



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Transcript of the Governor's media session

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Following is the transcript of the media session by the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, after attending the Annual Inspection of the Correctional Services Department this (Tuesday) afternoon:

Governor: I am very pleased to have been able to attend another of the Correctional Services Department's parades. They do an excellent job. They have an excellent record and I am very pleased to be able to pay tribute to them today.

Question: Governor, is it that the Government is going to shelve the Broadcasting Bill?

Governor: We are considering our priorities in legislation. There are something which are more urgent within the broadcasting area than others and obviously we want to make sure that we have the maximum discussions with the community and with the Legislative Council about matters which aren't of urgent priority while getting on with the real priority areas, for example those aspects of broadcasting which need to be brought into line with the Bill of Rights and our obligations under the international covenants. Those things have obviously got to take priority at the moment.

Question: But the Consumer Council is taking initiative to suggest there should be changes like a one policy secretary to co-ordinate the whole broadcasting policy in the Government.

Governor: Well, it will be interesting to hear the discussion and debate about the Consumer Council's report. They always make an important contribution to public discussion and I'm sure that the Legislative Council will want to consider their thoughts.

Question: How important is the China...?

Governor: You've had two. Let's have somebody else.

Question: How important is the China factor affecting the Broadcasting Bill?

Governor: It's not.

Question: How is the Government going to deal with the serious gambling situation in the prison?

Governor: I think that's principally a matter for the Commissioner himself, but obviously there is a distinction between whether or not officers, members of the Correctional Services Department or Police officers are gambling in a way which runs up debts or whether on the other hand the inmates, those who are in prison, are running up debts and that's a matter for the day-to-day management of the Correctional Services Department. And I am sure the Commissioner will be very happy to answer that question later on.

Question: The question of ethnic minority was discussed today in ExCo. Are you any more optimistic that there might be a resolution ... ?

Governor: It wasn't actually discussed in the ExCo, but we received a petition from a group of Hong Kong citizens representing the ethnic minorities. As you know, it's a case and the course which I've pressed with ministers and other politicians in the United Kingdom and with the media, and we'll continue to do so and I hope that before July 1, 1997, we'll have seen some more progress on that.

Question: The LegCo is going to move a motion requesting Britain to grant visa-free to SAR passport holders. Do you have any news from your colleagues in the British cabinet on this issue?

Governor: The first thing that needed to happen was to get an agreement with Chinese officials about the SAR passport itself and I am delighted that we achieved that just before Mr Rifkind's visit to Peking. As Mr Rifkind said at the time, having got that agreement with Chinese officials we can now discuss with the British Government the question of visa-free access for SAR passport holders to the United Kingdom. I noticed the other day that Director Lu in some remarks he made seemed to be less optimistic about the number of countries which would offer visa-free access. I hope that's not correct. I think that we must obviously do all we can, working together -- Britain, China and the Hong Kong Government -- to get as much visa-free access as possible. Hong Kong is an international community. Travel into and out of Hong Kong is an exceptional important both for business reasons and in order to enhance people's well-being and maintain their confidence. So I very much hope that a number of countries, including of course, the United Kingdom, will offer visa-free access. I argued for it publicly when I was in the United Kingdom last Autumn including in television programmes. And I hope that will help to convince the British Government. Thank you very much.

End

Video control and pay TV deregulation are top priorities

* * * * *

The Recreation and Culture Branch is set to give top priority to drawing up regulatory proposals for Video-on-Demand (VOD) services and completing the review on the deregulation of pay television market before Wharf Cable's exclusivity expires at the end of May.

This was stated by the Secretary for Recreation and Culture, Mr T H Chau, today (Tuesday) at a press conference reviewing various tasks on the broadcasting front in the year ahead.

Mr Chau said given the declared intention of Hong Kong Telecom to introduce VOD services in July, it was clearly necessary for the Government to put in place a regulatory framework as soon as possible.

VOD, he said, would enable subscribers to call up films and television programmes on to the screen as well as to use other services such as home banking and home shopping.

"It is important that we facilitate this development, while considering its impact on the market, and meeting the legitimate expectations of people that the content should be properly regulated," he said.

Mr Chau hoped to publish the regulatory proposals in late February or early March and to amend the Television Ordinance before the end of the current legislative session.

Completing the review of the deregulation of the pay television market is Mr Chau's second priority.

The Recreation and Culture Branch has already completed a comprehensive fact-finding exercise to which all broadcasters were given an opportunity to contribute, and is now studying the results of that process.

"We hope to consult the Executive Council on proposals which will be published in a consultative paper, either in March or April, and to announce the outcome of the review before the end of May 1996," said Mr Chau.

Subsequent to the decision to proceed expeditiously with these two tasks, the Secretary said it would not be practicable to continue work on the Broadcasting Bill, pointing out that spending time on the Bill would make it more difficult to complete the higher priority tasks.

The Broadcasting Bill is primarily intended to be a consolidating bill, bringing the broadcasting provisions currently found in the Television Ordinance and Telecommunication Ordinance into one law, and creating a non-technological basis for licensing.

"It is a highly complex piece of legislation, and it is more important that we get it right," he stressed.

"We had intended that the Bill would amend Section 13C of the Telecommunication Ordinance, to bring it into line with the Bill of Rights Ordinance. This remains a high priority."

To avoid unnecessary delay, this will now be tackled together with other proposed amendments to the Ordinance, to be introduced after the Law Reform Commission has completed its scrutiny of the legislation.

Commenting on the recently-completed Consumer Council's report on broadcasting which was undertaken at the request of the Government, Mr Chau said he would give careful consideration to the recommendations as well as comments made by other interested parties.

He undertook to release the Government's considered response within six months.

End

Criticism on Broadcasting Bill refuted

* * * * *

The Secretary for Recreation and Culture, Mr T H Chau, today (Tuesday) refuted Democratic Party criticisms that suspending work on the Broadcasting Bill would harm competitiveness and prevent Hong Kong from keeping pace with technology.

Mr Chau pointed out that, on the contrary, unless priority was given to pay television review and regulating video-on-demand, it would not be possible to bring the legislation up-to-date with new technologies, or to promote competition in the pay television market.

"It was absurd to suggest that, because priority was being given to more important tasks, we were appeasing China," he said.

On Democratic Party proposals to draft a private member's bill amending Section 13C of the Telecommunication Ordinance, Mr Chau pointed out that the Government was already committed to amending this provision.

"When I announced plans to suspend work on the Broadcasting Bill earlier today, I had said that, as amending Section 13C was a priority task, it would be done in advance of the Broadcasting Bill, by tackling it together with other amendments to the Telecommunication Ordinance.

"These amendments would be considered in the light of the Law Reform Commission's report due in March and public consultation thereafter," he added.

End

New Lantao Bus fare increase approved by ExCo

* * * * *

The Governor-in-Council, today (Tuesday) approved a 10.4 per cent fare increase for New Lantao Bus (NLB) to take effect from February 1.

NLB last revised its fares about two and a half years ago in September 1993. With increasing operating costs, it would incur a loss in 1996-97 if fares remain unchanged.

A government spokesman said: "NLB has been providing an efficient bus service on Lantau Island. It has also taken measures to reduce costs.

"The fare increase will enable the company to meet rising operating costs and encourage it to make further service improvements.

"An increase of 10.4 per cent in fares is well below the estimated inflation of 22 per cent between NLB's last fare increase and the coming increase in February 1996. The impact of the increase on general inflation is minimal."

End

Relieving prison overcrowding a top priority: Governor

* * * * *

The Government attaches high priority to the problem of overcrowding in Correctional Services Department's (CSD) institutions, the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten, said this (Tuesday) afternoon.

Speaking at the department's annual inspection, Mr Patten said: "Overcrowding affects not just those in custody: it affects the staff who manage the institutions, increasing workloads, straining resources and morale.

"We are giving these problems urgent attention too, seeking to improve the situation whenever suitable opportunities arise."

A redevelopment project at Stanley Prison will provide 700 places by 1998. There will be an additional 250 places when the Chi Ma Wan Lower Detention Centre is converted into a female drug addiction treatment centre later this year.

A site search for new accommodation is also under way to help solve the problem.

Turning to the management of Vietnamese migrant detention centres, Mr Patten said significant progress had been made since the Comprehensive Plan of Action was implemented in 1989.

Over 46,000 migrants have returned home voluntarily, and another 1,700 through the orderly return programme.

The success achieved, the Governor noted, owed much to the professional and effective restraint as well as the bravery and skill of the CSD staff.

The Governor also commended the department's preventive and rehabilitative programmes, which help young people to turn away from crime, and expressed gratitude to the staff for their dedicated service to the community.

End

Consumer price indices for December 1995

* * * * *

Consumer price inflation in terms of Consumer Price Index (A) eased further to 6.6% in December 1995, from 8.9% in September, 8.4% in October and 8.2% in November, according to the latest Consumer Price Indices (CPI) released by the Census and Statistics Department today (Tuesday).

Moderation was also recorded in the Consumer Price Index (B) and the Hang Seng CPI. In December 1995, CPI(B) and the Hang Seng CPI rose by 7.3% and 7.9% respectively, compared with 8.3% and 8.9% in November.

The Composite CPI, which is compiled based on the combined expenditure pattern of all households, thus had a less rapid year-on-year increase of 7.2% in December, against 8.4% in November.

A government spokesman said this was the third consecutive month when the rate of consumer price inflation in Hong Kong fell. The moderation was broadly based.

Apart from decreases in the prices of vegetables and of some Chinese newspapers, slower price increases were also recorded in most of the other components in CPI(A), including the prices of other foodstuffs, the prices of outer-clothing and housing rentals.

Analysed by component, those components with faster price increases than the overall average for December 1995 over December 1994 were housing (10.7% in CPI(A), 11% in CPI(B) and 11.9% in the Composite CPI); and miscellaneous services (10.4%, 9.4% and 9.1%).

Meanwhile, those components with relatively slower price increases than the overall average for December 1995 over December 1994 were food (excluding meals bought away from home) (2.7% in CPI(A), 3.5% in CPI(B) and 3.2% in the Composite CPI); durable goods (4%, 3.7% and 3.9%); alcoholic drinks and tobacco (5.5%, 5.4% and 5.5%); and fuel and light (5.6%, 5.6% and 5.4%).

The miscellaneous goods category recorded a price decline for December 1995 over December 1994 (-3.6% in CPI(A), -0.7% in CPI(B) and -1.4% in the Composite CPI). This was mainly due to a large cut in the prices of some Chinese newspapers last month.

Comparing December 1995 with November 1995, CPI(A) and CPI(B) decreased by 0.4% and 0.2% respectively. The corresponding decrease for the Composite CPI was 0.3%.

For the three months ended December 1995, CPI(A) and CPI(B) were, on average, higher by 7.7% and 8.1% respectively over a year earlier. The corresponding increase for the Composite CPI was 8.2%.

For 1995 as a whole, CPI(A) and CPI(B) were, on average, higher by 8.7% and 9.2% respectively than in 1994. The corresponding increase for the Composite CPI was 9.1%.

Seasonally adjusted series are also available for the CPIs. The deseasonalised CPI(A) and CPI(B) increased at average rates of 0.1% and 0.3% per month during the three months ended December 1995. The corresponding increase for the Composite CPI was 0.3%.

Further details are shown in Tables 1 and 2 and Charts 1 to 4.

More details are given in the Consumer Price Index Report for December 1995, which is on sale at \$23 per copy from the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, Low Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

It is also available at the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

For local and overseas mailings, contact should be made with the Information Services Department, 28th floor, Siu On Centre, 188 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

For enquiries about the indices, please telephone the Consumer Price Index Section of the Census and Statistics Department at 2805 6403.

Details regarding the Hang Seng CPI are contained in the Hang Seng CPI Report issued by the Economic Research Department of Hang Seng Bank Ltd.

Table 1 Consumer Price Indices and Rates of Increase for December 1995
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

Component	CPI(A)		CPI(B)		Hang Seng CPI		Composite CPI	
	Index for Dec 95	% change over Dec 94	Index for Dec 95	% change over Dec 94	Index for Dec 95	% change over Dec 94	Index for Dec 95	% change over Dec 94
Food	152.8	+4.8	155.1	+5.4	156.9	+4.1	154.5	+4.9
Meals bought away from home	165.2	+6.7	164.7	+6.5	164.6	+4.2	164.9	+6.1
Food, excluding meals bought away from home	140.6	+2.7	141.9	+3.5	143.7	+4.0	141.6	+3.2
Housing	193.2	+10.7	198.1	+11.0	207.4	+14.1	199.5	+11.9
Fuel and light	135.1	+5.6	134.6	+5.6	133.0	+4.3	134.5	+5.4
Alcoholic drinks and tobacco	200.5	+5.5	189.7	+5.4	184.1	+5.3	194.4	+5.5
Clothing and footwear	156.2	+6.8	159.4	+7.5	171.3	+3.5	162.7	+5.9
Durable goods	118.7	+4.0	118.4	+3.7	124.9	+4.1	120.4	+3.9
Miscellaneous goods	133.9	-3.6	133.3	-0.7	133.7	+1.0	133.6	-1.4
Transport	161.5	+7.0	160.6	+7.3	158.2	+6.1	160.2	+6.9
Miscellaneous services	186.1	+10.4	177.8	+9.4	162.7	+7.4	175.9	+9.1
All items	163.1	+6.6	165.5	+7.3	170.6	+7.9	165.9	+7.2

Monthly consumer price indices are compiled on the basis of (a) expenditure patterns of relevant households and (b) prices collected currently in the month. The expenditure patterns underlying the 1989/90-based consumer price indices are based on those patterns derived from the 1989/90 Household Expenditure Survey. The CPI(A) is based on the expenditure pattern of about 50% of households in Hong Kong, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$2,500-\$9,999 in 1989/90 (broadly equivalent to \$3,900-\$16,000 at 1995 prices). The CPI(B) is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 30% of households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$10,000-\$17,499 in 1989/90 (broadly equivalent to \$16,000-\$28,500 at 1995 prices). The Hang Seng CPI is based on the expenditure pattern of the next 10% of households, which had an average monthly expenditure of \$17,500-\$37,499 in 1989/90 (broadly equivalent to \$28,500-\$61,000 at 1995 prices).

Whereas the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI are based on the expenditure patterns of groups of households with different magnitudes of household expenditure, the Composite CPI is compiled based on the expenditure pattern of all these households taken together. Thus, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and Hang Seng CPI show the impact of consumer price changes on different groups of households, the Composite CPI shows the impact of consumer price changes on the household sector generally.

Table 2 Consumer Price Indices for December 1992 - December 1995
(Oct. 89 - Sep. 90 = 100)

<u>Year/month</u>	<u>CPI(A)</u>	<u>CPI(B)</u>	<u>Hanq Seng CPI</u>	<u>Composite CPI</u>
1992 December	129.3	129.8	130.0	129.7
1993 January	131.8	131.6	131.5	131.7
February	132.4	132.2	132.0	132.2
March	132.0	132.2	133.1	132.4
April	133.5	133.9	134.5	133.9
May	134.5	134.8	136.3	135.1
June	136.0	135.9	137.1	136.3
July	135.8	136.1	136.9	136.2
August	136.3	136.6	137.4	136.7
September	138.4	138.3	139.2	138.6
October	140.0	139.6	140.7	140.0
November	139.4	139.9	142.2	140.3
December	140.4	140.9	143.3	141.3
1994 January	140.0	140.7	143.4	141.1
February	142.7	142.9	144.9	143.3
March	142.5	143.0	145.3	143.4
April	143.8	144.8	147.9	145.2
May	145.0	146.1	150.0	146.7
June	146.2	146.9	151.0	147.7
July	147.3	147.9	150.5	148.3
August	149.6	149.6	151.7	150.1
September	150.3	150.8	153.4	151.3
October	151.1	152.2	155.3	152.6
November	151.4	153.1	157.3	153.5
December	153.0	154.3	158.1	154.8
1995 January	154.1	155.3	158.2	155.6
February	155.4	156.6	159.0	156.7
March	156.1	157.4	159.7	157.5
April	157.6	159.2	162.3	159.4
May	158.1	159.9	164.2	160.4
June	159.2	161.1	165.6	161.6
July	159.8	161.5	165.7	161.9
August	162.0	163.1	166.6	163.6
September	163.7	164.5	168.5	165.2
October	163.8	165.6	170.0	166.1
November	163.8	165.8	171.2	166.5
December	163.1	165.5	170.6	165.9

Chart 1 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in CPI(A)

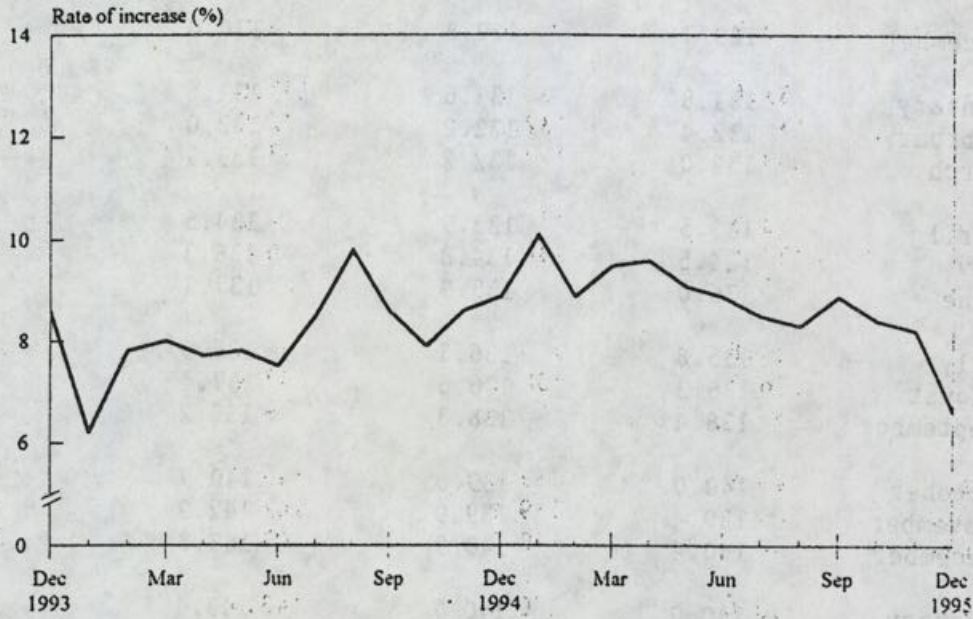


Chart 2 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in CPI(B)

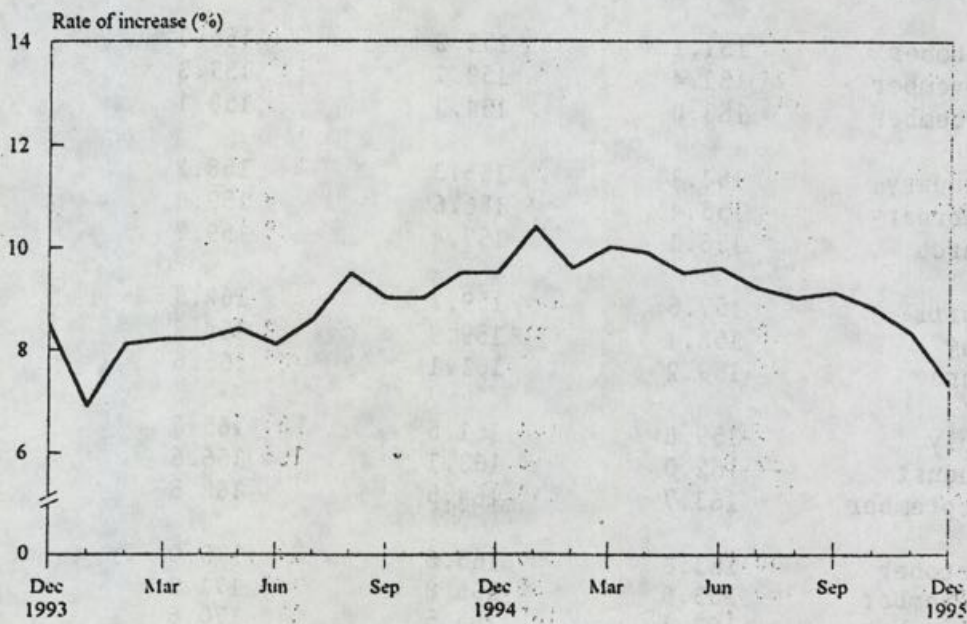


Chart 3 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in Hang Seng CPI

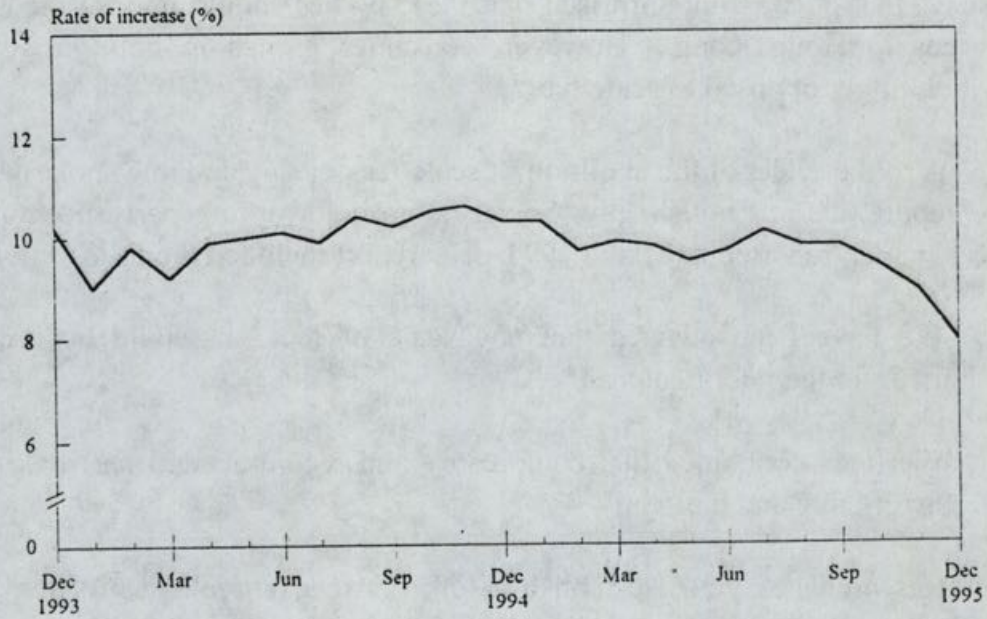
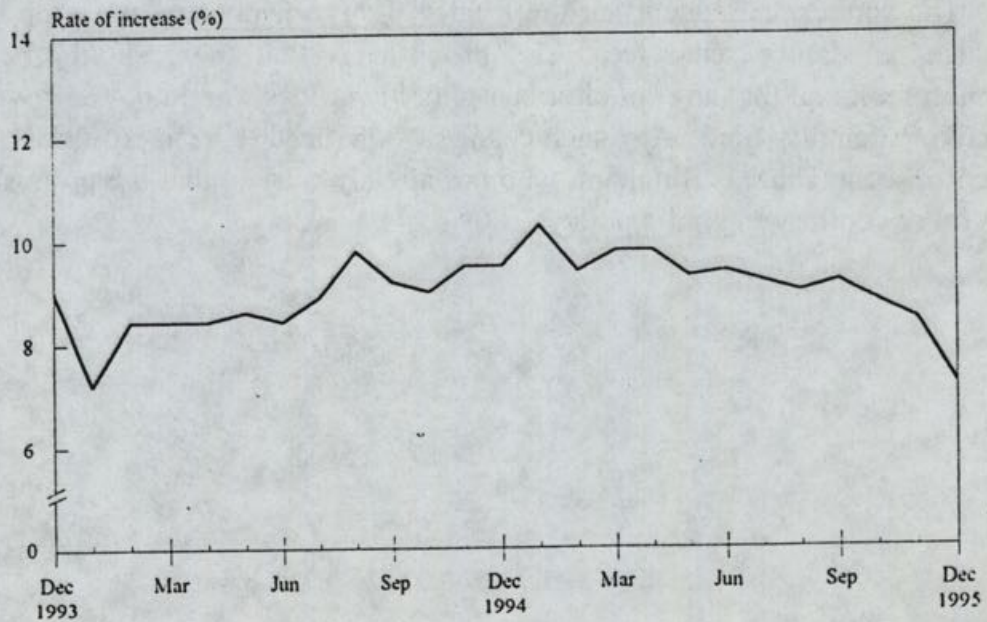


Chart 4 Year-on-year Rates of Increase
in Composite CPI



Abolition of scale fees

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In response to comments made by the Law Societies of England and Hong Kong in defence of scale fees, a spokesman for the Legal Department said today (Tuesday) that he was not surprised that these bodies should oppose the abolition of scale fees in Hong Kong. However, consumer groups in both jurisdictions are overwhelmingly opposed to scale fees.

As to the effect of the abolition of scale fees in England, the spokesman pointed to the report of the English Law Society's special working party on conveyancing services, which reported in March 1994. The report included the following findings:

"We have been advised that any scale of fees.....would be impossible to justify in the public interest"

"We have concluded that compulsory and recommended fee scales would be unworkable and ineffective"

"Research has yet to establish a link between unrealistically low prices and higher-than-average levels of complaints or indemnity claims."

Since then, some English solicitors have been trying to establish such a link but, in the recent words of the past chairman of the special working party, "Despite extensive research no conclusive connection has been found between low cost conveyancing and negligence."

The spokesman added that the English Law Society was not proposing to re-introduce mandatory scale fees. Its proposal is that there should be guideline minimum fees, and that any solicitor charging lower fees should not be covered by the collective indemnity fund. Any such change would need to be approved by the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Bingham, who has already warned that the proposals may be unlawful or contrary to public policy.

End

New Buildings Department heads appointed

* * * * *

The Government today (Tuesday) announced that Principal Government Civil Engineer of the Civil Engineering Department, Dr Choi Yu-leuk, has been selected to succeed Mrs Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping as Director of Buildings from January 29 when Mrs Yu takes up the post of the Director of Education.

The Government also announced the appointment of Assistant Director of Buildings, Mr Cheng Wei-dart, as Deputy Director of Buildings - a new post approved by the Finance Committee on January 19.

In making the announcement, a government spokesman said merits of all professional officers at D3/DL3 and D4 ranks in the Planning, Environment and Lands Branch and Works Branch and their groups of departments, as well as professional officers at the D2 rank in the Buildings Department, had been considered.

Dr Choi and Mr Cheng are identified as the most suitable candidates for these jobs.

Following are biographical notes of Dr Choi, Mr Cheng and Mrs Yu:

Dr Choi Yu-leuk

Aged 56, Dr Choi is the Principal Government Civil Engineer in the Civil Engineering Department. He first joined the civil service as an Apprentice Engineer in 1960.

He was promoted to Chief Engineer (D1) in April 1978, to Government Engineer (D2) in March 1985 and to Principal Government Engineer (D3) in January 1992.

He had extensive experience in engineering gained in four government departments and one secretariat branch, and in management issues, most recently as the Deputy Director (D3) of the Territory Development Department.

Mr Cheng Wei-dart

Aged 54, Mr Cheng is an Assistant Director of Buildings. He joined the civil service as a temporary clerk in July 1963 before his appointment as a temporary Survey Assistant (Buildings) in December 1963.

He rose up to the rank of Chief Building Surveyor (D1) in February 1980 and to Government Building Surveyor (D2) in February 1985. He has long experience in his department in a wide range of responsibilities.

Mrs Yu Lai Ching-ping

Aged 54, Mrs Yu is the Director of Buildings. She first joined the civil service in 1965 and the Administrative Grade in 1968.

She rose to her present rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in February 1995. She was appointed the first Director of Buildings in January 1994 following the re-constitution of the then Buildings and Lands Department into the Buildings Department and the Lands Department.

End

Appointment of Efficiency Unit Head

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) the appointment of Mr Colin Sankey as Head of the Efficiency Unit in Government Secretariat.

The post was vacated when the former Head of the unit, Mr Robert Footman, was appointed as Postmaster General. Mr Sankey was selected for the post of Head, Efficiency Unit through in-service competition.

Mr Sankey was Deputy Head of the Efficiency Unit and has been acting as Head of the unit since November 20, 1995.

Following is a brief biographical note of Mr Sankey -

Mr Sankey, aged 51, joined the Government as a Treasury Accountant in 1974. He has worked in a number of branches including the Economic Services Branch and Finance Branch. He was promoted to his present rank of Principal Assistant Financial Secretary in 1986. He was appointed as Deputy Head of the Efficiency Unit in May 1992 when the unit was first set up.

End

Residential mortgage survey results for December 1995

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Residential mortgage loans for the purchase of properties in Hong Kong grew at a higher rate in December, according to the results of the latest monthly survey conducted by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA).

The latest figures show that the total amount of outstanding mortgage lending by the 33 institutions covered in the survey grew by 1.4% in December (1.2% in November) to \$272.7 billion. (The percentage change has been adjusted to allow for sale and reclassification of loans by some institutions amounting to \$0.6 billion during the month). The growth rate is above the monthly average of 1.2% over the last 12 months.

"The higher rate of loan growth in December largely reflects the drawdown of loans associated with the increased property transactions in the preceding month," said the Deputy Chief Executive (Banking) of HKMA, Mr David Carse.

The annualised rate of growth in lending over the last three months fell to 13.5% from 14.4% in the three-month period to November. The 12-month average of outstanding loans showed an annualised growth rate of 15.0%, compared with 14.2% in November.

The amount of new loans approved but not yet drawn decreased by \$1.7 billion (24.6%) to \$5.3 billion in December. "These figures suggest that trading activity in the property market slowed somewhat in the month and hence the outstanding residential mortgage loans in January should grow at a reduced rate," said Mr Carse.

Lending for the purchase of properties in China increased by 0.5% to \$5.3 billion in December. Gross loans made in December decreased both in number (to 131 from 186) and in amount (to \$118 million from \$138 million). New loans approved in December also decreased both in number (to 222 from 255) and in amount (to \$131 million from \$145 million).

**Residential Mortgage Loans in Hong Kong
Results of Survey for December 1995**

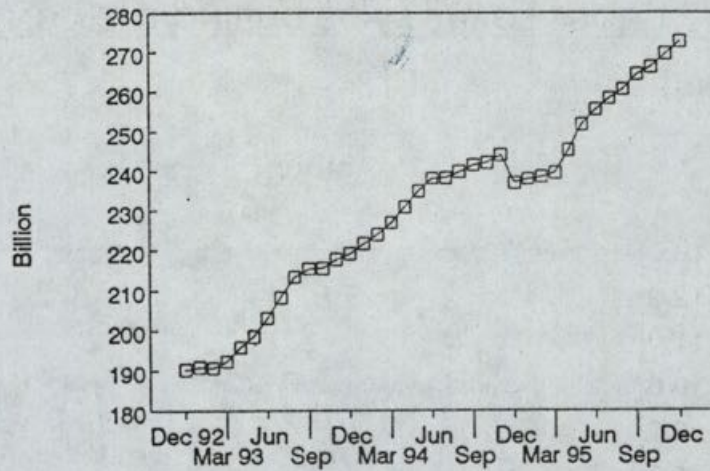
	Dec 1995 HK\$ Mn	Nov 1995 HK\$ Mn
<u>33 authorised institutions</u>		
1. <u>Outstanding lending</u>		
a. Amount	272,695	269,589
b. Monthly change	1.4% **	1.2%
c. Twelve-month change	14.9% **	14.1%
d. Average change (annualized)		
Latest three months	13.5% **	14.4%
Latest twelve months	15.0% **	14.2%
2. <u>Gross loans made during month</u>		
a. Amount	9,356	7,835
b. Number	6957	5392
3. <u>New loans approved during month</u>		
a. Amount	8,530	10,095
b. Number	6189	7142
4. <u>New loans approved during month but not yet drawn</u>		
a. Amount	5,323	7,061
b. Number	3854	4984

Note : ** Adjusted for the effect of sale and reclassification of residential mortgage loans by some institutions amounting to HK\$0.6 billion.

Chart A

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG
(33 institutions)

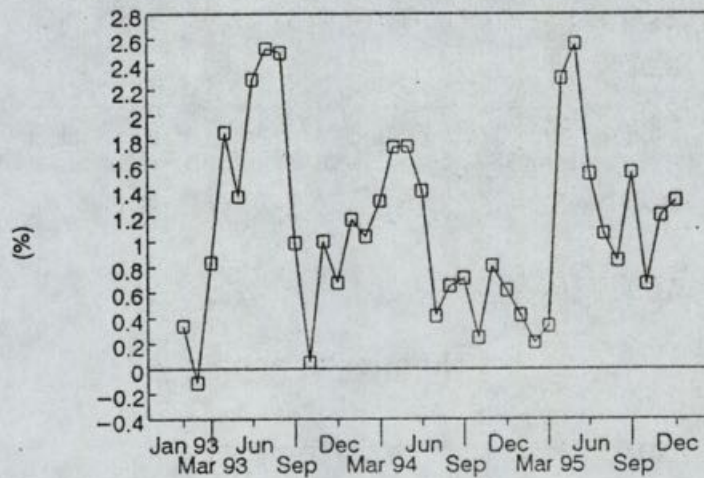
Outstanding balance at end of month



A1

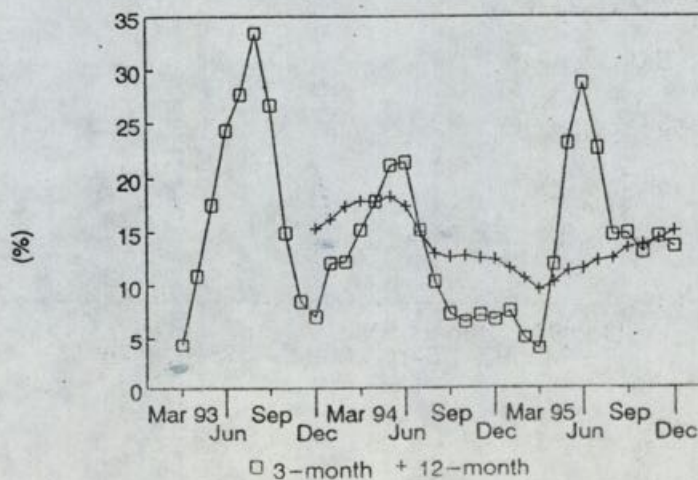
Remarks : The significant fall of outstanding balance in December 1994 was due to the effect of reclassification, securitization and sale of loans by some institutions.

Monthly growth rate



A2

3-month and 12-month moving average growth rate on annualised basis



A3

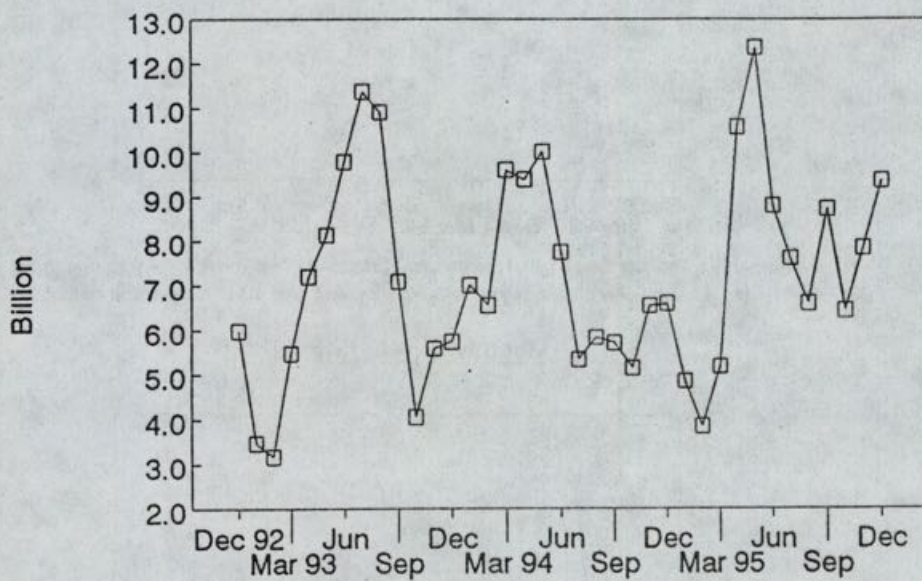
□ 3-month + 12-month

Chart B

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG
(33 institutions)

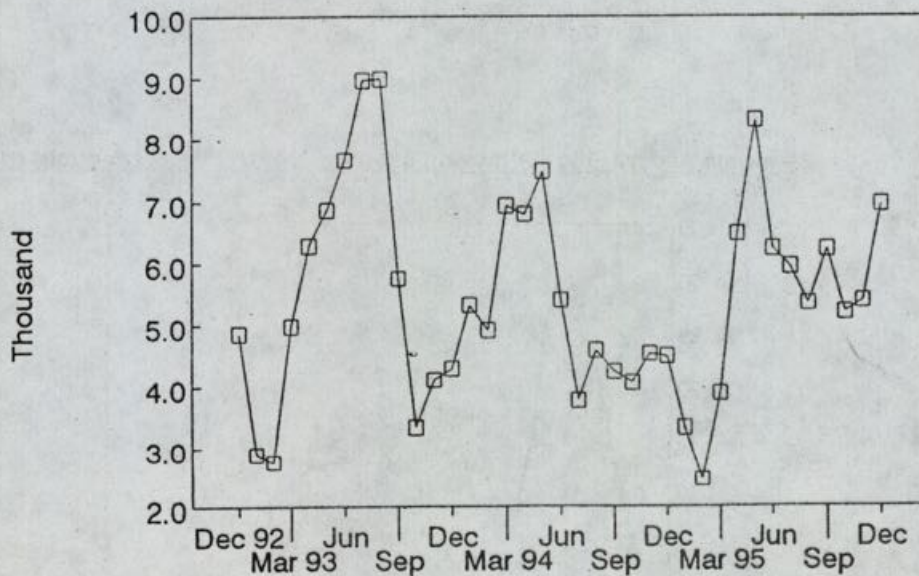
GROSS LOANS MADE DURING THE MONTH

Amount



B1

Number of accounts



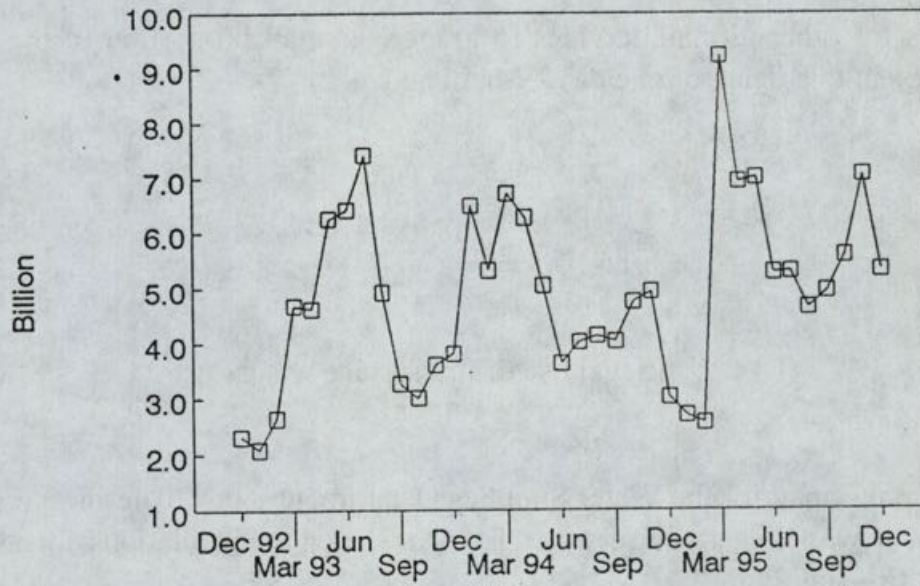
B2

Chart C

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG
(33 institutions)

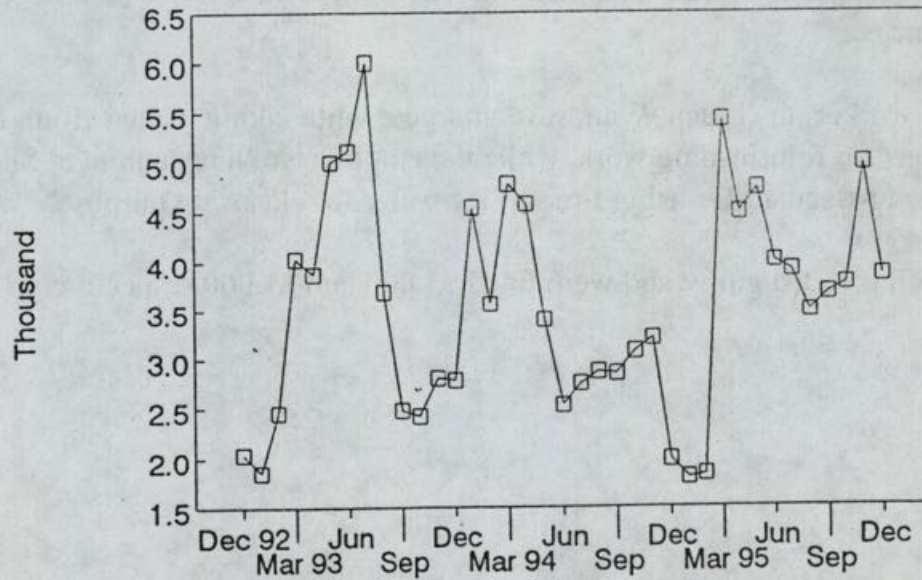
NEW LOANS APPROVED BUT NOT YET DRAWN

Amount



C1

Number of accounts



C2

Speedpost service to France back to normal

* * * * *

The acting Assistant Postmaster General (Postal Services), Mr Kingsley Li, announced today (Tuesday) that the Speedpost service to France, which was subject to delay due to the public administration and transport strike in the country in December 1995, is now back to normal.

"As for other airmail services to France, a small proportion of the items may still be subject to a delay of one day," Mr Li added.

End

Illegal use of fire service water

* * * * *

A spokesman for the Water Supplies Department today (Tuesday) reminded the public that it was illegal to use water from fire service installations for any purpose other than fire-fighting.

"Offenders will be prosecuted and are liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000," he said.

The spokesman was commenting on two recent court cases which involved such offences.

A worker in Tsuen Wan was charged with taking water from fire service installations for refurbishing work, while the employee of a restaurant at Shek Kip Mei Estate was prosecuted for using fire service water for cleansing purpose.

Both pleaded guilty and were fined \$3,000 and \$1,000 respectively.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

* * * * *

Tender date	23 Jan 1996	23 Jan 1996
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q604	Y685
Issue date	24 Jan 1996	24 Jan 1996
Maturity date	24 Apr 1996	22 Jan 1997
Coupon	---	---
Amount applied	HK\$5,050 MN	HK\$1,520 MN
Amount allotted	HK\$1,500 MN	HK\$500 MN
Average yield accepted	5.36 PCT	5.19 PCT
Highest yield accepted	5.37 PCT	5.20 PCT
Pro rata ratio	About 5 PCT	About 17 PCT
Average tender yield	5.39 PCT	5.20 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Tenders to be held in the week beginning January 29, 1996

Tender date	30 Jan 1996	30 Jan 1996
Paper on offer	EF bills	EF bills
Issue number	Q605	H657
Issue date	31 Jan 1996	31 Jan 1996
Maturity date	1 May 1996	31 Jul 1996
Tenor	91 days	182 days
Amount on offer	HK\$1,500+300 MN	HK\$800+160 MN
End		

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
	-----	-----	-----
Opening balance in the account	2,361	0930	-358
Closing balance in the account	1,718	1000	-59
Change attributable to :		1100	-59
Money market activity	-117	1200	-65
LAF today	-526	1500	-65
		1600	-117

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 123.8 *-0.1* 23.1.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.48	2 years	2711	5.60	100.67	5.27
1 month	5.44	3 years	3901	5.57	100.38	5.50
3 months	5.37	5 years	5012	6.38	102.34	5.91
6 months	5.31	7 years	7211	6.82	103.85	6.21
12 months	5.19	5 years	M502	7.30	104.97	6.18

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$21,643 million

Closed January 23, 1996

End