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JLG to meet in Peking

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The thirty-fourth meeting of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group on Hong Kong will take place in Peking between October 31 and November 2.

The British team will be led by the Senior Representative, Mr Hugh Davies. The other members of the British team will be Mr Nicholas Ng (Secretary for Constitutional Affairs, Hong Kong Government), Mr Alan Paul (Counsellor, Office of the British Senior Representative, Sino-British Joint Liaison Group) and Mr Sherard Cowper-Coles (Head of Hong Kong Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Government stresses need for progress on port

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The Government is determined to progress on planning for new container terminals to ensure that the port can meet rapidly growing demand.

This was the message given by Port Development Board Secretary, Mr Tony Clark, to a joint meeting of the German and French Business Associations today (Tuesday). He said the growth in port cargo throughput over the past five years was "little short of astounding".

"Even with a huge base - 11 million twenty-foot-equivalent units (TEUs) last year - container traffic has surged a further 15 per cent this year.

"At present rates of growth and at present productivity rates (which are well in excess of anything, anywhere else) we shall still need Container Terminals 9 and 10, and the first three berths of Container Terminal 11 before the turn of the century," he said.

Mr Clark said Hong Kong could expect to face a very considerable volume of increased cargo both in the short term and beyond the end of this decade. Despite this, some people had suggested that new port facilities could be put on hold.

He continued: "Let me knock firmly on the head the idea that we can go slow on Container Terminal 9."

Such suggestions ignored the reality that the average annual growth rate over the past five years has been over 17 per cent. That growth rate is the yardstick by which the industry measures the need for future terminals.

It was by no means certain that the existing terminals at Kwai Chung could continue making significant increases in their throughput capacities to cope with the growth.

"So you may rest assured," continued Mr Clark, "that the Hong Kong Government is determined to press ahead with seeing that our port is provided with the infrastructure demand requires. And that means early progress on CT9, CT10 and CT11."

He said the growth in cargo throughput had also affected public cargo working areas which had seen double digit growth.

"Some of our legislators are seeking to retain public subsidies for commercial activities at the PCWAs," said Mr Clark.

"They justify this on ground of 'economic downturn'. That may well be true in other parts of our economy. It is certainly not so in the port," he added.

Referring to recent reports that some giant ships, now on the drawing board, might not be able to enter Hong Kong's port when fully loaded, Mr Clark said full loadings in Hong Kong were the rare exception, rather than the rule.

Very few of the world's major hub ports could presently accommodate such huge vessels.

"That said," Mr Clark emphasised, "we are pushing ahead with a dredging programme which will ensure that Hong Kong does not lose out."

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Provisional statistics of retail sales for August released

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According to the provisional figures released today (Tuesday) by the Census and Statistics Department, the value of total retail sales in August 1995, estimated at $18.2 billion, increased by 4% when compared with August 1994. After discounting the effect of price changes over the period, total retail sales dropped by 2% in volume.

The slight decline in volume of total retail sales in August 1995 continued to be attributable mainly to a considerable drop in sales of motor vehicles, by 13% in value or by 20% in volume.

Sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts also went down by 1% in value and 4% in volume. Sales in department stores recorded virtually no change in value but a decrease of 7% in volume. Sales of consumer durable goods (other than motor vehicles) increased by 1% in value but decreased by 4% in volume.

Meanwhile, sales of clothing and footwear and fuels increased by 7% and 6% respectively in value, but showed virtually no change in volume.

Nevertheless, there were still increases in sales of miscellaneous consumer goods (11% in value and 6% in volume) and food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (6% in value and 1% in volume). Sales in supermarkets also rose by 13% in value and 5% in volume.

Compared with July 1995 (but bearing in mind that this comparison may be affected by seasonal factors), total retail sales in August 1995 increased by 3% in both value and volume. Comparing the period from January to August 1995 with the same period in 1994, total retail sales rose by 5% in value, but dropped by 1% in volume.

The volume of retail sales is derived from the value of retail sales after adjusting for price changes. The relevant components of the Consumer Price Index are used as deflators.

Table 1 presents the revised total retail sales figure for July 1995 and the provisional figure for August 1995.

Table 2 shows the value and volume indices of retail sales in July and August 1995 for all retail outlets and by type of retail outlet, with average retail sales from October 1989 to September 1990 taken as 100. Comparisons of the August 1995 results with those for July 1995 and those for August 1994, as well as comparisons of retail sales in the period from January to August 1995 with the same period in 1994 are also given.

The report containing the analysis of the August 1995 results is now on sale at $4 per copy at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, ground floor, Low Block, 66 Queensway; and the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

Enquiries about the survey results may be directed to the Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics Section of the Census and Statistics Department (Tel. No.: 2802 1258).

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TABLE 1 : TOTAL RETAIL SALES

Total Retail Sales for August 1995 (Provisional Figure) = HK$18,193.2 million

for July 1995 (Revised Figure) = HK$17,665.2 million

TABLE 2 : VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES FOR JULY 1995 AND AUGUST 1995

(Monthly average of Oct 89 - Sept 90 = 100)

Type of Outlet	Type of index	Index number		August 1995 compared with July 1995		August 1995 compared with August 1994		Jan -Aug 1995 compared with Jan -Aug 1994	
		July 1995 (Revised figures)	August 1995 (Provisional figures)						
		(Point)	(Point)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)	(Points)	(%)
(A) FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS									
	Value	188.1	193.7	+5.6	+3.0	+8.0	+4.3	+8.8	+5.0
	Volume	138.6	142.4	+3.8	+2.7	-2.2	-1.5	-1.8	-1.3
(B) BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLETS									
Food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (other than supermarkets)	Value	139.4	148.7	+9.3	+6.7	+8.1	+5.8	+6.2	+4.7
	Volume	100.2	100.3	+0.2	+0.2	+1.1	+1.1	-2.2	-2.1
Supermarkets ϕ	Value	175.4	177.1	+1.7	+1.0	+20.7	+13.2	+12.0	+7.7
	Volume	115.7	116.2	+0.5	+0.5	+5.6	+5.0	-0.1	-0.1
Fuels	Value	184.9	198.5	+13.6	+7.4	+11.3	+6.0	+11.6	+7.7
	Volume	120.9	128.4	+7.5	+6.2	-0.5	-0.4	+0.2	+0.2
Clothing, footwear and allied products	Value	305.9	315.6	+9.7	+3.2	+19.9	+6.7	+33.7	+13.5
	Volume	196.9	208.3	+11.5	+5.8	-0.8	-0.4	+4.9	+2.7
Consumer durable goods	Value	136.7	144.7	+8.0	+5.9	-7.3	-4.8	-20.1	-11.2
	Volume	109.7	115.9	+6.2	+5.7	-11.4	-9.0	-22.3	-14.8
- Motor vehicles and parts	Value	115.3	120.4	+5.1	+4.4	-18.7	-13.4	-47.6	-25.8
	Volume	77.0	79.9	+2.9	+3.8	-19.5	-19.6	-44.5	-32.6
- Consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and parts	Value	152.2	162.3	+10.2	+6.7	+1.0	+0.6	-0.1	-0.1
	Volume	133.3	141.9	+8.7	+6.5	-5.6	-3.8	-6.2	-3.8
Department stores	Value	163.9	164.4	+0.5	+0.3	#	#	+6.5	+4.3
	Volume	111.6	113.9	+2.3	+2.1	-9.1	-7.4	-5.1	-4.4
Jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts	Value	167.8	162.7	-5.1	-3.0	-1.4	-0.8	+8.1	+4.8
	Volume	153.9	149.7	-4.3	-2.8	-6.1	-3.9	+4.7	+2.9
Other consumer goods not elsewhere classified	Value	269.1	282.5	+13.4	+5.0	+27.9	+10.9	+30.6	+15.5
	Volume	204.2	213.7	+9.5	+4.7	+11.9	+5.9	+15.8	+10.0

NOTE : ϕ Not including supermarkets operating in department stores.
# denotes a figure within ±0.05.
The underlined figures were rounded up to 5.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Job bazaar in Tsuen Wan

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The Labour Department's second job bazaar this year will be held in Tsuen Wan Town Hall tomorrow (Wednesday).

Organised by the department's Employment Services Division and sponsored by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), the bazaar will provide a chance for employers and job-seekers to discuss details of job vacancies and employment conditions.

Sixteen employers from different trades including catering, retail, supermarket, trade, communications, medical, garment, electronics, security and property management will be participating in the bazaar.

They will brief job-seekers on their respective trades and select suitable persons for interview on the spot or on a later date.

Talks on the employees retraining programme and various trades will also be given by the ERB and participating organisations.

Hong Kong residents especially those who are aged 30 or above and are looking for a job are welcome to visit the bazaar between 11 am and 5.30 pm.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Hong Kong/Taiwan air services

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In response to press enquiries, a government spokesman said today (Tuesday) the Hong Kong Government noted that Cathay and the Taiwanese airlines had reached consensus on arrangements for air services between Hong Kong and Taiwan and that Cathay and the Taiwanese airlines would meet again to finalise a draft agreement to be put to the relevant authorities.

"In the meantime, air services between the two sides will continue on the basis of the current commercial agreement between Cathay and China Airlines," he said.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

83 VMs depart on Orderly Repatriation flight

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A group of 83 Vietnamese migrants (VMs) returned to Vietnam today (Tuesday) on the 26th flight under the Orderly Repatriation Programme (ORP).

The returnees, comprising 37 men, 19 women, 16 boys and 11 girls, were mainly from High Island Detention Centre. The oldest is 46 years old and the youngest 10 months.

Most of them arrived in Hong Kong in 1988 and 1989, with three in 1990 and two in 1991.

The group brought to 1,624 the total number repatriated on ORP flights since November 1991.

The returnees were transported to the airport early this morning for pre-departure security checks before boarding their flight for Hanoi.

Commenting on today's flight, the Refugee Co-ordinator, Mr Brian Bresnihan, stressed that the Government remained committed to the repatriation of all the VMs in Hong Kong's camps.

"The Comprehensive Plan of Action provides that the migrants must return to Vietnam. Their refusal to volunteer to go home leaves us with no option but to return them through the Orderly Repatriation Programme," he said.

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Monitors' report submitted to Chief Secretary

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The monitors appointed to observe the Orderly Repatriation Programme operation this (Tuesday) morning have submitted their report to the Chief Secretary.

The monitors were Dr Philip Kwok Chi-kuen, a Justice of Peace; and Mr Adam Voysey from Christian Action.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Official Receiver's Office Annual Report released

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The annual departmental report of the Official Receiver's Office (ORO) for 1994-95 was released today (Tuesday) by the Official Receiver, Mr Robin Hearder.

In launching the report, Mr Hearder noted that although the total number of new court insolvencies during 1994-95 had only gone up slightly by 0.4 per cent to 754 cases, it meant the previous increase in 1993-94 was continued. Considerable pressure will be brought upon the insolvency officers, legal officers, Treasury accountants and all other members of the staff as a result and inevitably this will cause some delays.

In terms of service delivery, staff of all grades have been able to maintain performance standards. Nearly all the targets in the performance pledges have been achieved and three new items have been added to the 1995-96 list. These standards are monitored quarterly by the Customer Liaison Group - the ORO Services Advisory Committee.

There were solid increases in the amount of summonses issued and fines totalling $550,000 were awarded by the courts in respect of prosecutions of the various insolvency offences during 1994-95.

In addition, an encouraging start has been made to the disqualification of directors under the new Part IVA of the Companies Ordinance and this will enhance the regulatory role of the department.

Drafting work continues on the bankruptcy amendments proposed by the Law Reform Commission, and it is expected that a bill will be gazetted for discussion by the Legislative Council early next year.

The number of proofs of claims adjudicated remain at the same high level, but the number of cases with dividends declared and the amounts of dividends were reduced largely because of lower level of realisation of assets.

There was increased contact with China and in September last year. The Official Receiver was part of the Financial Services Branch delegation that visited Beijing and Shanghai.

In February and March, ORO had entertained delegations from the Leadership Group on Bankruptcy of the Nation People's Congress, the Shenzhen Administrative Bureau for Industry and Commerce and the China Securities Regulatory Commission to explain the organisation and operations of ORO.

During the year, the Administration decided that more compulsory winding-up liquidations should be allocated out to the private sector.

Discussions are being conducted with the Insolvency Practitioners Committee of the Hong Kong Society of Accountants to form an administrative panel of experience insolvency practitioners to do this work. The scheme should come into operation later this year.

Total funds administered in the Companies Liquidation Account was $2,749 million and in Bankruptcy was $102 million. Note to Editors:

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Most improved students award scheme invites nominations

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Hard working and best performed Secondary 2 and 3 students will have an opportunity to win prizes in the Most Improved Students Award Scheme.

The Education Department is appealing to all school principals to nominate their outstanding students who, as a result of their hard work and perseverance, have attained the best all-round improvement in performance over the past school year.

The annual event, which is open to all types of secondary schools, including government, aided, private and special schools, is aimed at encouraging junior secondary students to fully develop their individual potential.

Awardees will each be presented with an award certificate, a most improved student pin and a $600 cash prize.

The winner of awards will be limited to two for each participating school, one for a student who has completed secondary 2 and the other for a student who has completed secondary 3.

Completed nomination forms should reach the Careers and Guidance Services Section of the Education Department on or before November 18, 1995.

All nominees are judged by their academic and conduct improvements as well as enthusiasm in participating in extra-curricular activities.

The scheme is jointly organised by the Education Department and the Sing Tao Foundation.

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14 pre-sale consent applications approved in 3rd quarter

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The Lands Department has approved a total of 14 applications for consent to pre-sale of residential and non-residential units in uncompleted developments during the quarter ending September 30.

Of the applications, 12 are for the pre-sale of a total of 2,065 residential units. These units, located in the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, Kwai Tsing, North, Tai Po, Tsuen Wan and Yuen Long districts, are estimated by the developers to be completed between September this year and May next year.

The other two are for the pre-sale of non-residential units located in Kowloon and Kwai Tsing districts.

In addition, three consents to assign residential units were approved where occupation permits have been issued involving 5,220 units in Hong Kong Island.

A total of 13 Deeds of Mutual Covenant and four Sub-deeds of Mutual Covenant for residential or non-residential developments were also approved during the quarter.

At the end of September, a total of 15 applications for pre-sale consent involving 8,137 residential units, and 11 applications in respect of non-residential developments are pending for approval. These developments are located in a variety of districts throughout the territory and the majority are estimated to be completed next year.

Since the new measures for pre-sale were introduced by the Government in June last year, consent has been given to 16,485 residential units including two Private Sector Participation Scheme projects (involving a total of 3,420 units) and one sandwich class housing development (involving 1,024 units), which are not subject to new measures.

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Contract for new airport radar system awarded

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The Secretary for the Treasury, on the advice of the Central Tender Board, has approved the award of an Airport Core Programme (ACP) contract for the supply and installation of a surface movement radar system for the new airport at Chek Lap Kok.

The contract, valued at $38 million, has been awarded to Norcontrol System a.s. of Norway by the Civil Aviation Department.

The company will be responsible for the supply and installation of the surface movement radar system which will provide air traffic controllers with a continuous, reliable and accurate picture of all moving and stationary objects, including aircraft and vehicles on the runways, taxiways and aprons under all weather conditions.

Work will start later this month for completion in early 1997.

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Buildings Department to remove illegal metal cage

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The Building Authority today (Tuesday) declared that an unauthorised metal cage mounted on the external wall of a premises at Kin Tai House in Wan Hon Street, Kwun Tong will be be demolished for public safety reasons.

The Buildings Department posted a Notice of Intention at the premises today informing the property owner that a Closure Order would be applied from the Hong Kong District Court at 9.30 am on November 28, 1995.

The Chief Building Surveyor (Control) of the department, Mr Leung Shiu-hong, said the illegal metal cage, protruding from the second floor, was posing a danger to both the residents and the public.

Mr Leung said the Closure Order was part of a large- scale clearance operation mounted by the Buildings Department early last year to tackle unauthorised building works (UBW) at Kin Tai House.

A total of 45 Removal Orders were served on the building's owners in August this year. They were asked to demolish their illegal structures, including metal cages, canopies and flower racks, within a period of two months.

"All the affected owners, except one on the second floor, abided by the orders and have removed their unauthorised structures," Mr Leung said.

"In order to enforce the Removal Order against the second floor UBW, we will apply for a Closure Order from the Court so that Government contractors can commence the demolition work on the owner's behalf.

"The owner is liable to prosecution under the Buildings Ordinance if he fails to abide by the Removal Order by November 28. The demolition cost will also be recovered in full from him," Mr Leung added.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

No mail services during Chung Yeung Festival

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The acting Postmaster General, Miss Nancy Law, announced today (Tuesday) that there would be no mail delivery during the Chung Yeung Festival (November 1).

All post offices will be closed on that day.

End/Tuesday, October 24, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

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Tender date	24 Oct 95	24 Oct 95
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q543	H576
Amount applied	HK$5,720 MN	HK$3,695 MN
Amount allotted	HK$1,500 MN	HK$800 MN
Average yield accepted	5.56 PCT	5.62 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.57 PCT	5.62 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 3 PCT	About 39 PCT
Average tender yield	5.58 PCT	5.63 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning October 30, 1995

Tender date	31 Oct 95	31 Oct 95
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q544	Y595
Issue date	2 Nov 95	2 Nov 95
Maturity date	31 Jan 96	30 Oct 96
Tenor	90 days	363 days
Amount on offer	HK$1,500+300 MN	HK$500+150 MN

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change ($million)
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Opening balance in the account	2,476	0930	+702
Closing balance in the account	1,655	1000	+700
Change attributable to :		1100	+700
Money market activity	+700	1200	+700
LAF today	-1,521	1500	+700
		1600	+700

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 121.7 *+0.0* 24.10.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.31	2 years	2708	6.06	100.35	5.93
1 month	5.41	3 years	3810	6.15	99.87	6.29
3 months	5.55	5 years	5009	6.95	100.63	6.91
6 months	5.61	5 years	M501	7.90	102.66	7.34
12 months	5.68					

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - $21,446 million

Closed October 24, 1995

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