



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, March 8, 1974

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Release time: 8.15 p.m.

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JANUARY TRADE FIGURES UP

The value of Hong Kong's domestic exports for January this year was \$1,896 million -- an increase of \$682 million or 56.2 per cent over January 1973, according to provisional trade figures released today by the Census and Statistics Department.

Imports were up in value by 30.9 per cent as compared with the same month last year, while re-exports increased by 61 per cent.

For the 12-month period February 1973 to January 1974, domestic exports went up by 31.6 per cent over the previous 12-month period, while re-exports rose by 59.6 per cent and imports by 33.9 per cent.

A table with comparative figures is given below for easy reference:

<u>MERCHANDISE:</u>	Domestic Exports:	\$1,896 million
	Imports	: \$2,433 million
	Re-exports	: \$ 576 million

/COMPARATIVE FIGURE

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

	January 1974 \$ Mn.	January 1973 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease	
			\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	1,896	1,214	+ 682	+ 56.2
Imports	2,433	1,859	+ 574	+ 30.9
Re-exports	576	358	+ 218	+ 61.0
	Nov. 1973 to Jan. 1974 \$ Mn.	Nov. 1972 to Jan. 1973 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease	
			\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	5,790	3,770	+2,020	+ 53.6
Imports	8,538	5,757	+2,781	+ 48.3
Re-exports	1,852	1,164	+ 688	+ 59.1
	Feb. 1973 to Jan. 1974 \$ Mn.	Feb. 1972 to Jan. 1973 \$ Mn.	Increase or decrease	
			\$ Mn.	%
Domestic Exports	20,156	15,312	+4,844	+ 31.6
Imports	29,579	22,091	+7,488	+ 33.9
Re-exports	6,743	4,225	+2,519	+ 59.6

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RATING COMMISSIONER TO TAKE OVER TENANCY INQUIRY BUREAUX

Responsibility for the running of the Tenancy Inquiry Bureaux is to be transferred from the Director of Home Affairs to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation under the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill published in today's gazette.

The Tenancy Inquiry Bureaux perform certain duties and provide a service to the public on tenancies in pre-war buildings.

However, since the Bureaux were set up, the major part of the government's responsibility in domestic tenancy matters has shifted to post-war premises and has been carried out by the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation.

The latter duties cover not only statutory functions, such as authorising increases in rents of domestic post-war premises, but also giving assistance and advice to the public on rent control and other tenancy problems in such premises. In addition, the Commissioner has always had certain duties to perform relating to pre-war tenancies.

On the grounds of both efficiency and service to the public, it is considered that all these tenancy matters, both pre-war and post-war, should be the responsibility of one department.

As the Rating and Valuation Department now has the largest share of this work, it is proposed that it should take over all such duties with effect from April 1 this year.

If the bill is enacted, all communications after that date about tenancy matters for both pre-war and post-war premises should be addressed to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation, 1 Garden Road, Hong Kong.

/The branches

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The branches of the Bureaux in Hong Kong and Kowloon will continue to operate from their present addresses (10th floor of International Building, Des Voeux Road, Central; and the 6th floor of the Government Offices in Canton Road).

The Commissioner of Rating and Valuation intends to continue to maintain offices for the Tenancy Inquiry Bureaux in both Hong Kong and Kowloon, so that residents on both sides of the harbour can still have easy access to the Bureaux whenever they are in doubt on landlord and tenant matters.

Consideration is, however, being given to relocating the Kowloon Office to a more central position to provide an improved service to the public.

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PRESS CONFAB ON NARCOTICS

Note to Editors: Mr. Norman Rolfe, Commissioner for Narcotics will hold a press conference on Monday (March 11) at 11 a.m. in the 35 mm theatre of the Government Information Services, 5th floor.

Mr. Rolfe will give a statement and answer questions on the recent United Nations Conference on Narcotics in Geneva at which he was a delegate.

You are invited to have the conference covered.

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PHARMACISTS MAY BE LOCALLY TRAINED AGAIN

Dr. Gerald Choa, Director of Medical and Health Services, said tonight consideration would have to be given to the possibility of training pharmacists locally, instead of abroad as at present, in order to meet a growing need for pharmacists in Hong Kong in line with medical development plans over the next decade.

He referred to a report prepared recently by the Pharmaceutical Society of Hong Kong at the request of the Medical and Health Department, in which the Society had recommended that there should be one pharmacist for every 250 hospital beds, and one retail pharmacy with at least one qualified pharmacist for every 10,000 of the population.

In addition, the Society had expected that a total of 300 pharmacists would be required by 1977, more than 500 by 1982, and nearly 1,100 by 1987 -- roughly an average of between 70 and 80 a year to be trained so as to make up the 930 qualified pharmacists estimated to be needed by then.

Speaking at the Silver Jubilee dinner of the Society, Dr. Choa said if the proposal to train pharmacists locally were accepted, the government would then have to decide whether such training should be at the university or the polytechnic level.

He congratulated the Society for growing from a founder membership of 21 to 133 in the last 25 years, and he noted that 210 pharmacists were at present on the official register.

He suggested

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He suggested that while this total might indicate a shortage of pharmacists, it was not true that the government had failed "to grasp the nettle of training pharmacists locally."

No fewer than three attempts had been made since 1934 to do precisely this. The programme conducted by the Technical Institute of the Education Department was interrupted by the Pacific War, and when it was resumed in 1946, poor enrolment probably led to its discontinuance.

A diploma two-year course in pharmacy was run by the Hong Kong University from September 1952 to June 1956. Three classes were held, and 20 students graduated from an entry of 25. Dr. Choa told the gathering he was not sure why it was not continued subsequently, but "looking at the small number of students, I suspect that once again the lack of response might be the reason."

Ten years ago, four government scholarships were made available. Three students returned from Britain and Australia, and were registered, but only one was still practising locally. Since then, instead of open scholarships, the government had sent eight of its own dispensers abroad to qualify as pharmacists.

Dr. Choa said while the report of the Medical Development Advisory Committee had not dealt with the question of pharmacists because the professions allied to medicine had not been included in its terms of reference, the Medical and Health Department was aware of the need to provide more pharmacists, and the problem was fully recognised.

/"Consequently,

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"Consequently, it is obvious that we have to consider once again the provision of facilities for training them locally," he commented.

In a reference to criticism that existing laws were not adequate for the full control of drugs -- regarding availability, quality and content, and import and export -- he said improved pharmacy and poisons regulations were now in draft, and when they became law, after exhaustive study so as to take account of their complexity, he hoped the medical and pharmaceutical professions would find the new measures "sufficiently comprehensive to meet their requirements."

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN KWAI CHUNG

Special traffic arrangements will be introduced next week in the Shek Lei Estate area, Kwai Chung, to improve traffic flow there.

Starting from 10 a.m. on Monday, the section of Wai Kek Street between Shek Lei Street and Tai Loong Street will be re-routed one-way northwards.

At the same time, the section of Shek Lei Street between Tai Pak Tin Street and the estate road junction near Block 11 will be re-routed from one-way southwards to two-way.

The estate road between Blocks 9, 10 and 11 will be closed to through traffic.

Appropriate traffic signs will be posted in the area to guide motorists.

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FIREMAN'S LIFE NOT EASY

A fireman's life is not an easy one, the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Denys Roberts, told recruits passing out from the Fire Services Training School today.

For a modest salary, he said, a fireman was expected to deal coolly and competently with a wide variety of dangerous situations.

"Frequently, during the course of his career, he will risk serious injury and even death," Mr. Roberts told the 80 newly qualified Firemen.

"By contrast, between periods of intense activity, which make great demands on his mental and physical resources, are long periods when there is little to do and a danger that boredom will sap his keenness and efficiency. Yet, when the test comes, the community expects him to behave with good sense, personal bravery and devotion to duty."

Firemen were called upon to help in many ways -- rescue victims of flood and landslides as well as those affected by fire, going to the aid of the injured from collapsed buildings or smashed cars, as well as delivering babies.

"Throughout your life as a Fireman, therefore, you will be giving help to your fellow men. This cannot be said of most professions," Mr. Roberts said.

/He told

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He told the recruits that they had chosen a rewarding career and they would be performing a service which is vital to the community.

"And I can assure you that your value is fully recognized in the high regard and considerable popularity in which members of your admirable Service are held by the population of Hong Kong," he added.

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ABERDEEN RECLAMATION

Some 11 acres of land is to be formed in Aberdeen Harbour as part of the Aberdeen reclamation scheme.

The reclaimed area will extend between Wu Nam Street and the Aberdeen Government Primary School and will provide land for the widening of Aberdeen Main Road.

This road widening together with other roadwork projects are urgently required to relieve traffic congestion on the roads both approaching and passing through Aberdeen. A large part of the area not devoted to roadworks will be developed as public open space.

The extent of the area involved is described in a notification in today's gazette which calls upon all persons having objections to the proposal or any claim of private right to submit such objections and/or claims in writing to the Director of Public Works within two months.

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NOVEMBER ACCOUNTS SHOW \$168 MILLION SURPLUS

The Government accounts for the month of November 1973 show a surplus of \$168 million compared with a surplus of \$209 million in November 1972.

This has reduced the accumulated deficit to \$73 million for the first eight months of this financial year.

Total revenue for the month at \$580 million was \$36 million less than in November 1972. The total revenue for the first eight months of the financial year was \$2,900 million -- \$247 million more than in the same period the previous year.

Expenditure amounted to \$412 million, an increase of \$4 million over November 1972.

This brings the total expenditure for the first eight months of the financial year to \$2,973 million -- an increase of \$616 million over the same period the previous year.

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BAN ON PURCHASE OF OIL IN CANS LIFTED

The restriction prohibiting the purchase of motor fuel oil in any container except the fuel tank or engine of a vehicle has been removed.

The restriction, made under the Emergency (Control of Oil) Regulations 1973, had been in force for the past three months.

It is rescinded as of today (Friday).

In announcing this, the Director of Oil Supplies, Mr. Roy Porter, stressed that Hong Kong was still not in a position to relax generally its oil saving measures. Fuel oil, used to generate electricity, in particular remains in short supply.

But he pointed out that the situation was constantly under review to see whether any relaxation, however minor, could be made.

The latest move is a small one, and Mr. Porter urged people to see it as such and not to regard it as a signal to relax their economies.

He explained that the oil supply situation was still uncertain and unless there is widespread public co-operation, it might be necessary to tighten up further during the summer months when electricity consumption is high.

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DRUG ADDICTS RAISE \$10,000 FOR CHARITY

Hong Kong probably leads the world in the fields of treatment of drug addicts and rehabilitation of young offenders, the Commissioner of Prisons, Mr. Tom Garner, said today.

"This has happened under a unique programme of the Prisons Department which involves the co-operation between the staff and the inmates and there is no better example than the ceremony for which we are gathered today," he explained.

The prison chief was speaking at a ceremony held in the Tai Lam Addiction Treatment Centre, at which cheques for almost \$10,000 were presented to the Community Chest.

The money was raised by 30 inmates of the treatment centre and the Chatham Road Training Centre who voluntarily took part in the "Walk-For-A-Million" held by the Community Chest in Kowloon on February 17. A number of staff members of the two institutions also joined the walk.

This is the third successive year in which inmates of the institutions had taken part in the fund-raising walk.

Commenting on the participation of the inmates in the walk, Mr. Garner said it marked a very important mile-stone within the work of the Prisons Department - in the context of who were involved and why was it done.

/"It underlines

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"It underlines the fact that individual inmates understand what they can do to help others who are less fortunate than themselves," he added.

One of the former inmates confirmed what Mr. Garner had said about what he felt when taking part in the 14-mile-long walk. A young man aged 24, he had recently left the centre on completion of treatment. He returned with his girl friend today to watch the ceremony.

He said the point was driven home to him when he saw two blind men also taking part in the walk. He then understood what he himself or anybody like him could usefully do to serve the community.

He certainly felt proud when his former fellow-inmates handed over the cheques to the Division Chairman of the Community Chest's Campaign Committee, Mrs. David Lee.

"It was the most meaningful thing that I did during six months in the treatment centre," he said.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph of the presentation will be boxed for collection this evening.

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CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

Daily Guide To Wholesale Market Prices And Supplies

The following prices were realised today (Friday) 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	-	-
- new crop	-	-
S.C.Jion - old crop	Good	1.94
new crop		
Po Ngai	-	-
Chu Cho	-	-
<u>Thai Rice</u>		
100% Whole	-	-
10-15% Broken	-	-
A1 Super Extra	Good	1.67
A1 Super	Good	1.52
Whole Glutinous	-	-
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.82
<u>Australian Rice</u>	Good	1.80
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	Good	1.60

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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	3.5	2.4	3.0
Big-Eyes	Good	2.6	0.8	1.8
Squid	Limited	5.8	3.2	4.5
Hair-Tails	Good	2.6	1.2	1.8
Lizard Fishes	Normal	2.6	1.2	2.0
Croakers	Normal	2.4	1.2	1.8
Conger-Pike-Eels	Good	2.6	2.2	2.5
Melon Coat	-	-	-	-
Breams	Normal	4.8	3.5	4.0
Yellow Belly	Good	1.8	0.8	1.2
Mackerels	Good	3.9	3.2	3.5
Red Goat Fish	Good	1.2	0.7	1.0
Fork-Tail	Normal	1.4	1.0	1.2
Horse-Head	Good	5.5	3.2	4.5
Melon Seed	Normal	3.2	2.8	3.0
Pomfrets	Scarce	10.0	9.0	9.5
Grouper	Normal	7.5	5.0	6.5
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	1.4	0.5	1.0
White cabbage	Normal	1.0	0.3	0.7
Chinese Lettuce	Normal	0.8	0.2	0.5
Chinese Kale	Normal	1.2	0.3	0.7
Spring onion	Normal	0.8	0.3	0.6
Spinach	Normal	1.2	0.4	0.8
Water cress	Normal	1.0	0.2	0.6
Leaf mustard cabbage	Limited	0.9	0.3	0.6
Tomato	Limited	1.6	0.4	1.2

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price</u>
		<u>(\$/ picul)</u>
		(Average)
Pork	Good	300