholders for the year ending December 31, 1995, the stockholder, Kian Gwan Co (China) Ltd, had informed the department that it did not wish to renew its registration.

A spokesman for the department explained that imports of rice were subject to a control scheme, to ensure a regular and adequate supply and to maintain a reserve stock for emergency purposes.

"Under the scheme, imports of rice for local consumption are governed by quotas. The quotas are divided among a number of companies registered as stockholders who are obliged to hold at any time 45 tonnes of rice as reserve stock for each unit of quota," he said.

"At the end of 1994, 1,000 units of quota were distributed to 46 registered stockholders. Kian Gwan Co (China) Ltd, which held 40 units of import quota, had decided not to renew its registration as stockholder from January 1995. "Since then, we have received a few enquiries on how we are going to dispose the 40 units of import quota surrendered by Kian Gwan."

The spokesman said after careful deliberations, the Trade Department concluded that there was no urgent need to invite applicants to take up these quotas for the time being.

"There are three reasons for coming up with such a conclusion," he said.

"First, although the non-allocation of 40 units means that the amount of reserve stock has been reduced from 45,000 tonnes to 43,200 tonnes, the shortfall of 1,800 tonnes is only equivalent to two days' consumption. The remaining reserve stock is sufficient for 48 days' consumption and would still be adequate for Hong Kong's need.

"Second, the non-allocation does not mean that there has been any shortfall in rice import. In effect, the amount used to be imported by Kian Gwan is shared among the existing 45 stockholders.

"Third, the rice market in terms of the sharing among the stockholders is rather pluralistic. The addition or decrease in one or two stockholders would not have any significant impact on improving and reducing competition. "Nevertheless, the department will monitor the rice market and review the situation at the end of this year."

The spokesman said the question had been discussed at the Rice Advisory Committee meeting chaired by the Director-General of Trade earlier this week.

Members of the advisory committee, including rice importers, wholesalers, retailers and a few professionals, generally agreed to the department's views.

He pointed out that the annual total consumption of rice in Hong Kong had been on a gradual decrease in recent years despite a steady increase in population.

"In 1990, Hong Kong people consumed more than 350,000 tonnes of rice. Last year, the figure dropped to 328,240 tonnes. This is largely due to the increasing affluence of the population and the availability of diverse choice of other staple food like bread and noodles," he said.

"Nevertheless, rice is still the most important staple diet which has emotional connotations among Chinese people. The reserve stock has been psychologically reassuring to Hong Kong people at times of crises. It also serves as a cushion against overseas fluctuations in supply. Rice prices have been quite stable in recent years."

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Intellectual Property Department rolls out on the information super highway

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The Hong Kong Government's Intellectual Property Department (IPD) is one of the first Hong Kong Government departments to set up an information centre on the INTERNET World Wide Web.

Over 20 million people all over the world (over 10,000 of them in Hong Kong) with computers connected to the INTERNET can now read news about Hong Kong's efforts to promote intellectual property protection, and get simple information on copyright and how to apply to register trademarks and patents free of charge.

Apart from running Hong Kong's Patents and Trademarks Registries, the IPD has the task of promoting a respect for intellectual property rights in Hong Kong.

"The INTERNET World Wide Web is an obvious choice for putting across our message," an IPD spokesman said today (Friday).

"More and more schools, universities, professional people and commercial organisations are linking to the INTERNET, and computer-literate people are the targets for one of our most important messages - 'Always use licensed computer software'."

Apart from the sort of information brochures we provide at our enquiry counters (for example "how to apply ..." information and our Performance Pledge), we plan for the centre to operate like a news-sheet.

"We have also invited contributions from the collecting societies, which collect royalties for musical and video performances, as well as groups like the Business Software Alliance," the spokesman said.

"Although the INTERNET is a centre for computer enthusiasts, we have to remember that all types of intellectual property rights need to be protected.

"I hope that later, we will get offers of contributions from other organisations interested in IP protection outside the Government to add to our 'news-sheet'.

"Unfortunately, because of technical limitations, the World Wide Web cannot display information in Chinese at present."

To connect to IPD's information centre, one needs a computer linked to the INTERNET through a MODEM, which allows computers to pass data across telephone lines, like a fax machine.

Most people use special software available from INTERNET (which comes with a free licence for evaluation purposes or use by students or in non-profit organisations) to search for information on the World Wide Web. Some common pieces of software are called "Mosaic" and "Netscape".

With such a programme installed on one's computer, one just types in the "address" of the IPD information centre, and the programme will take one straight to it.

For those already connected to the INTERNET World Wide Web, they can connect to the Intellectual Property Department Web Page at:

<http://www.houston.com.hk/hkgipd/>

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Board supports listing of Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay as a Ramsar site

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The Town Planning Board was today (Friday) briefed on the Governor-in-Council's decision to approve the proposal to list Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay as a Ramsar site.

The Board was informed that consultation on the proposal was being carried out by the Agriculture and Fisheries Department with possible listing in May this year.

The listing would put an area of 1,500 hectares of wetland under protection.

In addition, financial allocation has been made for conducting a consultancy study soon to develop a comprehensive and active conservation management plan for the area.

Measures would include habitat creation and restoration, ecological survey and monitoring as well as vegetation and wildlife management.

The Board recognises the importance of Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay as a wetland habitat for water birds and migratory birds and has in the past asked the Government to designate it as a "Wetland of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat" under the Ramsar Convention as a matter of urgency and to take the necessary steps to have it preserved and managed.

Therefore, the Board strongly supports the proposal to list Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay as a Ramsar site and will give weight to it in considering applications for development in the area in future.

Members of the Board also called for better co-ordination of developments on both sides of the border in this sensitive region so as not to jeopardise its importance as a nature reserve of international significance.

They were informed that there are already established channels for such exchange of views between the authorities.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Waterloo Road development plan published

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The Town Planning Board today (Friday) published the draft Land Development Corporation (LDC) Waterloo Road/Yunnan Lane Development Scheme Plan and the associated Land Use Diagram for a proposed redevelopment scheme in Yau Ma Tei.

The 0.42-hectare scheme area is bounded by Waterloo Road, Portland Street, Man Ming Lane and Shanghai Street, including Yunnan Lane and a section of Shek Lung Street.

Most of the buildings in the area are six-storey completed before 1966. They are used mostly for residential purpose on upper floors with shops and metal/electrical workshops on ground floor.

The area is in severe shortage of public open space and up-to-standard community facilities.

"The scheme area is designated as 'Comprehensive Development Area' to facilitate the LDC to undertake comprehensive development for the area," a spokesman for the Town Planning Board said.

"The scheme plan provides a planning framework for the redevelopment of the scheme area by restructuring the existing land uses and street patterns," he said.

The proposed development, as shown on the Land Use Diagram, comprises a commercial/office complex, Government/Institution/Community (GIC) uses and a large public open space.

The proposed GIC facilities include a refuse collection point, a public latrine, a hostel for single persons, a day nursery and a public toilet for the disabled.

Meanwhile, a public open space of 1,650 square metres will be provided at the corner of Portland Street and Man Ming Lane to serve the nearby residents, the spokesman added.

To achieve efficiency in land use, Yunnan Lane and a section of Shek Lung Street will be closed. Underground car parking and loading/unloading facilities will be provided on basement levels.

"LDC will be required to submit a master layout plan for the scheme area to the Town Planning Board for approval," the spokesman said.

The draft scheme plan No. S/K2/LDC1/1 is available for public inspection until May 10 at:

- * Planning Department,
16th floor,
Murray Building,
Garden Road,
Hong Kong;

- * Kowloon District Planning Office,
11th floor,
Leighton Centre,
77 Leighton Road,
Hong Kong; and

- * Yau Tsim Mong District Office,
sixth floor,
Mong Kok Government Offices,
30 Luen Wan Street,
Mong Kok,
Kowloon.

Any person affected by the scheme plan may submit a written objection to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board, c/o Planning Department, 13th floor, Murray Building, before May 10.

Copies of the draft scheme plan can be bought at the Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, and the Kowloon Map Sales Office, ground floor, 382 Nathan Road, Kowloon.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Works for river trade terminal development approved

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The Government has authorised a developer to carry out dredging, reclamation and submarine infrastructure works in Tuen Mun for the development and operation of a proposed river trade terminal.

The works are tentatively scheduled to begin by early 1996 in phases for completion by 1999 within an area of about 370 hectares of foreshore and seabed.

Upon completion, there will be 63.47 hectares of reclaimed land, associated seawalls, and a 10.75-hectare breakwater for the river trade terminal development and a sewage outfall reprovisioning and extension system for the adjoining Pillar Point Sewage Treatment Plant.

The extent of the area affected by the works is notified in the Gazette today (Friday).

The plan can also be purchased at the Survey and Mapping Office.

The notice and its related plan can be seen at the Lands Department's Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road; and at the Tuen Mun District office, second floor, Tuen Mun Government Offices, 1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun.

Any person who considers that his interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed involved will be affected may submit a written claim for compensation to the Director of Lands on or before March 10 next year.

He should state in his submission the sum of money that he is willing to accept in full and final settlement of his claim and submit such particulars to substantiate the claim.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Drainage channel to alleviate flooding

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The Government plans to construct a concrete drainage channel in Kam Tin, Yuen Long to alleviate flooding problems in the area.

The channel will be built within an area of about 0.31 hectare of foreshore and seabed at the upstream of Kam Tin River.

The works are scheduled to begin in mid-1996 for completion in late 1998.

The extent of the area affected is notified in the Gazette today (Friday).

The notice and its related plans can be seen on notice boards posted near the site. The plan can also be seen at the Lands Department's Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road; and at the Yuen Long District Office, ground floor, Yuen Long District Branch Offices Building, 269 Castle Peak Road, Yuen Long.

Any person who considers that his interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed involved will be affected may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands before May 10 this year.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Siu Mo To jetty to serve new airport

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The Civil Engineering Department is inviting tenders for the construction of a jetty at Siu Mo To as part of the government facilities for the new airport at Chek Lap Kok.

A precast concrete block solid pier and a rubble pitched slope catwalk will be built. On completion, they will serve the Civil Aviation Department's equipment station at Siu Mo To.

Construction is expected to start in May and be completed in November this year.

The works have been designed and construction will be supervised by the Ports Works Division of the Civil Engineering Office of the department.

Tender forms and further particulars can be obtained from the Chief Engineer, Port Works Division, Civil Engineering Office, fifth floor, Civil Engineering Building, 101 Princess Margaret Road, Kowloon.

Tender offer will close at noon at the end of this month.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

330 additional supported employment places

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The Social Welfare Department has secured funding to establish an additional 330 places in supported employment service this year, the Director of Social Welfare, Mr Ian Strachan, said today (Friday).

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Salvation Army Shaukeiwan Day Activity Centre, Mr Strachan said this was a form of employment for disabled persons, which allowed them to work in an integrated open setting with ongoing support service, and to have access to the usual benefits of having a job, such as income at market rates and satisfaction of real work achievement.

"Most important of all, disabled workers would have opportunities to work with ordinary workers, to relate to others in ordinary social situations and to enjoy a fuller social life.

"We are also reviewing the role of sheltered workshops as we wish to see more capable sheltered workers move on to a more independent work settings like supported employment programmes, or even open employment," he said.

Turning to the overall objective in rehabilitation, Mr Strachan said it was to help disabled persons to integrate into the community, to lead an independent life as far as their capability permitted and to enjoy equal opportunities as ordinary citizens.

"For mentally handicapped adults, the day activity centre is designed to provide them basic training in self-care, daily living and social skills, as well as occupational and simple work training.

"Given the chance to develop their potential to the fullest extent possible, some of these trainees can ultimately move on to other programmes such as sheltered workshop. Other may need to stay on for a longer term training and care," he said.

For this group of clients, Mr Strachan said the Government was exploring ways to enhance the day care programme so that the life-long burden of families in caring for their mentally handicapped members could be substantially relieved, without having to place their disabled members in institutions as an alternative.

"In this direction, we are considering day care with an extended evening session which provides meals and personal care.

"If realised, this will be a great relief to families who wish to accommodate their disabled members at home," Mr Strachan added.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Careers information counts

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In an era of rapid changes, getting up-to-date information on careers would enable us to develop a successful career with confidence, Assistant Commissioner for Labour Mrs Angela Ho said today (Friday).

Speaking at the 13th Careers Quiz Prize Presentation, she said the aim of setting up the Careers Advisory Service (CAS) was to provide the public, especially young people, with adequate information on career planning.

"Apart from providing different kinds of careers information, the CAS also organises various activities such as the Careers Quiz to help students gain access to up-to-date careers information," Mrs Ho said.

Organised by the CAS, the Careers Quiz aimed at arousing students' awareness of the importance of choosing a suitable career and encouraging them to actively collect first-hand information on careers and training.

A record number of 140,000 students from more than 270 secondary schools in Hong Kong took part in the Quiz. Participants were required to answer 50 multiple choice questions on careers, vocational training as well as labour legislation.

"The CAS's careers information centres are the best places to go to for careers information. We hope that students will make good use of them," Mrs Ho added.

She expressed appreciation to the Pentax Camera of Jebson & Company Limited for sponsoring the event and the Information Technology Services Department for marking the quiz papers.

The Manager of Jebson & Company Limited, Mr Yeung Sai-kwong, also presented prizes at the ceremony.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Sai Kung Police Station stops displaying weather signal

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With effect from April 1, day and night signals will no longer be displayed at the tropical cyclone and strong monsoon warning signal station at Sai Kung Police Station.

Visual signals will continue to be displayed at the eight signal stations at the following locations:

- * Aberdeen Marine Office,
- * Cheung Chau Meteorological Station,
- * Lau Fau Shan Police Station,
- * Sha Tau Kok Sewage Treatment Works,
- * Shau Kei Wan Marine Office,
- * Stanley Police Station,
- * Tai Lam Small Boat Unit Headquarters, and
- * Tai O Police Station.

Signal stations convey very little information. Also the signals may be obscured during adverse weather conditions and by high rise buildings.

When tropical cyclone or strong monsoon warning signals are hoisted, information on the signal status, the weather and precautions to take are broadcast frequently by radio and television.

Residents in Hong Kong are therefore advised to listen to the radio or watch the television for the latest information.

Additionally, the public can obtain these information by calling 2835 1473 of the Home Affairs Department's Public Enquiry Service Centre or the Royal Observatory's Dial-a-Weather Service at 1878066 for recorded English weather service and at 1878200 for recorded Cantonese weather service.

End/Friday, March 10, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
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Opening balance in the account	1,266	0930	+1414
Closing balance in the account	1,756	1000	+1414
Change attributable to :		1100	+1355
Money market activity	+1,360	1200	+1360
LAF today	-870	1500	+1360
		1600	+1360

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 118.5 *-0.3* 10.3.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills

EF notes/Hong Kong Government bonds

Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.88	14 months	2605	6.35	99.76	6.66
1 month	5.22	23 months	2702	7.50	101.02	7.05
3 months	5.79	28 months	3707	6.95	99.79	7.14
6 months	6.14	34 months	3801	8.00	101.84	7.41
12 months	6.53	57 months	5912	8.15	101.56	7.90

Total turnover of bills and bonds - \$25,797 million

Closed March 10, 1995

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