



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Tuesday, November 7, 1995

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New legislation to enhance fire safety

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The Government is in the course of drafting new legislation to require commercial premises, particularly those located in old buildings which do not have any sophisticated fire protection systems, to upgrade their fire safety installations, the Secretary for Security, Mr Peter Lai, said today (Tuesday).

Speaking at the opening of the Fire East '95 Conference, Mr Lai said in an effort to further promote fire safety, commercial premises would be required to upgrade their fire safety installations, including retrofitting automatic sprinklers.

"Fighting and preventing fire is an on-going battle, with no room for complacency," he said.

"With the implementation of this legislation, we will make Hong Kong a safer place for our citizens and visitors."

Mr Lai noted that fire could pose a great hazard in Hong Kong, where there are over six million people living in about 1,000 square kilometres of land.

"Fortunately, we have in recent years been able to keep our fire losses consistently low compared with other major cities around the world.

"This is possible because we have such a well-trained and well-equipped Fire Service, whose staff carry out their duties with a high degree of professionalism, courage and efficiency," he said.

The purpose of the Fire East '95 Conference is for participants to share ideas and experience as professionals, so that they can continue collectively to develop strategies and solutions to minimise the harmful effects of fires.

End/Tuesday, November 7, 1995

Report on rockfall incident released

The Highways Department today (Tuesday) released a report on the rockfall incident which occurred on Tuen Mun Road on August 18, 1995

The report noted that the investigation into the incident is still going on. The rockfall might have been caused by a fracture of a rock mass along a hidden place of weakness during hand splitting of rock. The adjacent rock joints might have been affected by water infiltration due to a prolonged period of heavy rains.

The Assistant Director of Highways, Mr Peter Orange, said: "The Police are carrying out their own investigation into the incident that caused the death of a driver and injury of a passenger.

"The Police investigation may lead to a decision by the Coroner to hold an inquiry. The reports by the Contractor and the Supervising Officer cannot be released at this stage without prejudice to the impending inquiries," he said.

The Highways Department report released today also gives a brief account of the subsequent road closures and the way forward in completing the road widening work on Tuen Mun Road.

Copies of the report are available from the Major Works Project Management Office of the Highways Department, third floor, Ho Man Tin Government Offices, 88 Chung Hau Street between 9 am and 5 pm on weekdays.

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Independent reviewer for landslides appointed

The Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the Civil Engineering Department has appointed one of the members of the Slope Safety Technical Review Board, Sir John Knill, to conduct an independent technical review of the GEO's investigation into the two landslides at Fei Tsui Road and Sham Wan.

Sir John is Professor Emeritus of Engineering Geology and Senior Research Fellow at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, the University of London. He is an expert in engineering geology and was the Chairman of the Natural Environment Research Council in the United Kingdom.

He has extensive experience in the application of geology to slope stability problems, and was a member of the 1976 Independent Review Panel on Fill Slopes in Hong Kong following the Sau Mau Ping disaster.

Sir John visited the GEO between September 5 and 8 to be briefed on the background information on the incidents and to agree to the general scope of the investigation. He has just completed his second four-day visit starting October 31.

"Excellent progress has been made with the investigations into the cause of these two fatal landslides which occurred in August and these will be completed in the near future," Sir John said.

Sir John will visit Hong Kong again in early December to complete his review.

End/Tuesday, November 7, 1995

Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General appointed

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) the appointments of Mr Robert Footman as the next Postmaster General and Mr Luk Ping-chuen as the next Deputy Postmaster General.

Mr Footman, Head of the Efficiency Unit, and an Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1, was selected for the Postmaster General post through an in-service competition.

"The in-service trawl was arranged to widen the field of candidates and select the best person for the job. The same method was used in selecting the Director of General Grades," a government spokesman said.

Mr Footman's appointment is for three years succeeding the former Postmaster General, Mr Michelangelo Pagliari, who has retired since October 17. Mr Footman will assume the post on November 20.

Mr Luk has served in the Post Office for over 27 years and was recommended by a promotion board as the next Deputy Postmaster General. He will take up the appointment in early 1996.

Following are biographical notes of Mr Footman and Mr Luk:

Mr Robert Charles Law Footman

Mr Footman, aged 43, joined the government as an Administrative Officer in 1974. He has served in a number of departments including a District Office, the former Environment Branch, and the Trade Department.

He was promoted to Administrative Officer Staff Grade C in 1983 and to Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 in 1992. He is now Head of the Efficiency Unit in the Chief Secretary's Office.

Mr Luk Ping-chuen

Mr Luk, aged 49, joined the Post Office as an Assistant Controller of Posts Class II in 1968. He was promoted to Senior Controller of Posts in 1981 and to the current rank of Assistant Postmaster General in 1992. He has acted as Deputy Postmaster General on a number of occasions previously.

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Academic forum on Hong Kong in Transition

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The Hong Kong Baptist University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Central Policy Unit of the Hong Kong Government will co-sponsor a full-day forum on "Countdown to 1997: Hong Kong in Transition" on Friday (November 10).

The forum will bring together leading local and overseas academics, professionals and government officials to discuss and exchange views on issues relating to Hong Kong's transition.

In the morning sessions, the topics covered include Politics in the Transition and Transitional Issues of Note.

In the afternoon, there will be a round-the-table discussion on Public Opinion in the Transition.

The Director of the David C Lam Institute for East-West Studies of the Baptist University, Professor Herbert Tsang, will give welcoming remarks in the morning and the closing remarks will be made by a member of the Central Policy Unit, Mr Mike Hanson, in the afternoon.

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Operation against illegal radio apparatus in taxis

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The Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) and the Police today (Tuesday) conducted an operation in Hong Kong Island to combat illegal radio apparatus installed in taxis.

Over 20 officers from OFTA and the police were involved in the operation during which nine persons suspected of contravention of the Telecommunication Ordinance were arrested.

OFTA is very concerned about the interference caused by illegal radio apparatus installed in taxis because of the effects it has on legitimate users of the radio spectrum.

A spokesman for OFTA pointed out that it was an offence to install radio apparatus in taxi without a licence granted by the Telecommunications Authority or to incorporate any unauthorised frequency channel in any licensed radio apparatus. On summary conviction, an offender is liable to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for two years. The radio apparatus involved is also subject to forfeiture.

For any enquiries regarding licensing of radio apparatus, please contact:

Office of the Telecommunications Authority,
29th floor, Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong.
Tel: 2961 6680

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Stanley Prison inmates' brilliant results in exams

An inmate of Stanley Prison has scored the best result in accounting, beating over 2,000 entrants world-wide in the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examination (LCCI) and coming first in cost accounting.

He is among 76 other inmates of the maximum security institution run by the Correctional Services Department (CSD) who will receive certificates after having recently passed various public examinations, at a presentation ceremony to be held at Stanley Prison on Friday (November 10).

Three other inmates have also achieved good results, obtaining Full Technological Certificate of the City and Guilds of London Institute which is equivalent to a diploma in electronic engineering.

The Stanley Prison inmates obtained a total of 51 distinctions and 39 credits in examinations organised by the Hong Kong Examination Authority, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Pitman Examinations Institute, City and Guilds of London Institute, University of London and the Association of Accounting Technicians.

The Head of Secretariat and Corporate Affairs of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, Mr David Yau, will officiate at the presentation ceremony.

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Gurkhas to take part in field training exercise

The public are advised that the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles will be taking part in a field training exercise throughout the New Territories (Tolo, Shing Mun, Tai Lam Country Park, Ta Kwu Ling, Ma On Shan and Sai Kung) from 6 am on Monday (November 13) to 6 am on Saturday (November 18).

Over 600 troops will be involved in the exercise and they will be using blank ammunition and pyrotechnics.

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Dangerous structures on hillside need to be demolished

The Building Authority today (Tuesday) declared a number of squatter structures on the hillside adjacent to Grantham Hospital in Wong Chuk Hang Road as dangerous and should be demolished for public safety.

The Buildings Department posted a Notice of Intention at the structures this morning informing the residents that demolition work would commence immediately after a Closure Order was applied from the Hong Kong District Court at 9.30 am on December 19, 1995.

The Chief Building Surveyor (Dangerous Building) of the department, Mr Kwok Yui-chung, said according to the advice by the Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department, the slope was unstable and liable to become dangerous after heavy rain.

Besides, some of the squatter structures were so dilapidated and poorly maintained that they were no longer suitable for use as residence. Some stilt supports also showed signs of instability.

"For the safety of the residents and the general public, it is necessary to vacate and demolish the structures so that we can carry out preliminary remedial work to the slope.

"In the long term, as the affected slope is located on private land, we will issue a Repair Order to the owner asking him to carry out permanent remedial work," Mr Kwok said.

The Housing Department, the Social Welfare Department, and the District Office have already contacted the residents to arrange resettlement and to render assistance if necessary.

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Tender date | 7 Nov 1995 | 7 Nov 1995 |
| Paper on offer | EF BILLS | EF BILLS |
| Issue number | Q545 | H577 |
| Amount applied | HK\$8,230 MN | HK\$2,990 MN |
| Amount allotted | HK\$1,500 MN | HK\$800 MN |
| Average yield accepted | 5.50 PCT | 5.52 PCT |
| Highest yield accepted | 5.50 PCT | 5.53 PCT |
| Pro rata ratio | About 86 PCT | About 60 PCT |
| Average tender yield | 5.55 PCT | 5.54 PCT |

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning 13 NOV 1995

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Tender date | 13 NOV 1995 | 14 NOV 1995 |
| Paper on offer | EF NOTES | EF BILLS |
| Issue number | 2711 | Q546 |
| Issue date | 14 NOV 1995 | 15 NOV 1995 |
| Maturity date | 14 NOV 1997 | 14 FEB 1996 |
| Tenor | 2 YEARS | 91 DAYS |
| Amount on offer | HK\$500+100 MN | HK\$1,500+300MN |
| Coupon | 5.60 PCT | |

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

| | \$ million ----- | Time (hours) ----- | Cumulative change (\$million) ----- |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Opening balance in the account | 2,578 | 0930 | -3 |
| Closing balance in the account | 1,588 | 1000 | -3 |
| Change attributable to : | | 1100 | -3 |
| Money market activity | -3 | 1200 | -3 |
| LAF today | -987 | 1500 | -3 |
| | | 1600 | -3 |

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 122.4 *+0.0* 07.11.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

| EF bills | | EF notes | | | | |
|-----------|-------|----------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Terms | Yield | Term | Issue | Coupon | Price | Yield |
| 1 week | 5.24 | 2 years | 2708 | 6.06 | 100.77 | 5.67 |
| 1 month | 5.34 | 3 years | 3810 | 6.15 | 100.48 | 6.06 |
| 3 months | 5.50 | 5 years | 5009 | 6.95 | 101.52 | 6.69 |
| 6 months | 5.52 | 5 years | M501 | 7.90 | 103.50 | 7.11 |
| 12 months | 5.55 | | | | | |

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$12,393 million

Closed November 7, 1995

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