



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, December 13, 1973

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Release time: 8.15 p.m.

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NEW RENT CONTROL PROVISIONS CLARIFIED

A spokesman for the Rating and Valuation Department today clarified some points in the new rent control ordinance which was passed by the Legislative Council yesterday, and which will come into effect this Saturday (December 15).

Following an amendment proposed by the Hon. P.C. Woo on behalf of the Unofficials, premises with a rateable value of over \$30,000 will be allowed to have a rent increase of over 21 per cent of the current rent.

This allowed increase, however, will still be limited to one-fifth of the difference between the current rent and the fair market rent assessed by the department.

For example, if the current rent is \$2,200 and the fair market rent is assessed to be \$5,000; one-fifth of their difference is \$560. This will be the maximum amount of increase that can be charged for the premises if it has a rateable value of over \$30,000.

If the premises has a rateable value of \$30,000 or less, the increase in rent will be limited to 21 per cent of the current rent, that is \$462.

On rate increases, the spokesman pointed out that these may be passed on to tenants, regardless of the rateable value of the premises.

Any rate increase, if passed on to tenants, cannot be counted as a rent increase under the Ordinance.

The spokesman revealed however that there are no plans for a general review of rateable values next year.

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Copies of a simple booklet explaining the main points of the Ordinance will be available free of charge from next week at the Rating and Valuation Department, City District Offices, Tenancy Enquiry Bureaux and District Offices in the New Territories. Forms to be used under the new Ordinance will also be available at these places.

Members of the public are urged to obtain copies of the booklet if they are not clear about the new legislation.

The new Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance covers virtually all existing domestic tenancies in post-war premises; and provides existing tenants with security of tenure up to December 15, 1976.

Among others, the Ordinance:

- * does not control tenancies in new buildings certified for occupation after December 14, 1973.
- * invalidates any agreement between landlords and tenants to contract out of the control of the legislation;
- * allows landlords and tenants to agree freely to any rent increase;
- * provides, failing agreement, for the landlord to apply to the Rating and Valuation Department for a certificate of rent increase;
- * sets the limit of rent increase to one-fifth of the difference between the current rent and the fair market rent; the latter to be assessed by the

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- department - provided that for premises with a rateable value of \$30,000 or less, the increase cannot exceed 21 per cent of the current rent.
- * controls the new rent for two years after the increase, if the increase is made after December 14, 1973;
 - * disallows a rent increase within one year of the last increase, if that increase was made on or before December 14, 1973, or within one year of the tenancy;
 - * requires the landlord to serve a notice of the certified increase on the tenant, specifying the effective date of increase, which cannot be earlier than one month from the date of service of the notice;
 - * allows the landlord who lets his premises to a new tenant after December 14, 1973, to agree any rent, although he will have to notify the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation of the new rent;
 - * allows the landlord to regain his premises, on application to the District Court, if he wants the premises for his own domestic use or if he intends to rebuild it;
 - * provides for an Independent Rent Tribunal to review certificates of rent increase issued by the Rating and Valuation Department, and provides for either the landlord or tenant, if not satisfied with the Tribunal's decision, to appeal to the District Court;

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- * allows rent increases to be passed to sub-tenants, although the increase should generally follow those paid by the principal tenant and in any case not above 21 per cent of the original rent, and
- * allows rates increases to be passed on to tenants, although this increase will not count as a rent increase for the purposes of the Ordinance.

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HYDROFOIL NIGHT OPERATIONS APPROVED

The Marine Department has given the go-ahead for a night hydrofoil service to Macau subject to certain conditions, it was announced today.

This follows a series of night trials aboard the hydrofoil M.V. **Patane** using a low level television system known as Vidar.

However, the approval is subject to certain mechanical modifications being made to the Vidar installation and some minor improvements to the bridge layout aboard the hydrofoil.

Officers operating such hydrofoils would also require special training in the use of the Vidar coupled with radar as an anti-collision device.

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PROPOSED HONG KONG SHIPPING REGISTER

UK Study Team Completes Work

The British study team of the Department of Trade and Industry has completed its work in Hong Kong in relation to the proposed Hong Kong Register of Shipping.

The team is led by Dr. J. Cowley and comprises Mr. G.W. Thompson, Captain E.G. Anderson and Mr. A.J. Hunt. On return to the United Kingdom a comprehensive report will be prepared and submitted to the department.

The team has not been concerned with policy matters. Their terms of reference were confined to professional and technical matters. Any terms which may be negotiated for a separate Register will be in the nature of a package and it is not possible to forecast before further discussions in London what form such a package might take. No decision has yet been taken on the establishment of a separate Register.

Whilst in Hong Kong, the members of the team have studied in depth many aspects of the proposed Register and their work has included visits to Hong Kong-owned ships in normal service to meet the officers and crews and to witness the general operation of the vessels. In addition, a number of deck and engineer officers were interviewed with the object of assessing the general standards appertaining to Hong Kong-owned ships.

Local suppliers, servicers and manufacturers of safety equipment have been visited to examine the facilities available and to ascertain the part which they fulfil in the shipping industry. Ship repair and dockyards were of interest to the team not only in relation to their ship servicing function but also with reference to the part which they might play in providing practical training for future marine engineer officers.

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Since the safe and efficient operation of ships depends to a high degree on the standards of directed training and associated professional education of the ships' officers and crews, the team was particularly interested in the education and training facilities available to prospective and serving personnel. Several educational and training establishments were inspected and discussions were held on the nature and duration of the courses with college staffs and school instructors.

Just over two weeks of the team's programme were spent in Japan where inspections were made of ships under construction for Hong Kong shipowners in a number of shipyards. Testing, research and other establishments were inspected and manufacturers of safety and related equipment were visited.

During their stays in Hong Kong and Japan the members of the team discussed on an informal basis various aspects of ship operation with government and classification society surveyors, superintendents, manufacturers, shipbuilders, training officers, ship-repairers, educationalists and seamen's welfare officers and representatives. All were most helpful.

The team also met several Hong Kong shipowners and were impressed by their approachability and by the close contact they maintained with their superintendents and other support staff.

Whilst making its investigations the team has been working with and received full co-operation from the Director of Marine and his staff.

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ASIAN SHIPPERS TO DISCUSS COMMON PROBLEMS

Hong Kong will be taking part in a shipping conference in Bangkok organised by ECAFE to study the problems of shippers in the region.

Representing Hong Kong will be Mrs. Susan Yuen, Honorary Secretary of the Hong Kong Shippers' Council, and Mr. Paul K.C. Wong, Assistant Director of Commerce and Industry (Commercial Relations).

The meeting will be held from December 17 to 19 and will be attended by representatives of governments and shippers' organisations.

It will consider a plan of action to develop co-operation among shippers at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. Consideration will be given to the quality and frequency of shipping services available to shippers and there will be an effort to determine whether they are suited to the needs of the trade.

Special attention will be devoted to the relationships between Shippers Councils (or other representatives of shippers) and Shipping Conferences and ways will be explored of strengthening shipping bodies so that they can meet Conferences on more equal terms.

This is the second meeting organised by the ECAFE to promote shipper interests in the region. The first meeting resulted in the training course to help in the establishment of Shippers' Councils which was hosted by the Hong Kong Government last year.

Following this training course, a number of Shippers' Councils have been formed and it is expected that these will be represented at the ECAFE meeting.

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MORE PRIVACY IN ESTATE BATHROOMS

The Housing Department is to spend several million dollars to improve the female communal bathrooms and latrines in all old Mark I and II public housing blocks.

The improvement consists of fitting metal gates to individual compartments and strong solid wooden doors with bolts to the main entrance of the bathrooms. Water taps will also be installed in each cubicle.

Work has already started in four blocks at Chai Wan Estate. Improvement to other blocks in the estate will be carried out shortly.

A "lump sum" tender has been called for the improvement works which are scheduled to be completed in four to five months.

Mr. Ralph Husband, Assistant Director of Housing, said the need for improvement had long been felt.

"The fitting of doors to individual cubicles in the bathrooms will give more privacy to the users, and the strong wooden door at the entrance will surely provide added security," he said.

Last year, similar improvements were carried out at Tung Tau Estate, and tenants' reaction had been most favourable.

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OPENING OF SHA TIN GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL

The newly completed \$5.5 million Sha Tin Government Secondary School will be officially opened tomorrow (Friday) by Mr. P.C. Woo, Senior Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council and Chairman of the Board of Education.

The school will provide accommodation for 920 pupils. At present there are 480 pupils in Forms 1 and 2.

Apart from 24 normal classrooms, there are four laboratories, seven specialist teaching rooms, an assembly hall, a covered playground and a basketball court.

Before Mr. Woo unveils a plaque, the Director of Education, Mr. J. Canning will invite the Principal Government Architect, Mr. C. Bramwell, to hand the keys of the school to the Principal, Mr. J. Ormerod.

Note to Editors: You are invited to have the opening ceremony covered. It begins at 4 p.m. tomorrow.

A 14-seater van for press representatives will leave the Kowloon Sub-Pool behind the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office at 3 p.m. sharp for the school on Friday.

As seats are limited, you are invited to reserve one for your representative by telephoning the Education Department's Information and Public Relations Section, Tel. 5-778311 ext. 155 as soon as possible.

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1974 ROYAL OBSERVATORY CALENDAR ON SALE

The Royal Observatory Calendar for 1974 is now on sale at \$6 per copy.

Extra copies have been printed this year in view of the high demand in the past and those interested in the meteorological, astronomical and tidal data contained in it, are advised to get their copies early to avoid disappointment.

The 1974 calendar is similar in layout to that of the 1973 edition and contains, in both English and Chinese, times of sunrise, sunset, moon rise and moon set, times and heights of high and low tide.

Astronomical events such as eclipses and phases of the moon, and other useful and informative diagrams and illustrations are also contained in the calendar.

Copies of the calendar are available at the Government Publications Centre at Star Ferry Concourse, Hong Kong; the Government Printing Department, Java Road, North Point and the Royal Observatory, Nathan Road, Kowloon or can be ordered through leading bookstores.

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AWARDS FOR VOLUNTARY RAINFALL OBSERVERS

Mr. G.J. Bell, Director of Royal Observatory, tomorrow will present awards to five voluntary rainfall observers for their outstanding service in the maintenance of their rainfall stations.

The presentation ceremony will be held at the headquarters of the Observatory in Nathan Road, Kowloon, at 3.30 p.m.

The Royal Observatory maintains a network consisting of about 120 rainfall observing stations situated at various places in Hong Kong.

Many people from all walks of life have willingly given their services as voluntary observers.

As a gesture of appreciation for their co-operation, the Royal Observatory has invited them to a special reception tomorrow. They will be shown the work of the Observatory and the instruments used.

The five voluntary observers who will receive the awards are: Mr. Lam Chi-ching, from Tai Lam Chung Forest Reserve Station; Mr. Ng Wai-tin, from Sha Tin Public Primary School; Mr. William Chan, from Tai Mei Tuk Marine Laboratory; Mr. Sze Kam-ching, from Tsuen Wan Public Primary School and Mr. Ching Wing-choy, from Tai Mo Shan Farm.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to have the presentation and reception covered. The reception starts at 2.30 p.m. The presentation ceremony will be held at 3.30 p.m.

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CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

Daily Guide To Wholesale Market Prices And Supplies

The following prices were realised today (Thursday) 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	Good	1.64
-- new crop		1.72
S.C.Jion -- old crop	Good	1.66
Po Hgai	Good	1.42
Chu Cho	Good	1.22
<u>Thai Rice</u>		
100% Whole	Good	No Sale
10-15% Broken	Good	1.50
A1 Super Extra	Good	1.45
A1 Super	Good	1.37-1.22
Whole Glutinous	Limited	1.52
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.62
<u>Australian Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	-	-
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	-	-

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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	4.30	2.50	3.50
Big-Eyes	Good	2.60	0.60	1.60
Squid	Normal	6.00	1.80	4.00
Hair-Tails	Good	2.20	1.50	1.80
Lizard Fishes	Normal	2.40	0.80	1.70
Croakers	Good	2.00	0.50	1.60
Conger-Pike-Eels	Normal	2.30	1.70	2.00
Melon Coat	Good	2.40	1.30	1.70
Breams	Normal	5.00	2.50	4.80
Yellow Belly	Good	1.20	0.70	0.90
Mackerels	Good	3.00	2.00	2.50
Red Goat Fish	Good	2.20	0.70	1.60
Fork-Tail	Normal	1.20	0.40	0.80
Horse-Head	Normal	5.50	2.50	4.00
Melon Seed	Limited	2.70	1.70	2.00
Pomfrets	Scarce	9.00	7.50	8.50
Grouper	Normal	8.50	5.50	7.50
Yellow Croaker	-	-	-	-

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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	Limited	2.20	0.70	1.50
White cabbage	Normal	0.60	0.20	0.40
Chinese Lettuce	Normal	0.60	0.20	0.40
Chinese Kale	Normal	0.80	0.15	0.45
Spring onion	Normal	1.20	0.40	0.80
Spinach	Normal	1.40	0.60	1.00
Water cress	Normal	1.10	0.20	0.60
Leaf mustard cabbage	Scarce	0.50	0.20	0.35
Tomato	Scarce	2.20	1.20	1.60

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

	<u>Availability of Supply</u>	<u>Wholesale Price</u>
		<u>(\$/ picul)</u>
		(Average)
Pork	Good	285

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