



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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GARDEN ROAD, 5th-8th FLOORS, MURRAY BUILDING,  
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Following the upgrading of services, the DIB will no longer be printed in hard copies and distributed by post to subscribers with effect from May 1, 1997.

This decision will do good to the community at large in terms of environmental protection as 3.1 million sheets of A4-size paper will be saved each year, not to mention the saving of postage and large quantity of ink for printing.

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It is the policy of this department that we should aim at running a paperless office in the long run, but if you have difficulties in the new arrangements, please contact the undersigned at 2842 8738.

*Robert Yip*

(Robert YIP)

for Director of Information Services

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Monday, April 14, 1997

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Govt & CLP reached agreement over Black Point deferral .....	1
Number of drug abusers remains stable for 1996 .....	2
Revision to home purchase allowance approved .....	4
Sino-British Land Commission to meet .....	5
Employers urged to give entitlements to employees .....	5
Latest review of tar and nicotine yields announced .....	6
RO study confirms trend in deteriorating visibility .....	7
Parents visit the Royal Observatory .....	8
HK's external trade statistics with breakdown for Feb 1997 .....	9
Manufacturer fined for malpractice .....	19
Prompt collection of BN(O) passports .....	19
Water storage figure .....	20
Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results .....	21

Govt & CLP reached agreement over Black Point deferral

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The Secretary for Economic Services, Mr Stephen Ip, today (Monday) welcomed the agreement reached between the Government and China Light and Power (CLP) on measures to tackle high reserve margin in the CLP system.

Mr Ip said that the arrangement was reasonable and would be beneficial to consumers. He was glad that CLP had acted towards the issue in a responsible manner.

Mr Ip was content that CLP had agreed to defer generating units 7 and 8 at Black Point for up to five years if the situation requires.

He said the Government would review the situation with the company in 1999 based on the demand forecast at the time. A 5-year deferral of units 7 and 8 will bring net benefits to consumers both in the short and long term.

According to the Government's consultant, the benefits from the deferral could be as high as \$478 million during the life of the project up to the year 2032.

China Light and Power has also agreed to shortly decommission 442 MW of existing gas turbine capacity and to put the gas turbines into preservation.

The decommissioning of gas turbines will immediately hold down the reserve margin by 10%.

Upon decommissioning, the remaining book value of the turbines will be written off and no permitted return will be earned. This alone will bring benefits of \$119 million to consumers.

China Light and Power and the Government will review in 1999 whether the turbines should be disposed of permanently, be recommissioned or continue to be preserved.

Mr Ip noted that the Black Point generating units 5 and 6 are too advanced. He agreed that it is neither practicable nor economically justifiable to defer them. Unit 5 has already been delivered and Unit 6 will soon be ready for delivery.

End

Number of drug abusers remains stable for 1996

\* \* \* \* \*

The Chairman of the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN), Professor Chen Char-nie today (Monday) announced that the size of Hong Kong drug abusers population has remained relatively stable over the past two years. •

Professor Chen said: "In 1996, a total of 19,626 drug abusers of all ages were reported to the Central Registry of Drug Abuse, representing an increase of 1.5 per cent when compared with 19,343 reported in 1995.

"The 1996 figure represented a decrease of 3.4 per cent when compared with 20,327 in 1994.

"The proportion of Hong Kong people involved in drug abuse also remained relatively small, which is around 3.5 per thousand population.

"The 1996 figures showed that for drug abusers of all ages, the most commonly abused drugs were heroin (86.6 per cent), cannabis (8.4 per cent), cough medicine (3.0 per cent), triazolam (2.9 per cent) and methylamphetamine or 'ice' (2.8 per cent)."

The number of drug abusers reported to have abused psychotropic substances increased by 28.3% in 1996 as compared with the corresponding figure in 1995, rising from 2,618 to 3,358.

The 1996 figure represented an increase of 44.2% when compared with 2,328 in 1994.

The upward trend of drug abuse among females observed since 1992 persisted in 1996. The reported figure in 1996 was 2,417, representing an increase of 4.1% as compared with 2,321 in 1995.

Taking into account the up-trend in the number of psychotropic substance abusers and the importance of family support to steer young persons away from drugs, the Preventive Education and Publicity Sub-committee decided that the anti-drug abuse themes in the coming year should include:

- 1) to educate young persons that there is no difference between 'hard' and 'soft' drugs in terms of harmful effects, and to better equip them with refusal skills;

- 2) to alert parents the importance of strengthening parent-child relationship and the role that they could play to steer their children away from drugs;
- 3) to encourage people, in particular young people, to adopt a drug-free life, and to point out that whatever their problems may be, there are other alternatives to drug.

A multifaceted approach will continue to be adopted to convey the anti-drug messages to meet the varying needs of different target groups in the community. New components include:

- 1) the drug education talk conducted by the Narcotics Division for school students will be revamped to include updates on the harmful effects of abusing psychotropic substance and the support programmes that are available to them when they encounter drug abuse problems. A video on educating students about refusal skills to drug offers will also be produced and shown in the school talk.
- 2) anti-drug projects involving parents and students participation with District School Liaison Committees will be co-organized. The main theme will be on strengthening parent-child relationship and educating them about the benefits of a drug-free family.
- 3) a new TV API specifically aims at educating young people that there is no difference between 'hard' and 'soft' drugs in terms of its harmful effects will be broadcast in May.
- 4) an anti-drug homepage on the internet to educate young persons on the harmful effects of drug abuse will also be launched in May.

To find out the underlying reasons that have led to the recent up-trends in the number of female drug abusers and psychotropic substance abusers, the ACAN's Research Sub-committee will commission a two-year study to identify relevant factors affecting the changes in drug abuse pattern. Findings of the study will throw light on how to refine the existing preventive strategy to arrest the existing up-trends.

On the other hand, the ACAN Sub-committee on Treatment and Rehabilitation will concurrently examine how to further strengthen the existing services for female drug abusers and psychotropic substance abusers to better cater for their rehabilitation needs.

Present at the press briefing were the Commissioner for Narcotics, Mrs Clarie Lo; the Chairman of ACAN's Preventive Education and Publicity Sub-committee, Mr Justein Wong Chun; the Chairman of ACAN's Treatment and Rehabilitation Sub-committee Professor Lee Shiu-hung; and the Chairman of ACAN's Research Sub-committee, Professor Daniel Shek Tan-lei. They gave a brief on ACAN's above anti-drug strategy and programmes for 1997/98 having taken into account changes in the drug abuse situation in Hong Kong.

End

#### Revision to home purchase allowance approved

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The Governor-in-Council has approved a proposal to revise the eligibility for the Home Purchase Allowance (HPA) and the amount of the allowance payable to owners of residential units affected by Government resumption.

A Government spokesman said today (Monday) that apart from statutory compensation, owners of domestic premises resumed by the Government were eligible for HPA, which was an ex-gratia allowance payable to enable the owners to purchase a replacement flat of a similar size in the neighbourhood of the resumed flat.

At present, HPA is paid to the owners, irrespective of whether the premises are vacant, tenanted or occupied by the owners. There is no limit on the number of payments to a single owner who owns more than one property.

"We consider the current arrangements over-generous to non-owner-occupiers and investment owners who do not need a replacement flat to live in," the spokesman said.

"We therefore propose to revise the eligibility for HPA and the amount payable. Under the proposal, owners of tenanted property will get less HPA than owner occupiers. Each owner can get HPA arising from a maximum of two flats per resumption exercise.

"At present, HPA is assessed on the basis of a brand new flat. This is not necessary since the premises resumed are very often older type of premises in poor condition. It suffices to use the replacement cost of a reasonably modern replacement flat (about 10 years old) in assessing HPA," the spokesman said.

The spokesman said the proposal would be considered by the Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works tomorrow (Tuesday) and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council shortly.

End

#### Sino-British Land Commission to meet

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The two sides of the Sino-British Land Commission have agreed that the Commission's thirty-fourth meeting will be held on April 16, 1997 (Wednesday). The meeting will discuss the Land Disposal Programme for the period from April 1, 1997 to June 30, 1997.

End

#### Employers urged to give entitlements to employees

\* \* \* \* \*

Employees working under a continuous contract and suspected that they have not been given all the entitlements under the Employment Ordinance are urged to come forward and contact the Labour Department's Labour Relations Division for assistance.

In response to today's (Monday) press reports on employers failing to give entitlements to their employees, a spokesman for the Labour Department said: "Under the Employment Ordinance, an employee who works continuously for the same employer for four weeks or more, prior to a given date, for at least 18 hours in each of the four weeks, is regarded as working under a continuous contract.

"Once he has a continuous contract, the employee is protected by the Employment Ordinance," the spokesman said.

"The benefits provided by the Employment Ordinance include paid annual leave, statutory holidays, sickness allowance and end of year payment," he added.

Employers are required to give benefits and entitlements to their employees according to the Employment Ordinance or they may face prosecutions.

"Under the Ordinance, it is an offence for an employer not to grant his employees any holiday or not to give holiday pay or sickness allowance or other benefits," the spokesman said.

Officers of the Labour Department conduct inspections to employers' premises to ensure compliance with the provisions on annual leave, statutory holidays, etc.

"If there is sufficient evidence, the Department will take out prosecutions against employers who breach the law. They may be liable, upon conviction, to a fine of \$10,000 to \$200,000," the spokesman added.

In 1996, the Labour Department secured 1,361 convictions for failing to grant statutory holidays to employees under the Employment Ordinance.

End

#### Latest review of tar and nicotine yields announced

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The Government's latest Review of Tar and Nicotine Yields of Cigarettes has shown that the average tar and nicotine yields of the 106 best-selling cigarettes in Hong Kong in 1996 were 12.9 milligrams (mg) and 0.95 mg per cigarette respectively.

This represents a decrease of 0.2 mg in tar yield, but a 0.03 mg increase in nicotine yield as compared with last year's review, a spokesman for the Health and Welfare Branch said today (Monday).

According to the review, 21 brands of cigarettes were in the LOW TAR group (0 to 9 mg/cigarette), 35 brands in the LOW TO MIDDLE TAR group (10 to 14 mg/cigarette), 42 brands in the MIDDLE TAR (15 to 17 mg/cigarette) group and 8 brands in the HIGH TAR group (18 to 20 mg/cigarette).

All 106 brands of cigarettes carried on their packets and cartons a tar group designation as claimed by their manufacturers. However, 17 brands were found to have been labelled with tar groups inconsistent with the test findings - 7 brands should be in a higher tar group and 10 in a lower tar group.

"Manufacturers may continue to sell the cigarettes using the previous designation for a period of 12 months," the spokesman said.

Under the current legislation, if the determination of the Government Chemist for any brand of cigarettes differs by not more than one mg from the previous determination and has the effect of placing the cigarettes in a tar group other than that to which they would have belonged, the brand may continue to use its previous designation subject to the written approval of the Director of Health.

The spokesman said the Government is now proposing to amend the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance to lower the maximum permissible level of tar in cigarettes so as to reduce smokers' exposure to this harmful substance.

"The maximum permissible level we propose is 17 mg. Assuming that no new brands enter the market, five brands will be affected by the proposal. We also propose that cigarettes packages and advertisements should show the tar and nicotine yields instead of the tar group designation so that the smokers are better informed," he added.

End

#### RO study confirms trend in deteriorating visibility

\* \* \* \* \*

The visibility in Hong Kong has deteriorated over the past three decades, a recent study carried out by the Royal Observatory shows. The deteriorating trend is particularly noticeable inside the Victoria Harbour in recent years, adversely affecting the viewing of this world-famous harbour from time to time.

The study used visibility observations made by trained weather observers of the Observatory from the late 1960s to early 1990s. In essence, it counted the number of hours when visibility was reduced to below 8 kilometres by dry suspended particles in the atmosphere. To eliminate weather-related events, the study did not count cases where visibility was impaired by weather elements, such as rain, fog, mist, or humid days when the relative humidity reached 95 % or higher.

According to Dr Cheng Cho-ming, Acting Senior Scientific Officer and a member of the study group, back in the mid-1970s there were on average only about 180 hours each year of reduced visibility inside the harbour, but this figure reached 450 hours by the early 1990s, reflecting one-and-a-half-fold increase. The deteriorating trend has been particularly pronounced since the late 1980s.

Outside the harbour, a similar trend is also observed at the outlying island of Cheung Chau. There, the number of hours of reduced visibility has increased from around 130 per year in the mid-1970s to about 230 by early 1990s.

Dr Cheng remarked that reduced visibility is often associated with light winds blowing from the west in the harbour, and a stable atmosphere. Such situation occurs most frequently during the cool months, from January to April. However, reduced visibility is also observed in summer, typically ahead of typhoons approaching Hong Kong from the east when similar meteorological conditions occur.

End

#### Parents visit the Royal Observatory

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Parent members of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation (HSC) and representatives from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) will tomorrow (Tuesday) visit the Royal Observatory Hong Kong.

The visit will provide parents with opportunities to learn about the hoisting of tropical cyclone signals and rainstorm warning.

They will also acquire a better understanding on issuing announcements on suspension of classes by the Education Department in inclement weather.

The visit is organised by the Working Group on Parents' Centre of the HSC. The centre aims at enhancing communication between parents and the department.

The chairman of the working group, Mrs Canny Lau, and some 30 members of the HSC and PTA will be received by the Acting Director of the Royal Observatory Hong Kong, Mr Lam Chiu-ying.

End

HK's external trade statistics with breakdown for Feb 1997

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The Census and Statistics Department today (Monday) released detailed statistics on external trade with breakdown by country/territory and commodity for February 1997.

In February 1997, the value of re-exports grew by 0.3% over a year earlier to \$76.5 billion, while the value of domestic exports decreased by 11% to \$12.6 billion. Meanwhile, imports increased by 6.6% to \$102.3 billion.

Changes in the value of Hong Kong's re-exports to ten main destinations are shown in Table 1.

Comparing February 1997 with February 1996, increases were recorded in the value of re-exports to South Korea (+12%), China (+12%), the Netherlands (+7.8%) and Taiwan (+7.6%).

On the other hand, there was basically no change in the value of re-exports to the United States, and decreases were recorded in the value of re-exports to Japan (-12%), Germany (-11%), France (-8.7%), the United Kingdom (-6.0%) and Singapore (-4.3%).

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, increases were recorded in the value of re-exports to the Netherlands (+8.6%), South Korea (+6.2%), the United States (+6.2%), Taiwan (+5.7%), China (+3.3%) and Singapore (+2.2%).

However, decreases were recorded in the value of re-exports to Germany (-9.6%), France (-3.6%), Japan (-3.6%) and the United Kingdom (-2.2%).

Taking all destinations together, the value of re-exports in the first two months of 1997, at \$178.6 billion, increased slightly by 0.6% over the same period in 1996.

Table 2 shows changes in the value of re-exports of ten principal commodity divisions.

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, more notable increases in the value of re-exports were registered for office machines and automatic data processing machines (by \$2.8 billion or 28%); clothing (by \$609 million or 3.7%); and electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof (by \$604 million or 3.2%).

Over the same period, more notable decreases in the value of re-exports were registered for telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment (by \$941 million or 5.5%); miscellaneous manufactured articles consisting mainly of baby carriages, toys, games and sporting goods (by \$622 million or 3.2%); travel goods, handbags and similar containers (by \$446 million or 7.5%); and plastics in primary forms (by \$336 million or 7.5%).

Changes in the value of domestic exports to ten main destinations are shown in Table 3.

Comparing February 1997 with February 1996, increases were recorded in the value of domestic exports to France (+13%), the Netherlands (+4.8%) and China (+1.1%).

However, decreases were recorded in the value of domestic exports to Singapore (-24%), the United States (-23%), Taiwan (-21%), Canada (-13%), the United Kingdom (-9.7%), Germany (-8.5%) and Japan (-4.1%).

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, the value of domestic exports to France and the Netherlands increased by 13% and 10% respectively.

However, decreases were recorded in the value of domestic exports to Singapore (-28%), Taiwan (-23%), the United States (-18%), Canada (-15%), Germany (-8.1%), Japan (-5.6%), the United Kingdom (-3.9%) and China (-2.1%).

Taking all destinations together, the value of domestic exports in the first two months of 1997, at \$29.9 billion, decreased by 10% over the same period in 1996.

Table 4 shows changes in the value of domestic exports of ten principal commodity divisions.

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, the value of domestic exports of most principal commodity divisions decreased. More notable decreases were registered for clothing (by \$1.1 billion or 10%); electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof (by \$570 million or 11%); photographic apparatus, equipment and supplies, optical goods, watches and clocks (by \$451 million or 18%); textiles (by \$324 million or 16%); miscellaneous manufactured articles consisting mainly of jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares (by \$315 million or 12%); and office machines and automatic data processing machines (by \$213 million or 9.7%).

Over the same period, an increase in the value of domestic exports was recorded for professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus (by \$247 million or 57%).

Changes in the value of imports from ten main suppliers are shown in Table 5.

Comparing February 1997 with February 1996, the value of imports from most main suppliers showed increases of various magnitudes : France (+103%), the United Kingdom (+25%), Malaysia (+22%), the United States (+17%), Germany (+13%), South Korea (+8.9%), Japan (+8.8%), Taiwan (+8.1%) and Singapore (+0.7%).

However, the value of imports from China decreased by 4.9%.

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, increases were recorded in the value of imports from France (+49%), the United Kingdom (+20%), Malaysia (+10%), Germany (+9.4%), the United States (+9.3%), Japan (+1.9%), South Korea (+1.7%) and China (+1.6%).

However, the value of imports from Taiwan and Singapore decreased by 4.7% and 0.6% respectively.

Taking all destinations together, the value of imports in the first two months of 1997, at \$234.0 billion, decreased by 3.4% over the same period in 1996.

Table 6 shows changes in the value of imports of ten principal commodity divisions.

Comparing the first two months of 1997 with the same period in 1996, more notable increases in the value of imports were registered for office machines and automatic data processing machines (by \$3.0 billion or 27%); electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof (by \$1.0 billion or 3.5%); clothing (by \$881 million or 5.6%); miscellaneous manufactured articles consisting mainly of baby carriages, toys, games and sporting goods (by \$505 million or 3.5%); and footwear (by \$466 million or 5.0%).

Over the same period, a more notable decrease in the value of imports was recorded for general industrial machinery and equipment, and machine parts (by \$458 million or 6.5%).

All the trade statistics described here are measured at current prices and no account has been taken of changes in prices between the periods of comparison.

A separate analysis of the volume and price movements of external trade for February 1997 will be released in early May 1997.

Detailed trade statistics analysed by commodity and by country/territory are published in trade statistics reports.

The February 1997 issue of the "Hong Kong External Trade" with detailed analyses on the performance of Hong Kong's external trade in February 1997 will be on sale at \$111 per copy around 21 April 1997.

The report can be purchased at either (i) the Government Publications Centre, Ground Floor, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong, or (ii) the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th Floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Enquiries regarding regular subscription to this report may be directed to the Publications (Sales) Office, 28th Floor, Siu On Centre, 188 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong (Tel. No. 2598 8194) and enquiries on trade statistics to the Census and Statistics Department (Tel. No. 2582 4915).

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TABLE 1 : RE-EXPORTS TO TEN MAIN DESTINATIONS

DESTINATION	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
CHINA	25,392	+ 11.7	61,983	+ 3.3
UNITED STATES	15,153	*	34,805	+ 6.2
JAPAN	5,536	- 11.6	12,689	- 3.6
GERMANY	3,242	- 10.7	7,302	- 9.6
UNITED KINGDOM	2,228	- 6.0	5,061	- 2.2
TAIWAN	1,796	+ 7.6	4,451	+ 5.7
SINGAPORE	1,602	- 4.3	4,084	+ 2.2
NETHERLANDS	1,424	+ 7.8	3,217	+ 8.6
SOUTH KOREA	1,490	+ 11.8	3,118	+ 6.2
FRANCE	1,251	- 8.7	2,912	- 3.6

\* DENOTES LESS THAN 0.05%

TABLE 2 : RE-EXPORTS OF TEN PRINCIPAL COMMODITY DIVISIONS

COMMODITY DIVISION	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, APPARATUS AND APPLIANCES, AND ELECTRICAL PARTS THEREOF	8,752	+ 7.3	19,218	+ 3.2
MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURED ARTICLES (MAINLY BABY CARRIAGES, TOYS, GAMES AND SPORTING GOODS)	7,795	- 10.4	18,970	- 3.2
ARTICLES OF APPAREL AND CLOTHING ACCESSORIES	7,839	+ 1.6	17,214	+ 3.7
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND SOUND RECORDING AND REPRODUCING APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT	6,940	- 9.5	16,292	- 5.5
TEXTILE YARN, FABRICS, MADE-UP ARTICLES AND RELATED PRODUCTS	5,851	+ 11.6	13,991	- 0.1
OFFICE MACHINES AND AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING MACHINES	5,470	+ 30.2	12,697	+ 27.8
FOOTWEAR	5,053	- 0.8	11,324	+ 0.3
PHOTOGRAPHIC APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, OPTICAL GOODS, WATCHES AND CLOCKS	3,904	+ 7.3	8,565	+ 3.4
TRAVEL GOODS, HANDBAGS AND SIMILAR CONTAINERS	2,182	- 22.6	5,505	- 7.5
PLASTICS IN PRIMARY FORMS	1,685	+ 3.0	4,160	- 7.5

TABLE 3 : DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO TEN MAIN DESTINATIONS

DESTINATION	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
CHINA	3,180	+ 1.1	8,419	- 2.1
UNITED STATES	2,937	- 22.7	6,756	- 17.9
GERMANY	749	- 8.5	1,737	- 8.1
JAPAN	779	- 4.1	1,673	- 5.6
UNITED KINGDOM	753	- 9.7	1,656	- 3.9
SINGAPORE	557	- 24.4	1,293	- 28.5
TAIWAN	411	- 21.3	942	- 23.2
NETHERLANDS	355	+ 4.8	881	+ 10.1
CANADA	273	- 12.5	578	- 14.9
FRANCE	244	+ 12.8	570	+ 12.9

TABLE 4 : DOMESTIC EXPORTS OF TEN PRINCIPAL COMMODITY DIVISIONS

COMMODITY DIVISION	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
ARTICLES OF APPAREL AND CLOTHING ACCESSORIES	3,931	- 16.0	9,445	- 10.4
ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, APPARATUS AND APPLIANCES, AND ELECTRICAL PARTS THEREOF	2,126	- 7.1	4,558	- 11.1
MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURED ARTICLES (MAINLY JEWELLERY, GOLDSMITHS' AND SILVERSMITHS' WARES)	1,076	- 6.3	2,336	- 11.9
PHOTOGRAPHIC APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, OPTICAL GOODS, WATCHES AND CLOCKS	844	- 19.1	2,062	- 17.9
OFFICE MACHINES AND AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING MACHINES	796	- 17.6	1,985	- 9.7
TEXTILE YARN, FABRICS, MADE-UP ARTICLES AND RELATED PRODUCTS	666	- 19.9	1,759	- 15.5
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND SOUND RECORDING AND REPRODUCING APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT	537	+ 6.5	1,305	- 2.2
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CONTROLLING INSTRUMENTS AND APPARATUS	290	+ 39.7	677	+ 57.4
MANUFACTURES OF METALS	221	- 27.2	550	- 21.1
PLASTICS IN PRIMARY FORMS	240	+ 9.8	514	- 5.8

TABLE 5 : IMPORTS FROM TEN MAIN SUPPLIERS

SUPPLIER	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
CHINA	33,473	- 4.9	84,527	+ 1.6
JAPAN	15,389	+ 8.8	31,331	+ 1.9
UNITED STATES	8,870	+ 17.2	19,239	+ 9.3
TAIWAN	7,444	+ 8.1	17,406	- 4.7
SINGAPORE	5,444	+ 0.7	12,413	- 0.6
SOUTH KOREA	4,710	+ 8.9	10,496	+ 1.7
UNITED KINGDOM	2,842	+ 25.4	5,960	+ 19.5
GERMANY	2,330	+ 13.3	5,686	+ 9.4
FRANCE	2,591	+102.9	5,554	+ 49.4
MALAYSIA	2,538	+ 21.9	5,500	+ 10.0

TABLE 6 : IMPORTS OF TEN PRINCIPAL COMMODITY DIVISIONS

COMMODITY DIVISION	FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	FEB 97 OVER FEB 96 (% CHANGE)	JAN-FEB 1997 (HKD Mn.)	JAN-FEB 97 OVER JAN-FEB 96 (% CHANGE)
ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, APPARATUS AND APPLIANCES, AND ELECTRICAL PARTS THEREOF	14,073	+ 11.1	30,195	+ 3.5
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND SOUND RECORDING AND REPRODUCING APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT	9,821	+ 1.8	21,991	- 0.3
TEXTILE YARN, FABRICS, MADE-UP ARTICLES AND RELATED PRODUCTS	7,460	+ 9.3	17,489	- 1.8
ARTICLES OF APPAREL AND CLOTHING ACCESSORIES	6,407	- 6.0	16,542	+ 5.6
MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURED ARTICLES (MAINLY BABY CARRIAGES, TOYS, GAMES AND SPORTING GOODS)	6,247	+ 2.0	14,765	+ 3.5
OFFICE MACHINES AND AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING MACHINES	6,312	+ 30.0	14,267	+ 26.5
FOOTWEAR	4,176	+ 3.8	9,846	+ 5.0
PHOTOGRAPHIC APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, OPTICAL GOODS, WATCHES AND CLOCKS	4,303	- 1.2	9,360	- 2.7
NON-METALLIC MINERAL MANUFACTURES	3,377	+ 6.6	6,951	+ 3.5
GENERAL INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT, AND MACHINE PARTS	3,123	- 8.9	6,624	- 6.5

End

### Manufacturer fined for malpractice

\* \* \* \* \*

A spokesman for the Customs and Excise Department today (Monday) said that it was a serious offence to furnish false information in an application for certificate of origin.

The reminder was made after a fabric manufacturer was fined \$500,000 at Tuen Mun Magistracy today after pleading guilty to eight counts of giving false information in certificates of origin applications.

The goods involved were silk woven fabric valued at \$2.18 million for export to Japan.

The court heard that an investigation by officers of the Customs and Excise Department revealed that between March 1995 and April 1995, the accused company purchased the China origin fabric through a local firm. In order to obtain the certificates for assisting the Japanese buyer to evade import tariff, it falsely declared in the applications for certificate of origin that the goods were products of its own.

The spokesman stressed that the department would step up enforcement actions to track down such malpractice to protect the commercial reputation of Hong Kong and to ensure that the confidence of its trading partners in Hong Kong's textile control system would not be undermined by some dishonest businessmen.

The maximum penalty for giving false information in an application for certificate of origin was 500,000 in fine plus two years of imprisonment, he added.

End

### Prompt collection of BN(O) passports

\* \* \* \* \*

Applicants who have been notified to collect their British National (Overseas) passports should pick up their passports promptly from the date when the passports are ready for collection at their chosen immigration offices, a spokesperson of the Immigration Department appealed to them today (Monday).

Currently, there are around 30,000 prepared BN(O) passports ready for collection by applicants at various immigration offices.

Hong Kong Immigration Department ceased taking the above applications from Tuesday April 1, 1997. The Immigration Department, however, will continue to issue BN(O) passports which have been prepared until Saturday April 26, 1997. Thereafter, all uncollected passports will be passed to the British Trade Commission.

But Hong Kong permanent identity cards prepared for children under 11 years of age in connection with their BN(O) passports will continue to be issued at the original immigration offices.

For their convenience, applicants are reminded to pick up their passports in time at the immigration offices which have been chosen by them upon application. They will be required to collect their passports at the British Trade Commission if they do not do so before the transfer of the uncollected passports.

For BN(O) passports issued to children under 11 years of age, applicants will also be required to collect their children's Hong Kong permanent identity cards at the original immigration offices after they have collected their passports.

For enquiries, members of public may telephone 2824 1177 (English), 2824 1717 (Chinese) or use fax line 2877 7711.

End

#### Water storage figure

\* \* \* \* \*

Storage in Hong Kong's reservoirs at 9 am today (Monday) stood at 78.9 per cent of capacity or 462.465 million cubic metres.

This time last year the reservoirs contained 468.612 million cubic metres of water, representing 80 per cent of capacity.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

\* \* \* \* \*

Tender date	:	14 April 1997
Paper on offer	:	EF Notes
Issue number	:	3004
Issue date	:	15 April 1997
Maturity date	:	17 April 2000
Coupon	:	6.50%
Amount applied	:	HK\$1,190 MN
Amount allotted	:	HK\$500 MN
Average price accepted (yield)	:	99.68 (6.73 PCT)
Lowest price accepted (yield)	:	99.66 (6.74 PCT)
Pro rata ratio	:	About 25 PCT
Average tender price (yield)	:	99.65 (6.74 PCT)

End