



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, May 17, 1973

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CHINESE WATER EXPERTS VISIT HONG KONG

Six senior officials of the Kwangtung Water Authority will arrive in Hong Kong on Monday (May 21) for a seven-day visit as guests of the Director of Public Works, Mr. James Robson, who invited them here on behalf of the Hong Kong Government.

Mr. Robson said today that the visit was in reciprocation for his week's stay in Canton in November last year.

"I am delighted that the dates have now been made final", he commented. "We're looking forward to showing these visiting colleagues some of our main installations and projects and to a further exchange of technical information."

The six men will be led by Mr. Wang Yung, the Director of the East River-Shumchun Water Supply Project Administration Bureau of Kwangtung Province.

The other five members of the party are: Mr. TANG Te-chun, Principal Water Engineer of the Bureau of Water Conservancy and Electric Power, Kwangtung Province; Mr. MA En-yao, Engineer of the same Bureau; Mr. BI Te-kuang, Engineer of the East River-Shumchun Water Supply Project Administration Bureau; Mr. YUAN Liu, Engineer of the East River-Shumchun Bureau; and Mr. CHANG Ching-ping, Secretary and Interpreter.

The programme of the visit will include tours of the Plover Cove Reservoir, the desalter site at Luk On Pai and other Waterworks undertakings.

The group will also pay visits to other engineering projects and provision has been made to enable them to meet leading figures in the community in the course of private entertainment during the social side of their visit.

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REMAINS UNCHANGED

The cost of living in Hong Kong remained fairly stable last month, according to the latest General Consumer Price Index.

The index for April was 154, the same as that for the previous month.

Decreases of one point each were recorded in the indexes for foodstuffs and services. On the other hand, there was a rise of six points in the index for durable goods.

Increases of one point each were recorded in the index for housing and the index for alcoholic drink and tobacco, while movements in other sections of commodity were insignificant.

Compared with March 1973, the average retail price of rice, fish, beef, poultry and fresh fruits dropped. But there were increases in the prices of fresh vegetables, other meat and eggs.

The increase in housing charges pushed up the index for housing by one point and a similar increase was recorded in the alcoholic drink and tobacco index brought about by a revision in the prices of Chinese wines.

The index for durable goods rose by six points mainly as a result of higher prices for wooden furniture and the drop in the index for services followed the abolition of the entertainment tax, resulting in a lowering of charges at cinemas.

The Modified Consumer Price Index for April was 159, the same as that for the previous month, and 23 points higher than for the corresponding month last year.

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MEASURES TO CLEAR BACKLOG OF BUILDING APPLICATIONS

Special measures are being introduced to clear the backlog of building applications in the Buildings Ordinance Office.

The Building Authority announced today that for a period of about six weeks, starting from now, the B.O.O. will be inspecting plans on the basis of a general rather than a detailed examination.

A spokesman for the Office emphasised that the temporary speed-up of procedures will in no way affect the rigorous checking of all plans to ensure structural stability and hillside site stability which is being carried out now; "safety factors will continue to be regarded as the first priority".

In fact, he said, it is proposed to strengthen the resources of the team of engineers now engaged on this work within the Buildings Ordinance Office by taking on consultants to supplement their efforts.

In addition, the systematic checking and inspection of construction work on site, and the testing of materials as and when necessary, will continue, the spokesman said.

The usual practice of a physical inspection before an Occupation Permit is issued will not be affected.

All authorised architects have been informed of this temporary variation in procedures in a circular letter from the Building Authority (the Director of Public Works, Mr. J.J. Robson).

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The letter points out that the temporary measures will have the effect of emphasising the duties and responsibilities of architects.

Mr. Robson adds: "All buildings under construction are subject to rigorous checks by officers of the B.O.O. and I cannot stress too highly the importance I attach to the role of the authorised architect in not only ensuring that no contraventions of the Buildings Ordinance occur during construction but also in ensuring that he, himself, has sought and obtained all relevant information to ensure the viability of the project."

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REVENUE INSPECTORS NOT EXTRACTING INFORMATION FROM STOCKBROKERS

The Commissioner of Inland Revenue, Mr. F.E. Rainbow, today denied a newspaper report, attributed to his department, alleging that drastic action would be taken to tax the profits of habitual traders on Hong Kong's four stock exchanges.

Commenting on the report, he recalled that the Financial Secretary, Mr. C.P. Haddon-Cave, had referred in his budget speech to the appointment of Inland Revenue staff to "make inquiries into the activities of habitual dealers with a view to establishing that they are carrying on businesses or 'adventures in the nature of trade', thereby bringing their rewards into charge for profits tax".

"We have already taken steps to establish a section to deal with such cases," Mr. Rainbow said. "But naturally we cannot disclose our sources of information.

"Certainly we have no team of inspectors extracting information from stockbrokers, as alleged.

"The team of inspectors assigned to stockbrokers' offices are there solely to check on stamp duty.

"We have taken steps, yes, but to suggest that these are drastic may create unnecessary misgiving that we are resorting to extreme and unprecedented measures.

"The steps we are taking are the normal ones we would take to identify and assess any person carrying on any kind of trade or business," Mr. Rainbow stressed.

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CERTIFICATED MASTERS COMMISSION CALLS FOR INFORMATION

The special Commission appointed by the Governor to examine and report on the underlying causes of the Certificated Masters dispute would like to contact interested parties including organisations and individuals.

In an advertisement published in local English and Chinese language newspapers, the Commission says it is anxious to hear from any person interested in these matters, either by letter or at a meeting to be mutually arranged.

The Commission, which held its first meeting on Tuesday (May 15) will meet regularly until its work is complete.

The Chairman is Mr. T.K. Ann, a member of the Legislative Council and a leading industrialist. Its members are Bishop Francis Hsu, the Catholic Bishop of Hong Kong, and Miss B.M. Kotewall, the Headmistress of St. Paul's Co-Educational College.

The terms of reference of the Commission are:

To examine the underlying causes of the dispute which has arisen between the Certificated Masters in Government and aided schools and the Government, including existing channels of communication and promotion prospects; and

To advise on what measures, apart from the newly announced salary scales, should be taken to obviate a recurrence of such a dispute affecting teachers employed in government and aided schools.

Any person interested in these matters are invited to contact Miss Yuk, Secretary to Mr. Ann, by phoning 5-228396 to arrange a meeting, or write to P.O. Box 6128, Tsim Sha Tsui.

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ANOTHER AUCTION OF "LUCKY" NUMBERS

The second public auction of "lucky" car numbers will be held on Wednesday (May 23) when 30 of the special vehicle registration numbers will be offered for sale.

The auction will start at 5.30 p.m. in the canteen of the Central Government Offices (West Wing), 7th floor, Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong.

Successful bidders will be required to pay in cash or by cheque immediately after the bidding. Proceeds of the auction will be paid to the Government Lotteries Fund for charitable purposes.

More than \$300,000 was raised at the first auction on May 9 when 50 "lucky" numbers were sold, and a third auction is scheduled to be held in about a fortnight's time.

On Wednesday, the following registration numbers will be on sale:

826	834	861	875	894
AS 1	AS 2	AS 3	AS 4	AS 11
AS 33	AS 55	AS 77	AS 80	AS 90
AS100	AS200	AS222	AS567	AS666
AS777	AS789	AS888	AS999	AS1234
AS2345	AS3333	AS4567	AS6000	AS9000

The vehicle registration mark will be assigned only to a vehicle which is registered in the name of the successful bidder within 12 months from the date of the auction.

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YOUTH PROJECT COMPETITION ON SOCIAL WELFARE OPENS

The Director of Social Welfare, Mr. F.K. Li, will officially open an exhibition of the youth project competition on social welfare tomorrow (Friday) afternoon.

Judging of the displays will take place prior to the opening. This will be done by a panel of four judges, comprising Miss Monica Yu of the Hong Kong Social Workers Association; Mr. Y.F. Hui, of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service; Mr. G.W. Parry of the Education Department, and Miss Annie Chan of the Social Welfare Department.

Mr. Leo Lee, Managing Director of the Tung Tai Trading Corporation, has donated \$3,000 towards the cost of educational or recreational equipment as prizes.

The first prize will be equipment worth \$1,000, the second, \$600 and the third, \$400. In addition, there will be 10 consolation prizes of equipment worth \$100 each.

The exhibition is sponsored jointly by the Social Welfare Department, the Education Department, and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and will be held in the Ocean Terminal.

The aim of the competition was to arouse young people's interest in local, social, and community affairs; to help them gain a better understanding of social welfare services and to encourage them to contribute towards the community.

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The exhibition will last until Sunday.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to cover the opening ceremony tomorrow (Friday) at 4.30 p.m. Mr. James Marshall, Public Relations Officer, Social Welfare Department, will be on hand to assist the press.

Copies of Mr. Li's speech in English and Chinese will be available at the ceremony and also in the G.I.S. press boxes later that evening.

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NEW TERRITORIES LAND FOR SALE

Three lots of Crown land in the New Territories will be put up for auction on June 4.

Of the three lots, two are on Clear Water Bay Road -- one at Silver Strand the other at Ta Kwu Ling -- with an area of 17,600 sq. ft. and 17,000 sq. ft. respectively.

The other lot, covering 10,000 sq. ft., is at Tai Mong Tsai, Sai Kung. All three are for private residential purposes.

The auction will be held at 2.30 p.m. in the Sai Kung District Office, San Po Kong Government Offices, Kowloon.

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WATER CUTS IN MID LEVELS AND WESTERN DISTRICT

A number of premises in the Mid-levels area and Western District on Hong Kong Island will be without water for five hours from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Saturday (May 19).

The temporary stoppage is to allow Waterworks staff to carry out leakage tests in both areas.

The area affected in Mid-levels is bounded by Old Peak Road, Robinson Road from Glenealy to Albany Road, Conduit Road from Old Peak Road to Conduit Apartment.

The area affected in Western District is bounded by Pokfulam Road, First Street, Second Street, Third Street, High Street, Eastern Street and Western Street.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.