



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Investment protection agreement signed with France

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The Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, on her official visit to France began her first full day in Paris today with the signing of an agreement that provides additional reassurances for French investors who are investing in Hong Kong.

The investment promotion and protection agreement (IPPA) was jointly signed by Mrs Chan for Hong Kong and Mr Jean Arthuis, the Minister for Economy and Finance representing the French government.

Mrs Chan said she believed overseas investors welcomed the added assurances provided by the bilateral agreements to which their own governments were parties.

The same protection was also provided to Hong Kong investors in countries which had also signed the bilateral agreements.

"As overseas investment will continue to play an important role in sustaining our economic growth, it is in Hong Kong's interests to have a network of IPPAs with countries which have invested substantially in the territory.

"These investment protection agreements, which have been endorsed by the Chinese side in the Joint Liaison Group, have been tailor-made to take into account the unique investment regime and economic characteristics of Hong Kong and remain in force beyond 1997," Mrs Chan explained.

Mr Arthuis said it was important for French investors to be able to continue to enjoy beyond 1997 the security and protection they have had for a long time in Hong Kong. He was delighted that such an assurance had been made possible by the agreement signed today.

Today, Mrs Chan also met other French ministers and senior officials, including the Minister who is responsible for Foreign Trade, Mr Yves Galland, and President Chirac's Foreign Policy Adviser, Mr Jean-David Levitte. She was also guest at a luncheon hosted by the President of the Senate, Mr Rene Monory, and later had a meeting with the President of the National Assembly, Mr Philippe Seguin, and his deputy, Mrs Nicola Catala.

During these meetings, Mrs Chan outlined the measures being put in place in the run up to the change of sovereignty in 1997 to ensure a smooth transition.

In the evening, the Chief Secretary had a wide-ranging discussion about the latest developments in Hong Kong with members of IFRI, the French Institute for International Relations.

Last night, Mrs Chan was guest of honour at a dinner hosted by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Jacques Godfrain, who is responsible for Overseas Aid and Development.

During the dinner, she spoke of the close relations between Hong Kong and France and hoped that her visit would help strengthen these bilateral ties.

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HK continues to be an international financial centre

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The Government is committed to maintaining Hong Kong as an international financial centre, the Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, said this (Thursday) evening.

Mr Tsang was speaking at the pre-dinner seminar of the International Futures and Options Exchange Conference 1995 held in Hong Kong. The Conference was attended by leaders of some 28 exchanges from all over the world to promote among themselves a better understanding and cooperation.

"Hong Kong will continue to prosper and succeed and be the best place in which to do business both now, in the next 50 years, and beyond," Mr Tsang said.

"My confidence in the future is based on the fact that Hong Kong has established over the years the essential ingredients to be successful.

"As Financial Secretary, I will continue to fend for established policies of open markets, minimum government interference, stable currency, low taxes, prudent public finances and a level playing field, all of which have served Hong Kong so well in the past," he said.

Mr Tsang said the Government's aim is to ensure the orderly operation of the securities and futures sector and to encourage the development of new products and services.

"We seek to strike a balance between the degree of prudential regulation necessary to ensure the continued reliability and high reputation of our goods and services and the degree of freedom necessary to ensure that our market remain vigorously innovative and competitive," he said.

Mr Tsang said the Hong Kong Futures Exchange has been the frontline regulator of the options and futures market.

"I am delighted to read the mission statement of the Hong Kong Futures Exchange that the Exchange seeks to provide investors with a transparent, fair, efficient and diversified futures and options market and to consolidate the role as an international risk management centre serving China and the world," he said.

He also commended the Futures Exchange for its efforts to diversify the Exchange's markets and products to help ensure Hong Kong's overall competitiveness in the financial world.

A record number of new derivative products have been introduced into the securities and futures markets in 1995, he added.

Mr Tsang said the Futures Exchange maintains a risk management system which provided the highest level of safety and the early detection of unsound financial practices.

"The system now provides a unique blend of risk management and financial surveillance techniques, and has enabled the Exchange to be responsive to the demands of a sophisticated financial marketplace.

"The system is constantly being reviewed and modified to reflect the most advanced risk management techniques," he said.

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Improvement works on Tuen Mun Road to commence on Saturday

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Improvement works to the Sam Shing Hui and So Kwun Wat section of Tuen Mun Road will commence on Saturday (December 2).

A part of the Kowloon-bound carriageway of Tuen Mun Road at two locations - a 410-metre section at Sam Shing Hui and a 120-metre section at So Kwun Wat - will have to be temporarily closed to enable the contractor to carry out excavation work on the critical parts of the slopes adjacent to the road.

Announcing the date for the improvement works, the Assistant Director of Highways, Mr Peter Orange, said today (Thursday) that the Highways Department considered it necessary to provide a wider buffer area at the foot of the slope by positioning an improved protective barrier in the middle lane.

"This will help to achieve an improved level of safety in proceeding with the rock excavation at this section," he said.

Mr Orange said to minimise the period of lane closure, the department would put in the maximum resources within the site constraints to carry out the works quickly but safely.

"The Highways Department will also explore all possible ways and means to reduce the construction period as the works progress," he added.

In view of the exceptional circumstances, the Environmental Protection Department has agreed in principle to the extension of working hours into the evening hours every day including Sundays and public holidays.

All possible noise mitigation measures will be taken to keep down the noise level generated by the construction activities.

On temporary traffic arrangements associated with the lane closure, the Chief Engineer (New Territories West) of the Transport Department, Mr Chow Ying-shun, said appropriate adjustment to the location of the central divider and some slight reduction in the carriageway width would be made to provide three Kowloon-bound and two Tuen Mun-bound traffic lanes for this three-kilometre section between Sam Shing Hui and So Kwun Wat covering the two works areas.

"To upkeep road safety, the speed limit along this section of Tuen Mun Road will be 50-km per hour. The existing morning peak hour bus only lane on the Kowloon-bound carriageway will be maintained.

"This traffic diversion scheme will commence early in the morning on Saturday and will last for up to two and a half months to tie in with the work of Highways Department," Mr Chow said.

Mr Chow noted that the road capacity for Tuen Mun Road Kowloon-bound traffic would not be significantly affected.

For Tuen Mun-bound traffic, he said some delay would be expected especially in the evening peak period as the number of traffic lanes has to be reduced from three to two in the So Kwun Wat/Sam Shing section.

Motorists are advised to drive with care and patience, or to choose alternative routes. Commuters are strongly advised to make the best use of public transport services.

During the affected period, public transport services connecting Tuen Mun and Yuen Long with the urban areas will be strengthened.

Specifically, Kowloon Motor Bus will operate a special bus service Route 60P between Tuen Mun Town Centre and Sheung Shui.

The Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry will operate a special ferry service from Tsuen Wan to Tuen Mun in the evening peak hours. The adult fare is \$6.

A feeder bus, Route 39S, will be introduced to operate from Tsuen Wan MTR Station to Tsuen Wan Ferry Pier to facilitate commuters using the special ferry services. The fare is \$1.

The Tuen Mun and Yuen Long District Boards were consulted in their special meetings on November 14 and November 20.

The two district boards have set up liaison groups with representatives from relevant departments to monitor the progress of works and the temporary traffic arrangements.

An inter-departmental co-ordination centre will operate to oversee the implementation of the special traffic arrangements and to introduce refinements to the scheme if necessary.

For public enquiries, the Transport Department provides a hotline service during office hours. The number is 2339 2444.

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New Hospital Authority members appointed

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The Government announced today (Thursday) the appointment of four new members and re-appointment of 14 incumbent members to serve on the Hospital Authority Board with effect from tomorrow (December 1).

The four new members are Mr Peter Chan Fuk-sing, Miss Iris Chan Sui-ching, Dr Conrad Lam Kui-shing and the Secretary for the Treasury or his representative.

Mr Peter Chan Fuk-sing is a certified public accountant with extensive involvement in the field of rehabilitation. He is currently a member on the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled as well as the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee.

Miss Iris Chan Sui-ching is the Chairman of the Alliance for Patient's Mutual Help Organisations. She has contributed constructive advice and ideas on ways to improve the quality of medical care.

Dr Conrad Lam Kui-shing, a former Legislative Council member, has served on the Advisory Council on Aids since 1993. He also chairs the Hospital Governing Committee of Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital.

The Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, paid tribute to all existing members for their advice and invaluable contributions to the improvement of hospital services in Hong Kong.

"I look to them as well as new members for their continued support and active participation in ensuring the provision of quality patient care in Hong Kong," she said.

The following is a full list of the Hospital Authority Board:

Chairman

Mr Woo Kwong-ching, Peter

Members

Dr Aw Sian Sally

Miss Chan Ching-har, Eliza

Mr Chan Cho-chak, John

Mr Chan Fuk-sing, Peter

Miss Chan Sui-ching, Iris

Mrs Chan Wong Shui, Pamel
Professor Chow Shew-ping
The Honourable Ho Mun-ka, Michael
Dr Lam Kui-shing, Conrad
Dr the Honourable Leong Che-hung
Mrs Leung Lau Yau-fun, Sophie
Professor Li Kwok-cheung, Arthur
Professor the Honourable Felice Lieh Mak
Mrs Ling Li Ching-man, Eleanor
Mr Simon C Penney
Sir David Todd
Mr Wong Hong-yuen, Peter
Professor Young Tse-tse, Rosie
Secretary for Health and Welfare or her representative
Secretary for the Treasury or his representative
Director of Health
Chief Executive Officer, Hospital Authority

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Control over aircraft noise extended

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More stringent noise standards will be applied to aircraft under a new Schedule to the Civil Aviation (Aircraft Noise) Ordinance which takes effect today (Thursday).

A government spokesman explained: "The amended Schedule extends the requirement previously applied to Hong Kong airlines to all airlines operating at Kai Tak by requiring all subsonic narrow-bodied jet aircraft landing or taking off in Hong Kong to comply with the noise standards set out in Chapter 3 of Annex 16 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

"The new requirement covers both local and foreign registered aircraft and previous exemptions for some categories of local aircraft have been removed."

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Monetary statistics for October

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The total deposits grew moderately in October, while total loans and advances fell slightly, according to statistics published today (Thursday) by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority.

Table 1 summarises figures for October and comparisons with earlier months.

Deposits

Total deposits grew by 0.5% in October, moderating slightly from 0.8% in September. Within the total, Hong Kong dollar deposits rose by 1.7%, while foreign currency deposits fell by 0.7% during the month.

Within Hong Kong dollar deposits, demand deposits rose by 4.9% in October. However, that growth rate may have been distorted as refunds to unsuccessful subscribers of a new stock issue were made on October 31. As there was an over-subscription of about 10 times, demand deposits were inflated. Adjusted for that amount, demand deposits would still rise by 3.8% in the month.

Both savings and time deposits rose by 1.4% in October, continuing the increases of 2.2% and 3.8% respectively in September.

Swap deposits fell by a further 2.1% in October, resulting in a cumulative reduction of 46.4% since November 1994. This reflects the migration to Hong Kong dollar time deposits since the removal of ceilings on certain time deposit rates.

The fall in foreign currency deposits was accounted for by a 1.4% reduction in non-US dollar deposits and a very slight fall in US dollar deposits in the month.

Loans and Advances

Total outstanding loans and advances fell by 0.9% in October after a rebound of 0.7% in September. The fall was attributable to a 2.2% decrease in loans for use outside Hong Kong (including those where the place of use is unknown), while domestic loans rose by 0.9% in the month.

Analysed by currency, Hong Kong dollar loans rose by 0.8% in October, whereas foreign currency loans dropped by 1.8%.

As the growth of Hong Kong dollar deposits was faster than that of Hong Kong dollar loans, Hong Kong dollar loan-to-deposit ratio fell for the fifth consecutive month to 104.8%.

Money Supply

HK\$M1 rose by 2.8% in October, in line with the increase in demand deposits due to the refund for over-subscription of a new share issue.

Adjusted for that, HK\$M1 rose by 2.1% in the month. HK\$M2 and HK\$M3 both grew by 1.6% in October, up from their 1% increases in September.

TABLE 1 : MONETARY STATISTICS - OCTOBER 1995

(HK\$mn)

	Oct 1995	Earlier months (% change to Oct 1995)		
		Sep 1995	Jul 1995	Oct 1994
Money Supply				
M1 - HK\$	171,127	166,508 (2.8)	169,186 (1.1)	170,325 (0.5)
Foreign currency	16,457	17,418 (-5.5)	16,923 (-2.8)	17,163 (-4.1)
Total	187,584	183,926 (2.0)	186,109 (0.8)	187,488 (0.1)
M2 - HK\$@	1,254,020	1,234,206 (1.6)	1,210,400 (3.6)	1,058,854 (18.4)
Foreign currency*	985,165	992,103 (-0.7)	971,704 (1.4)	871,347 (13.1)
Total	2,239,185	2,226,309 (0.6)	2,182,104 (2.6)	1,930,200 (16.0)
M3 - HK\$@	1,271,260	1,251,662 (1.6)	1,228,039 (3.5)	1,075,554 (18.2)
Foreign currency*	1,048,409	1,055,692 (-0.7)	1,035,880 (1.2)	930,947 (12.6)
Total	2,319,669	2,307,354 (0.5)	2,263,919 (2.5)	2,006,501 (15.6)
Notes and coins in circulation	78,597	78,295 (0.4)	78,298 (0.4)	74,088 (6.1)
of which held by public	69,176	69,310 (-0.2)	69,145 (0.0)	65,549 (5.5)
Total Deposits				
Total Demand deposits	118,408	114,616 (3.3)	116,963 (1.2)	121,940 (-2.9)
Total Savings deposits	422,555	418,360 (1.0)	408,331 (3.5)	400,461 (5.5)
Total Time deposits with licensed banks	1,579,859	1,574,737 (0.3)	1,541,603 (2.5)	1,306,611 (20.9)
Total Time deposits with restricted licence banks	36,186	37,180 (-2.7)	38,627 (-6.3)	34,260 (5.6)
Total Time deposits with deposit-taking companies	18,636	18,881 (-1.3)	19,128 (-2.6)	19,532 (-4.6)
HK\$ deposits@	1,167,617	1,148,375 (1.7)	1,126,130 (3.7)	986,997 (18.3)
Demand deposits	101,951	97,198 (4.9)	100,041 (1.9)	104,776 (-2.7)
Savings deposits	292,768	288,789 (1.4)	286,052 (2.3)	276,653 (5.8)
Time deposits@	772,898	762,389 (1.4)	740,037 (4.4)	605,568 (27.6)
US\$ deposits*	508,147	508,322 (-0.0)	500,655 (1.5)	473,516 (7.3)
Other foreign currency deposits*	499,881	507,077 (-1.4)	497,867 (0.4)	422,290 (18.4)
Foreign currency deposits*	1,008,027	1,015,399 (-0.7)	998,522 (1.0)	895,806 (12.5)
All deposits	2,175,644	2,163,774 (0.5)	2,124,652 (2.4)	1,882,803 (15.6)
Foreign currency swap deposits	55,772	56,945 (-2.1)	60,596 (-8.0)	101,976 (-45.3)
Total Loans and advances				
To finance H.K.'s visible trade	154,687	154,571 (0.1)	158,776 (-2.6)	127,128 (21.7)
To finance merchandising trade not touching H.K.	17,830	17,539 (1.7)	19,215 (-7.2)	13,117 (35.9)
Other loans for use in H.K.	1,376,341	1,363,568 (0.9)	1,352,165 (1.8)	1,232,541 (11.7)
Other loans for use outside H.K.	2,107,243	2,153,436 (-2.1)	2,279,377 (-7.6)	1,832,152 (15.0)
Other loans where the place of use is not known	37,387	39,059 (-4.3)	40,619 (-8.0)	45,831 (-18.4)
Loans in HK\$	1,224,203	1,214,713 (0.8)	1,205,359 (1.6)	1,095,744 (11.7)
Loans in foreign currencies	2,469,284	2,513,460 (-1.8)	2,644,793 (-6.6)	2,155,024 (14.6)
Total loans and advances	3,693,487	3,728,172 (-0.9)	3,850,151 (-4.1)	3,250,768 (13.6)

* Adjusted to exclude foreign currency swap deposits.

@ Adjusted to include foreign currency swap deposits.

Note : Data may not add up to total due to rounding.

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Survey on pre-war buildings to be conducted

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The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) will conduct the first territory-wide survey next year to record all pre-war buildings and structures, the Commissioner for Recreation and Culture, Mr Benjamin Tang, said today (Thursday).

He said the current record of historical buildings maintained by AMO was by no means exhaustive.

"There are many historic buildings and structures which escape our attention and remain unrecorded.

"The survey, fully financed by the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, therefore aims to complete and update AMO's list of historic buildings so that appropriate measures can be taken to protect the buildings," he said.

Mr Tang was speaking at the opening ceremony of "Hong Kong Going and Gone - Views of Sheung Wan and Western District", a three-month photographic exhibition jointly organised by AMO and the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch. Meanwhile, AMO has taken photographs of 460 historic buildings this year. The project is nearing completion and following documentation work, they will be made available for public inspection.

Also speaking at the occasion were the Chairman of the Antiquities Advisory Board, Mr David Lung, and the President of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch, Mr David Gilkes.

Mr Lung said he was encouraged by the forthcoming AMO heritage projects, which included two territory-wide historical and archaeological surveys, the computerisation of monument records and various educational programmes.

These programmes will enhance the public's knowledge of Hong Kong's heritage and will also lead to a movement in the protection of historic buildings, he noted.

Mr Gilkes told the gathering that the Society would continue to pledge its full support to all those who tried and preserved Hong Kong's heritage and history.

"In the future Hong Kong's 1997 problems will be just a blip in the sea of time; it is therefore important that we today do not forget what happened in the past and do our best to bring to the public's attention for the sake of future generations," he said.

The exhibition is being held at the AMO Gallery at 136 Nathan Road, Kowloon, until early March next year.

Old photographs of Sheung Wan, Western and other parts of the territory, which come from the archives of the Society, are put on display.

Further details of the exhibition can be obtained on 2721 2326.

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Potential land fill source

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In response to media enquiries concerning potential sources for fill material, a government spokesman today (Thursday) said only eight sites were under consideration, and this was only by way of a possible contingency arrangement for sourcing fill.

"None of the eight are in the country park areas and they have not yet reached the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) stage. Besides, there is a possibility that they may be completely abandoned even before that stage is reached," he said.

On the issue that the Government was delaying creating 14 extra country parks because of considerations about potential areas for extracting fill material, the spokesman said this was not the case.

He added that the Government's Fill Management Committee routinely made available to any interested parties the wide range of documents and plans which covered the provision of fill material.

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Asia-Pacific region maritime officials meet in HK

Representatives from 16 maritime authorities are gathered in Hong Kong for the third meeting of the Port State Control Committee in the Asia-Pacific region to work out the harmonisation of inspection procedures, information exchange and the training scheme for inspectors at a regional level.

The meeting, hosted by the Marine Department, will begin tomorrow (Friday) and conclude on Thursday (December 7). It follows the two previous meetings held in Beijing and Kuala Lumpur respectively.

The outcome of the discussion will help to enhance the co-ordination of Port State Control activities in Asia-Pacific region.

It will also give a clear message of the determination of the maritime administrations in eradicating the operation of sub-standard ships in the region.

Port State Control inspection of foreign ships calling at a port is sanctioned by various conventions adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

Port states carry out inspection on foreign ships to ensure that they comply with the safety and pollution prevention requirements of the IMO conventions and thus to discourage the operation of sub-standard ships.

To implement the provisions of the conventions effectively, a rigorous and co-ordinated strategy of inspection regime needs to be adopted by all ports states in a region to prevent operators of sub-standard ships from taking advantage of the ports where such inspections are absent or less rigorous.

In 1982, 14 European countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Paris to stamp out sub-standard ships.

The signatories of the Paris MOU agreed on uniform standards for inspections and each member undertook to carry out inspections of an agreed minimum percentage of ships visiting their ports.

The success of the Paris MOU led countries in other regions to adopt a similar approach.

Dialogues began in 1991 for the establishing a regional co-operation in the port state control inspections in the Asia-Pacific region. The initiative was fully supported by IMO as well as the countries in the region.

Four preparatory meetings were then held and in November 1993, a Memorandum of Understanding, known as the Tokyo MOU, was agreed in Tokyo, Japan.

At the two previous meetings held under the Tokyo MOU, the delegates worked out the administrative details.

The third meeting in Hong Kong will be chaired by the Director-General of Marine Regulatory Directorate, Canadian Coast Guard and Chairman of the Committee, Mr Michael Hubbard.

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180 VMs transferred to Victoria Prison

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At 8 pm, an operation in the High Island Detention Centre (HIDC) was still underway.

The operation started at 9.30 am this (Thursday) morning when police and Correctional Services Department (CSD) officers entered the camp to remove a group of Vietnamese migrants (VMs) selected for return to Vietnam on two orderly repatriation flights scheduled for December 6 and 13.

From the outset of the operation, passive resistance was encountered. About 400 VMs climbed onto the hut roofs while about 1,800 others gathered in the open space of the south section of HIDC. It took CSD officers three hours to remove the VMs from the roofs of eight huts in the extreme southern section of the centre.

Despite repeated calls by the officers to the assembled VMs, those selected for repatriation declined to come forward.

CSD officers then persuaded the group to move to another part of the centre. During this process, some of those selected for return were identified.

In the third phase of the operation, the VMs still on the rooftops were removed. Efforts were then made to identify the remaining VMs selected for repatriation.

At 8 pm, all but 12 of the 192 VMs had been transferred out of the camp to Victoria Prison where they will undergo pre-flight formalities before being returned to Vietnam.

Seven VMs and four CSD officers sustained minor injuries.

As is the practice, the whole operation was observed by independent monitors.

Commenting on the operation, the Refugee Co-ordinator, Mr Brian Bresnihan, said he was pleased that no violence was encountered. He also commended the officers who had conducted the operation for their patience and restraint in what was a difficult situation.

"The Government is totally committed to the repatriation of all VMs as soon as possible," he said.

"The future of the VMs in our camps lies in Vietnam."

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187 VMs transferred to Victoria Prison

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The transfer operation in the High Island Detention Centre had stood down at 9.30 pm tonight (Thursday).

All but five of the 192 VMs had been transferred out of the camp to Victoria Prison.

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Aberdeen fish market redevelopment study

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The Fish Marketing Organisation (FMO) is embarking on a plan to redevelop its Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market and has commissioned a consultant to assist to bring the project to fruition.

The project involves conducting a detailed feasibility study, submission of a redevelopment proposal for the Town Planning Board's approval, modification of land lease, and a joint venture with a developer for the development and construction of the market.

The project will take about five years to complete.

At the first stage, a feasibility study, scheduled to be completed in three months, will look into various options and financial implications of redeveloping the fish market which was built more than 40 years ago with design and facilities now very much out of date.

The Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dr Lawrence Lee, signed the contract with the consultant this (Thursday) afternoon in his capacity as Director of Marketing.

Speaking after the signing ceremony, Dr Lee said the Administration had been considering plans to redevelop the Aberdeen fish market so as to meet the modern day needs of the community and local fishermen.

He said: "With its prime location in the heart of Aberdeen, the market site has the potential of redevelopment into an integrated market complex of high commercial value similar to the fishermen-wharf-type developments in Sydney, Seattle or San Francisco.

"The project aims to provide improved and modernised fishing port facilities.

"Apart from re-provisioning the existing wholesale fish market, it will accommodate important supporting facilities for our fishing fleet under one roof. These include fishing equipment stores, vessel servicing workshops, cold stores and fish processing factories.

"The opportunity is also made use of to provide additional attractions, such as retail markets for live fish and fresh food, seafood restaurants, shops for arts and crafts, an exhibition centre and car parks."

The wholesale market complex, in addition to providing a one-stop service to fishermen, will help strengthen Aberdeen as a major tourist attraction and seafood centre in Hong Kong, he added.

Chesterton Petty Limited has been awarded the contract to provide the consultancy services.

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December 19 - latest date for posting local Christmas mail

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The Assistant Postmaster General (Postal Services), Mr P C Luk, announced today (Thursday) that the latest date for posting Christmas mail for local delivery before Christmas is Tuesday, December 19.

Postings after this date might run the risk of not being delivered in time because of anticipated seasonal pressure of work. He advised members of the public to post as early as possible to avoid a last minute rush.

Mr Luk added that a special mail delivery would be provided on Sunday, December 17; Sunday, December 24; and Tuesday, December 26. A special collection service for posting boxes will also be provided on December 17 and 26. There will be no delivery on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

All post offices will be closed during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

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New Sai Wan Ho post office opens today

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The Postmaster General, Mr Robert Footman, today (Thursday) welcomed the opening of the Hing Man Street Post Office.

He said: "This is the second new branch post office opened since the Post Office changed to Trading Fund operation in August 1995 with a view to improving customer service."

The new office, located at ground floor, Shop 1, Wing Hing Court, 50-52 Hing Man Street, Sai Wan Ho, Hong Kong, opened for business at noon today.

It provides a normal range of counter services including stamp sale, registration, and letter and parcel acceptance services, to the *Sai Wan Ho Area. Business hours are:

Monday to Friday	:	9.30 am to 1 pm
		2.15 pm to 5 pm
Saturday	:	9.30 am to 1 pm

The telephone number of the new office is 2539 4114.

Mr Footman, the Chairman of the Eastern District Board, Mr Chan Bing-woon, and the District Officer (Eastern), Mr Lui Hau-tuen, officiated at the opening ceremony this morning.

The total number of branch post offices in Hong Kong at present is 126.

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List of environmental reports released

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The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (Thursday) released a list of environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports of major development projects completed since August this year as well as those which will be completed in the coming 12 months.

A complete list of all ongoing EIAs is available for public inspection at the Environmental Resource Centre at 221 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Following is a list of major EIA reports completed between August and early November:

- 1 Plastering Materials Blending Plant, YLIE
(Daido Building Material Ltd)
- 2 Improvement to Castle Peak Road (From Siu Lam to So Kwun Tan)
(Highways Department)
- 3 Route 3 Tai Lam Tunnel and Yuen Long Approach - Southern Section,
Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment
(Route 3 Contractors Consortium)
- 4 Green Island Public Dump
(Civil Engineering Department)
- 5 TKO Development, Contract No TK 39/93, Town Centre North - Road,
Bridge and Subways
(Territory Development Department)
- 6 North and South Kowloon Sewerage Stage 1 Hung Hom Bay Pumping
Station Environmental Impact Assessment
(Drainage Services Department)
- 7 Low Level Radioactive Waste Storage Facility
(Environmental Protection Department)
- 8 Design of Reclamation and Edge Structures for Container Terminals 10 and
11 and Back-up Areas
(Civil Engineering Department)

- 9 Rehabilitation of Lamma Quarry
(Civil Engineering Department)
- 10 Chai Wan Road/Wing Tai Road Widening
(Highways Department)
- 11 Agreement No CE30/94 Treatment and Disposal of Waterworks Sludge
from Existing Water Treatment Works EIA Study
(Water Services Department)
- 12 Shenzhen River Regulation Project Stage 2 works
(Drainage Services Department, Hong Kong Government/Shenzhen River
Regulation Office of Municipal Government, Shenzhen)

Major EIAs that are likely to be completed in the next 12 months include:

- 1 Backfilling of Marine Borrow Pits North Lantau and South Tsing Yi,
Feasibility Study/ EIA
(Civil Engineering Department)
- 2 Green Island Cement Manufacturing and Concrete Batching Area 17,
Southwest Tsing Yi
(Green Island Cement Co Ltd)
- 3 Hong Kong Cement/Concrete Batching Plant and Material Storage Facilities
at Northwest Tsing Yi Island
(Hong Kong Cement Co Ltd)
- 4 Main Drainage Channel for Fanling, Sheung Shui and Hinterland
(Civil Engineering Department)
- 5 Main Drainage Channels for Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long and Kam Tin
(Territory Development Department)
- 6 Sheung Shui Slaughter House
(Regional Services Department)
- 7 San Miguel Brewery, Yuen Long Industrial Estate
(San Miguel Brewery)

- 8 Kam Tin By-pass
(Highways Department)
- 9 Commercial/Residential Development at Shiu Wing Steel Mill Site in
Tseung Kwan O Area 72
(Shiu Wing Steel Ltd)
- 10 Residential Development at Hong Kong Oxygen Plant Site in Areas 50 and
51, Tseung Kwan O
(Hong Kong Oxygen and Acetylene Co Ltd)
- 11 Island West Refuse Transfer Station
(Environmental Protection Department)
- 12 Route 16: From West Kowloon to Sha Tin
(Highways Department)
- 13 Sham Tseng Link Feasibility Study
(Highways Department)
- 14 Sand Extraction and Backfilling of Eastern Waters Marine Borrow Areas
(Civil Engineering Department)
- 15 Central Reclamation, Phase III
(Territory Development Department)
- 16 Sha Lo Tung Revised Development Supplementary EIA
(Sha Lo Tung Development Co Ltd)
- 17 Discovery Bay Development Extension
(Hong Kong Resort Co Ltd)
- 18 Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme Stage 1, Implementation Stage EIA
(Drainage Services Department)
- 19 Route 3 Tai Lam Tunnel and Yuen Long Approach - Northern Section,
Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment
(Route 3 Contractors Consortium)

- 20 KCR Western Corridor Railway
(Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation)
- 21 MTR Tseung Kwan O and Quarry Bay Extensions
(Mass Transit Railway Corporation)
- 22 KCR Hung Hom Extension cum Ma On Sha Rail Link
(Highways Department)
- 23 Aviation Fuel Pipeline from Tsing Yi to CLK
(Provisional Airport Authority)
- 24 Cental/Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link
(Highways Department)

End/Thursday, November 30, 1995

Container depot owner fined for breaching safety rules

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The General Duties Provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (FIUO) have once again proved to be an "effective tool" in prosecuting construction site contractors and other industrial establishment owners for failing to take reasonably practicable measures to ensure the safety and health at work of their employees.

The comment was made by Labour Department's Chief Factory Inspector, Chan Tat-king, today (Thursday) following a recent court case in which the proprietor of a transportation company was fined a total of \$200,000 by Fanling Magistracy for breaching the General Duties Provisions.

It was the highest fine ever imposed on industrial safety offences.

An industrial accident occurred in the evening of September 27 last year at a container depot at Ping Ha Road, Yuen Long, in which a container examiner was knocked down by a stacker crane.

As a result, the worker suffered a fracture to his left leg and he also had to have his right leg amputated.

Investigations by factory inspectors resulted in the prosecution of the proprietor of Kwong Ming Transportation Company, Lau Kei-kwong, for breaching the General Duties Provisions. He was fined \$200,000 for two summonses issued under Section 6A(2)(b) and Section 6A(2)(c) of FIUO.

Mr Chan reminded all container depot owners that they should make proper arrangements to ensure the safety and absence of risks to health of all persons in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of containers in depots.

The arrangements should be as follows:

- * to provide separate designated zones to confine the movements of persons and cranes/vehicles;
- * to post suitable warning notices/signs in conspicuous positions;
- * to define and implement standardised safe working procedures; and
- * to ensure effective use of communication equipment between the crane driver and the container examiner for the checking of each other's current position.

Mr Chan disclosed that since the enactment of the General Duties Provisions of FIUO in December 1990, the Labour Department had by the end of May this year taken out a total of 102 summonses against factory, catering establishment and construction site operators for breaching this particular piece of industrial safety legislation.

"Under this legislation, employers and employees should work together to ensure all workplaces are safe and healthy.

"An employer who contravenes this provision will be liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and to imprisonment for six months and the maximum fine for an offending employee is \$50,000 and six months in jail," he said.

End/Thursday, November 30, 1995

Crown rents due on December 25

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Demand notes have been issued for Crown rents for the half year ending on December 25 in respect of an amount exceeding \$100 per year, a spokesman for the Treasury said.

Payment can be made using the Payment by Phone Service or by post addressed to the Director of Accounting Services, P O Box 8000, GPO, Hong Kong, or in person at any of the following offices:

- * The Treasury Headquarters Collection and Payment Office, Immigration Tower, first floor, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong;
- * The Central Sub-Treasury, Central Government Offices (West Wing), 11 Ice House Street, Hong Kong;
- * The North Point Sub-Treasury, Max Share Centre, first floor, 373 King's Road, North Point, Hong Kong;
- * The Sai Wan Ho Sub-Treasury, Eastern Law Courts Building, ground floor, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho, Hong Kong;
- * The Yau Ma Tei Sub-Treasury, Kowloon Government Offices, fourth floor, 405 Nathan Road (Market Street entrance), Kowloon;
- * The Kowloon City Sub-Treasury, Man Sang Commercial Building, first floor, 348-352 Prince Edward Road (corner of Prince Edward Road and Junction Road), Kowloon;
- * The District Office at Sai Kung, Sha Tin, Tai Po, North, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan or Kwai Tsing.

Crown rent payers who have not received their demand notes should bring along those for any previous period to any of the Treasury collection offices.

Duplicate demand notes will be issued to them.

If the payers cannot produce demand notes for any previous period, they should enquire at the Crown Rent Unit of the Treasury at Immigration Tower, 30th floor, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Non-receipt of the demand notes does not alter the requirement that the Crown rents must be paid by December 25, the spokesman said.

Crown rent payers who have submitted a valid direct debit authorisation should note that if the wording "Payment to Be Made By Autopay" is shown on the demand notes, payment will be made by direct debit to their bank accounts on December 27.

They should then ensure that their bank accounts contain the necessary funds on that date.

If the above wording is not shown, they should pay according to the instructions as set out in the demand notes.

To save queuing time, the spokesman urged Crown rent payers to use the Payment by Phone Service, or pay by post using cheques or cashier orders, or by early personal attendance at any of the collection offices.

However, the most convenient payment method is autopay, he said.

Applications for autopay are obtainable from Treasury collection offices, district offices and all major banks in Hong Kong or by telephoning 2829 4999.

For additional information regarding the Payment by Phone Service, please call 170 222 329.

The spokesman advised Crown rent payers to note the following points:

- * To avoid legal action for re-entry of a property, the owner for the time being of that property is obliged to pay Crown rent including any arrears as demanded;
- * The Crown rent payable under a lease of a property which has been renewed under the Crown Leases Ordinance and re-developed, will be three per cent of the rateable value of that property as assessed following the redevelopment.

Pending completion of the assessment and other related procedures, Crown rent demands will be based upon the pre-redevelopment rateable value.

In due course, Crown rent for the difference between the rent based upon pre- and post-redevelopment rateable values will be demanded and the owner for the time being is obliged to pay the rent as demanded. If he does not, legal action for re-entry of the property may be instituted.

He advised property buyers to instruct their solicitors to ensure that at the time of purchase the Crown rent was paid up to date.

If a property is subject to the Crown Leases Ordinance and has been re-developed but the rental paid up to the date of the purchase is not based upon an assessment of the rateable value of the property since its redevelopment, appropriate steps should be taken by the purchaser or his solicitors to protect the purchaser, the spokesman said.

Enquiries on outstanding accounts in respect of Crown rent may be addressed to the Director of Accounting Services. The fee is \$60 for each enquiry per property.

End/Thursday, November 30, 1995

Transfer of VMs from High Island Detention Centre

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The Government announced that a group of about 190 Vietnamese migrants will be transferred from the High Island Detention Centre today (Thursday) in preparation for their return under the Orderly Repatriation Programme.

They will be transferred to Victoria Prison for pre-flight documentation and medical checks prior to leaving Hong Kong. They will be returned in two groups on two flights on December 6 and 13.

The transfer will be observed by independent monitors.

End/Thursday, November 30, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
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Opening balance in the account	1,171	0930	+101
Closing balance in the account	1,519	1000	+101
Change attributable to :		1100	+101
Money market activity	+98	1200	+100
LAF today	+250	1500	+98
		1600	+98

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 122.4 *+0.1* 30.11.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.65	2 years	2711	5.60	100.01	5.67
1 month	5.61	3 years	3810	6.15	100.81	5.93
3 months	5.58	5 years	5009	6.95	102.45	6.45
6 months	5.57	7 years	7211	6.82	100.32	6.88
12 months	5.57	5 years	M502	7.30	102.10	6.91

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$18,911 million

Closed November 30, 1995

End/Thursday, November 30, 1995