



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, November 9, 1973

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Full rates to be paid for unoccupied domestic units from next year .....	1
Hiu Kwong Street re-opened .....	2
Biggest-ever careers exhibition to be staged later this month .....	3
Employment agencies must obtain a licence .....	6
"Hot-line" for queries on modified loan scheme to small industries .....	7
Seventh inter-institution sports meet on Sunday .....	8
Temporary closure of Wyndham Street .....	10
New arrangements for Public Light Buses to reduce congestion in Central .....	11

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 1 -

MEASURES TO DISCOURAGE HOARDING OF DOMESTIC PREMISES

Owners Of Unoccupied Units To Pay Full Rates

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As from next year, owners of domestic premises will not be able to claim a refund of rates when the premises are unoccupied.

At the same time, vacant domestic units in new buildings completed after January 1, 1974 will be assessed to rates after three clear months from the day of issuance of occupation permits instead of six months as at present.

These are some of the proposed changes set out in the Rating (Amendment) Bill 1973, published in today's Gazette.

Under the amending Bill, vacant domestic premises within a new building certified for occupation on or after January 1 next year will not be assessed to rates until three months following the issue of the occupation certificate.

If the premises are occupied earlier, however, they will be assessed to rates from the first day of the month following occupation.

Commenting on the new Bill, the Acting Commissioner of Rating and Valuation, Mr. T.F. Edwards, explained that at present a refund amounting to half of the rates paid was made on all unoccupied premises.

The new measures, he said, were being introduced to encourage owners to put their vacant premises back on the market as soon as possible and to encourage the early occupation of new buildings.

/Mr. Edwards .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 2 -

Mr. Edwards said: "The measures are closely linked to the new rent control legislation and are aimed at obtaining the best possible use of the existing supply of domestic accommodation."

He emphasized that the revised legislation was a deterrent measure in that "it discourages the hoarding of domestic premises for capital appreciation or for excessively high rents."

Mr. Edwards pointed out that unoccupied non-domestic premises would not be affected by the new measure and would continue to enjoy a refund of half the amount paid.

"In addition, the free rates period of six months for this type of premises in newly completed buildings remains unchanged," he added.

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#### HIU KWONG STREET RE-OPENED

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The section of Hiu Kwong Street between Block No. 13 and No. 17, Sau Mau Ping Estate, is now re-opened to traffic following the completion of repair work to the embankment of Hiu Kwong Street near Sau Lai Street.

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/3 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 3 -

HONG KONG'S BIGGEST-EVER CAREERS EXHIBITION

To Be Staged On Wanchai Reclamation

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The Youth Employment Advisory Service of the Labour Department is to stage Hong Kong's biggest-ever Careers Exhibition as a major feature of this year's Festival of Hong Kong.

The Commissioner of Labour, Mr. I.R. Price, said today the exhibition - to be staged by the Service - would be more than twice the size of last year's pilot effort by the department in the City Hall.

"Last year's exhibition, which only lasted for a couple of days, showed that there is a tremendous demand for an exhibition of this kind," he said.

"We received a very good response at last year's exhibition. Since then we have received a flood of requests from students, teachers, parents, and leaders of commerce and industry for a further exhibition."

Mr. Price said this year's enlarged exhibition would occupy half of the CMA pavilion on the Wanchai Reclamation during the period of the Festival of Hong Kong. It would be officially opened at 3.00 p.m. on Friday, November 23 by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, Dr. Rayson Huang, and would be open from 10.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. every day until Sunday, December 2.

"This year we have some 30 participants showing jobs in a wide range of spheres, covering industry, commerce and government. All in all, there will be some 100 jobs shown," he said.

/"Young people .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 4 -

"Young people will be told about entry qualifications, salary and promotion prospects, further training possibilities and details of the sort of work available in various fields. And there will be a wealth of literature to take away and study afterwards.

"The exhibition is aimed primarily at those nearing the end of their secondary school life," Mr. Price said, "but the information available will be of great value to all students older.

"The choice of a career is probably one of the most important that any young man or woman will ever be called on to make," he said.

"If it is a choice made wisely, after careful thought and after taking expert advice, it can lead to life-long satisfaction and fulfilment. If the choice is taken hurriedly, and without giving proper thought to the job to which the young person is best fitted, it can mean that he or she will be discontented and unhappy - all their life."

Mr. Price said the exhibition was a major extension of the services offered by the Labour Department's Youth Employment Advisory Service, which disseminates Careers Information and advice to school students through talks and seminars.

In the academic year 1972-73, officers of the Service had delivered 417 talks in 117 schools reaching 23,400 students.

The Service had also distributed to students free of charge some 44,000 pamphlets on various careers opportunities in Hong Kong.

/Mr. Price .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 5 -

Mr. Price said that a large number of Hong Kong's leading schools had been invited to visit the exhibition in school groups.

"This is, of course, an ideal way to see the exhibition," he said. They can be met by officers of the Youth Employment Advisory Service and briefed before being given a conducted tour.

"Any other school or youth organisation, which also wishes to visit the exhibition in a group can contact the Service by ringing 5-282523 to make arrangements," he said.

"This is an exhibition which no student, parent, teacher - or, indeed, any employer - should miss," said Mr. Price.

"Nowhere else in Hong Kong at any time will there be available to our young people, such a wide range of careers information."

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/6 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 6 -

LICENCE FOR EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

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Employment agencies in Hong Kong are required to obtain a licence from the Commissioner of Labour under the Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 1973 which will come into effect on January 1 next year.

The operative date of the legislation was published in the Gazette today.

The Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Lao Mou-chi, said today every employment agency, unless specifically excluded from the legislation or exempted by the Commissioner, must obtain a licence.

An employment agency which deals with both local and overseas employment has to obtain separate licences.

"Failure to obtain a licence shall be an offence and the operator of the agency shall be liable on conviction to a fine of \$5,000."

Mr. Lao said circular letters had already been sent to all known employment agencies to give them sufficient notice to comply with the law, and each had been given a copy of the Guide to the Employment Agency Regulations.

"All employment agencies are advised to complete their licencing requirements before the effective date," he said.

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/7 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 7 -

"HOT-LINE" FOR LOANS TO INDUSTRY INQUIRIES

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A telephone "hot-line" has been opened by the Commerce and Industry Department to deal with queries about the modified loan scheme for industrial firms in Hong Kong.

The number to ring is 5-258894. Inquiries will be handled by officers in the Department's Industrial Development Branch who can speak both English and Chinese.

The terms of the original Loans for Small Industry scheme have been modified to make it more attractive to local manufacturing concerns.

The aim is to stimulate industrial development by making loans available to buy new machinery and equipment.

Thirty local banks participating in the scheme have been sent explanatory booklets and application forms for use by interested applicants.

Fact sheets about the scheme have also been sent to more than 20,000 registered industrial concerns.

The scheme is open to factories employing not more than 200 workers and having not more than \$1 million in proprietors' funds.

This means in effect that 97 per cent of all Hong Kong's manufacturing concerns are eligible to apply for loans to improve their performance.

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/8 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 8 -

SEVENTH INTER-INSTITUTION SPORTS MEET 1973

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The seventh inter-institution sports meet for boys and girls in institutions, run by the Social Welfare Department and voluntary organisations, will be held on Sunday (November 11) at the Boundary Street Public Sports Ground in Kowloon.

Some 200 competitors from seven institutions will be participating in the various field and track events and invitation races. Besides the participants another 600 boys and girls will be there as spectators.

The institutions taking part in this sports meet are the Castle Peak Boys' Home, the Begonia Road Boys' Home, the O Pui Shan Boys' Home, the Ma Tau Wei Girls' Home and the Kwun Tong Hostel, all of which are run by the Social Welfare Department. The others are the Society for Boys Centres and the Hong Kong Juvenile Care Centre, both voluntary organisations.

This sports meet is being sponsored by Mr. Lau Wong-fat, Chairman of the Tuen Mun Rural Committee, who is this year's President of the Executive Committee responsible for arranging the programme. Members of the Committee comprise representatives from the participating institutions as well as senior officers of the Probation and Corrections Division of the Social Welfare Department under which its institutions are operated.

On Sunday, the morning will be devoted to the opening ceremony and the heats of the track event. The finals and invitation races followed by a band performance, mass drill and the presentation of prizes will take place in the afternoon:

/Guests invited .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 9 -

Guests invited for the occasion include members of the Judiciary, Police, Fire Services and City District Officials, the Hong Kong Boy Scouts Association, academic authorities of the Hong Kong University and Chinese University, Kaifong leaders, social workers, educationalists and Justices of the Peace.

The inter-institution sports meet was initiated in 1961 by a group of magistrates who donated a challenge cup for the occasion.

"The objective was to bring together all the boys and girls under the care of the institutions for a day of sports to develop among them a sense of healthy competition, physical well-being and mutual understanding," said Mr. Leung Kai-wah, Secretary of the Executive Committee, who is also the Superintendent of the Kwun Tong Hostel.

Since then, Mr. Leung said, there has been a zealous support and encouragement from all sectors of the community, among them judges, magistrates, social reformers and educationalists. This sports meet is now held biennially.

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Note to Editors: You are cordially invited to cover the above sports meet on Sunday, November 11, at the Boundary Street Playground.

The programme for the day is as follows:

9.00 - 9.30 a.m. Opening Ceremony  
9.30 - 12.30 Heats  
2.00 - 4.00 p.m. Final track events and invitation races  
4.00 - 4.45 p.m. Obstacle race and performances  
4.45 - 5.15 p.m. Prize-giving

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/10 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 10 -

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WYNDHAM STREET

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A section of Wyndham Street between On Lan Street and Queen's Road Central will be closed to all traffic from 1.50 p.m. to about 9.45 p.m. on Sunday (November 11).

The temporary closure will enable the Hong Kong Electric Co. Ltd. to move a 42-ton transformer from On Lan Street to Tin Chong Street.

Only vehicles seeking access to Wellington Street will be permitted to enter Wyndham Street during this period.

All other traffic will be diverted east into Lower Albert Road.

Motorists are advised that due to the weight of the load, the transporting vehicle is extremely slow and will require about 15 minutes to cross Queen's Road Central from Wyndham Street into Pedder Street.

East and westbound traffic flow along Queen's Road Central will therefore be stopped for approximately 15 minutes from about 8.45 p.m. on that day.

Appropriate signs will be in position to assist motorists.

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/11 .....

Friday, November 9, 1973

- 11 -

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR P.L.B. OPERATIONS IN CENTRAL

To Reduce Traffic Congestion

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A new traffic management scheme for public light buses aimed at improving traffic flow in Central District will be introduced early next month.

The introduction of this scheme comes after careful study by staff of the PWD Highways Office, Police Traffic Branch and Transport Department.

Under the new scheme, the movement of PLBs and the points where they may pick up or set down passengers, are kept as far as possible outside the congested Central District, but not so far out as to cause problems for passengers.

The main difficulty has been to find big enough sites in the right places. At peak hours on weekdays, about 700 PLBs an hour depart from Central for Wan Chai, North Point and Shau Kei Wan, while nearly 400 PLBs an hour depart in the other direction for Pok Fu Lam, Wah Fu and Aberdeen.

A three-stage scheme will start early next month with new PLB stands for picking up passengers on the reclamation at Rumsey Street; at the eastern end of the area in front of the Vehicular ferry terminal; and at the eastern end of the Central Bus Station, with pedestrian access by the existing overhead footbridge to and from Central.

Further stands for westbound PLBs will also be set up in Stanley Street and Wellington Street.

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Friday, November 9, 1973

- 12 -

At the same time, the entry of PLBs into certain streets will be banned completely, and PLBs will be prohibited from picking up/setting down passengers in other streets although they may travel along them without stopping.

"This scheme must not be thought of as new restrictions on PLBs," the spokesman said.

"It's really a re-arrangement of facilities so as to reduce traffic congestion in Central and to let both PLBs and the travelling public know exactly where they may stop and board east and westbound PLBs.

"The scheme does not reduce the number of PLBs operating from Central nor does it make life more difficult for intending PLB passengers. We don't claim the scheme to be ideal and there are bound to be complaints. But it's the best that can be done with the space available."

PLB operators were informed of the proposals at a meeting this afternoon, and liaison with other interested parties arranged through the good offices of the City District Officer (Central).

Details of the dates for putting the stages into operation and of road restrictions will be promulgated in the next few weeks.

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Release time: 7.45 p.m.