



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Promotions in the Administrative Service

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The Government announced today (Tuesday) the following promotions in the Administrative Service with effect from January 1, 1997 :

To the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A

Present Post

Robert Footman	Postmaster General
Shelley Lau	Director of Home Affairs
Fanny Law	On secondment to assist Mr Tung Chee Hwa
Chris Jackson	Minister, HK Economic and Trade Office, Washington
Alan Lai	Director-General of Trade

To the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1

Present Post

Leo Kwan	Deputy Secretary for Economic Services
Leung Chin-man	Director, HK Economic and Trade Office, Toronto
Pamela Tan	Director, Mandatory Provident Fund Office
Thomas Chan	Director, HK Economic and Trade Office, San Francisco
Rita Lau	Deputy Secretary for Broadcasting, Culture and Sport
Stella Hung	Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs
Kevin Ho	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury
Carrie Yau	Deputy Secretary for Security
Matthew Cheung	Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower
Francis Ho	Director-General of Industry
Sandra Lee	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service
John Tsang	Private Secretary, Government House

To the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B

Present Post

Nicholas Yek	Deputy Judiciary Administrator
Eddy Chan	Commissioner, Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority
Lolly Chiu	Policy and Administration Co-ordinator, Legal Aid Dept
Sarah Wu	Deputy Judiciary Administrator
Simon Lord	Clerk to the Executive Council
Andrew Wells	Deputy Secretary for Housing
Isaac Chow	Deputy Secretary for Transport
Anissa Wong	Deputy Director-General of Industry
Mike Arnold	Principal Assistant Secretary for Economic Services
Janet Wong	Administrative Assistant to Chief Secretary
Kim Salkeld	Director of Community Relations, ICAC
Carrie Lam	Deputy Private Secretary, Government House
Andrew Wong	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury

End

Policy on rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners

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Penal institutions in Hong Kong provide a disciplined but humane environment where inmates can receive appropriate counselling, where they can receive educational and vocational training, and where they can prepare themselves to return to society after release.

The Secretary for Security, Mr Peter Lai, said this today (Tuesday) at the opening ceremony of the Pacific Rim Regional Conference on "Reintegration of Discharged Prisoners: Rehabilitation, Employment and Prevention of Recidivism".

Mr Lai said that the two major aspects of the Government's penal policy were rehabilitation and aftercare service.

On rehabilitation, he said that all inmates in Hong Kong's penal institutions could receive education or training in one form or another.

"Young inmates are required to attend classes daily; adult inmates may also pursue an education by taking evening classes or self-study courses. Some of them have obtained impressive results in local and overseas examinations," he said.

In addition to education, the Government also provides opportunities for work in penal institutions.

Mr Lai said that all adult inmates carried out some kind of work, such as printing, laundry, and gardening.

"The objective is to keep them engaged in meaningful work, so that they can focus their mind on constructive activities.

"In addition to working within penal institutions, inmates held in minimum security prisons may also take part in community work under supervision, such as repairing footpaths and repainting walls in suburban areas.

"These activities provide opportunities for their interaction with the outside world and can better prepare them for re-entry into society later," he said.

As for reintegration of inmates into society, Mr Lai noted that this tended to be more difficult for inmates who had served long periods of detention than those on short-term sentences.

In view of the needs of long-term sentence inmates, Mr Lai said that the Government had been providing a number of aftercare programmes to help discharged inmates return to society as law-abiding citizens.

"Recently, for example, we have introduced a Post-Release Supervision Scheme to provide certain inmates with guidance and assistance after release.

"Under this scheme, home visits may be carried out; post-release counselling and assistance with job placement may be provided, depending on individual needs," he said.

"Our objective is that all discharged inmates can return to society and lead a normal, useful life," he added.

End

20 pre-sale consent applications approved

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The Lands Department approved 20 applications for consent to the pre-sale of residential and non-residential units in uncompleted developments between October and December 1996.

Of the 20 applications, 14 were for the pre-sale of 8,292 residential units on Hong Kong Island and outlying islands, and in Kowloon, Kwai Tsing, Sai Kung and Sha Tin. The majority of these units are estimated to be completed before end of 1997.

The other six applications were for the pre-sale of non-residential units on Hong Kong Island and outlying islands, and in Kowloon, Sha Tin, Tuen Mun and Tai Po.

In addition, four consents to assign residential units were approved where occupation permits had been issued involving 1,904 units on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon, North and Sha Tin.

A total of 16 deeds of mutual covenant and management agreement, four deeds of mutual covenant, three management agreements and four sub-deeds of mutual covenant for residential or non-residential developments were also approved during the quarter.

At the end of December 1996, a total of 20 applications for pre-sale consent involving 13,679 residential units and 11 applications in respect of non-residential developments were being processed.

These developments are located throughout the territory. The majority are estimated to be completed between late 1997 and March 1998.

The Lands Department has given consent to a total of 29,280 residential units since the introduction of new measures for the pre-sale of residential units in June 1994.

Four Private Sector Participation Scheme projects (totalling 5,810 units), four Sandwich Class Housing developments (totalling 3,602 units) and three Flat-for-sale Scheme projects (totalling 3,030 units), which are not subject to the new measures, have also been given pre-sale consent since June 1994.

End

Weather of 1996

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1996 was a warm year. The annual mean temperature of 23.3 degrees was the sixth highest on record.

It was also dry with a mean relative humidity of 76 per cent which ranked the fourth lowest. The year's total rainfall was near normal and amounted to 2,249.1 millimetres, only two per cent above the normal of 2 214.3 millimetres.

In the year, seven tropical cyclones necessitated the hoisting of local Tropical Cyclone Warning Signals as compared to the annual average figure of about six and the No. 8 Gale or Storm Signal was hoisted once.

January 1996 was warmer and cloudier than normal. The mean temperature of 17.8 degrees was the fifth highest for January. The month was also drier with total rainfall of only 1.3 millimetres which was 22.1 millimetres below normal.

Cold winter monsoon dominated most of February. Daily minimum temperatures of below 10 degrees were recorded each day from February 18 to 24, the sixth-longest cold spell recorded in February. The monthly total rainfall amounted to only 27.2 millimetres, 43 per cent below normal.

March was slightly warmer than normal. The monthly total rainfall amounted to 83.1 millimetres, 16.2 millimetres above normal. Nevertheless, the accumulated rainfall since January 1 was still 19 per cent below average.

It was cooler than normal in April and the minimum temperature of 10.9 degrees on April 3 was the third lowest recorded for the month. Three episodes of heavy rain contributed to most of the month's rainfall of 228.7 millimetres which was 67.2 millimetres above normal.

May was slightly cooler with near normal rainfall.

June 1996 was the hottest June on record. The mean temperature of 28.8 degrees equalled the previous record in 1977 and 1938. The monthly mean pressure of 1,008.8 hectopascals was the third-highest for June due to the dominance of the subtropical ridge over South China. Both the monthly total rainfall and the accumulated rainfall for the year were seven per cent above normal for the same periods.

It was hot in July 1996. The mean temperature of 29.2 degrees and the absolute maximum of 34.3 degrees ranked the sixth and ninth highest respectively on record for July. Occasional showers and thunderstorms affected the territory but the monthly rainfall of 230.3 millimetres was still 29 per cent below normal. During the second half of the month, two tropical cyclones, namely Frankie and Gloria necessitated the hoisting of the Stand By Signal No. 1.

August was cloudier than normal and there were nine days with thunderstorms. The weather was unstable from August 14 to 18 with rainfall amounting to 206.1 millimetres. Torrential rain on August 15 caused flooding in many places. The Stand By Signal No. 1 was hoisted on two occasions during the approach of tropical cyclones Lisa and Niki.

The total rainfall of 604 millimetres recorded in September 1996 was the sixth highest for the month and was more than twice the normal figure of 299.7 millimetres. Typhoon Sally rapidly traversed the northern part of the South China Sea, bringing thundery and frequent squally showers to Hong Kong and the No. 8 Gale or Storm Signal was hoisted early on September 9. Gales were recorded at Waglan and Cheung Chau with the maximum hourly winds exceeding 80 kilometres per hour.

October was warmer and drier than normal. The mean temperature of 26 degrees was the sixth highest for October. With only 44.8 millimetres recorded, the monthly rainfall was 69 per cent below normal.

With less frequent continental cold air affecting Hong Kong, November was warmer than normal. The mean minimum temperature of 21.1 degrees was the highest for November. The month was also rather dry with 3.5 millimetres of rainfall recorded against a normal of 35.1 millimetres.

December was generally fine and dry. Only a trace of rainfall was recorded and Fire Danger Warnings were in effect on 27 days in the month.

End

Licence needed for import/export of strategic commodities

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The Customs and Excise Department today (Tuesday) stressed that it is an offence to import or export strategic commodities without a licence.

A spokesman for the department made the appeal following a shipping company was fined \$250,000 in Western Magistracy today after pleading guilty to one count of importing strategic commodities without a licence.

The strategic commodities involved were 603 specially designed components of artillery gun systems worth \$9.5 million.

The court heard that in an investigation into a shipment of 710 wooden crates, manifested as "raw materials, finished products, spare parts and finished tools", on August 22 last year on board a vessel, officers of the Customs and Excise Department discovered that the shipment actually comprised tyres, sand and pebbles, lubricating oil and metal pieces of different sizes.

The metal pieces were later examined by a bomb disposal officer of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force, who confirmed that they were in fact specially designed components of artillery gun systems.

Based on the Police report and after examination, the Trade Department further confirmed that the goods were strategic commodities under the Munitions List of Schedule 1 to the Import and Export (Strategic Commodities) Regulations.

Follow-up investigations by officers of the Customs and Excise Department revealed that the shipping company was the local agent of the vessel and was responsible for the handling of cargo on board the vessel.

"The goods in question were intended to be transhipped to Syria. However, the import of the goods was not covered by any valid import licence," the spokesman said.

He pointed out that under the Import and Export Ordinance, no person shall import or export strategic commodities into and out of Hong Kong except under and in accordance with a licence granted by the Director-General of Trade.

The licensing control is aimed at ensuring Hong Kong's continued access to high-tech goods and up-to-date technology and at the same time preventing the territory from being used as a conduit for the proliferation of strategically-sensitive goods, arms, munitions or weapons.

On summary conviction, the maximum penalty for importing strategic commodities without a licence is a \$500,000 fine plus two years' imprisonment.

End

256 VMs depart on orderly repatriation flights

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Two groups totalling 256 Vietnamese migrants (VMs) returned by air to Hanoi, Vietnam today (Tuesday) on the 91st and 92nd flights under the Orderly Repatriation Programme (ORP).

The majority of the returnees, comprising 129 men, 62 women, 30 boys and 35 girls, were from Central and South Vietnam. Sixty-one of the returnees were from North Vietnam.

Many of the returnees arrived in Hong Kong in 1990, with some in 1989, 1991, 1995 and 1996.

The two groups brought to 9,299 the total number repatriated on ORP flights since November 1991.

End

Monitors' report submitted to CS

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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 two monitors comprised a non-official Justice of the Peace, Mr Stephen Lau Man-lung ; and representative from a non-government organisation, Mr Daniel Chu from Christian Action.

End

Issue of Year of the Ox special stamps postponed

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The Postmaster General, Mr Robert Footman, announced today (Tuesday) that the issue of special stamps for the Year of the Ox, which was scheduled on Friday (January 17), will be postponed to February 27.

"We have a number of issues in January and February, and February 27 is the earliest practicable alternative date," Mr Footman said.

"I apologise to our customers for any inconvenience this may cause them. It is most unfortunate that the stamps cannot be delivered on time as originally planned because of production problems, hence the revision of the issue date."

The Post Office will make available on February 27 corrigendum sheets at all post offices for customers to amend the date of issue printed on the first day covers they have bought.

Customers who have ordered serviced first day covers through the advance order service are advised that the revised collection period of the serviced covers will be from March 20 to April 17.

Those who have ordered their stamps through the Local Standing Order Service may collect their orders from their designated post offices as from March 3.

End

Airmail services to Afghanistan temporarily suspended

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The Postmaster General, Mr Robert Footman, announced today (Tuesday) that due to the civil war in Afghanistan, all airmail services to Afghanistan, including air letter and air parcel, are temporarily suspended with immediate effect.

Further announcement will be made as and when services resume.

End

Directory on services and facilities to be published

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The Small and Medium Enterprises Committee held its fourth meeting today (Tuesday) to discuss suggestions that can provide support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Hong Kong.

To follow up an earlier proposal considered by the committee to publish a directory on services and facilities available to SMEs, the committee decided that the directory be published by the middle of this year and that a working group be formed to oversee the project.

"Members agreed that major industrial and trade organisations should be invited to participate in the preparatory work so as to ensure that the information to be included is of relevance to SMEs," the chairman of the committee, Mr Denis Lee, said.

The committee discussed a preliminary plan for the organisation of an SME conference and agreed that a conference should be held in the latter half of the year.

"Such a conference will provide an opportunity for exchange of views among this committee, industry and trade organisations, industry-support agencies and SMEs," Mr Lee said.

"The objective is to gain a more thorough understanding of the issues facing SMEs in their development and to propose measures to deal with them."

"Members decided that a working group should be formed to organise the event," he added.

The committee also considered a proposal for an overseas exhibition for local SMEs.

"After some discussions, members agreed to give further consideration to the proposal when further information on various options of organising or participating in an overseas exhibition is available," Mr Lee said.

"We will continue to discuss other recommendations that will help enhance the competitiveness of SMEs in Hong Kong," he said.

End

Third nomination received for Tai Po DB by-election

One nomination was received today (Tuesday) for the Tai Po District Board by-election in respect of Shuen Wan constituency to be held on February 23.

The nomination was submitted by Mr Roger Li Kwok-keung, a 45-year-old accountant.

This is the third nomination received for the by-election since the nomination period started on January 3.

Mr Li can be contacted on 2651 1899 (daytime) and 2657 8177 (night time).

Nomination will last until Thursday (January 16).

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tender results

Tender date	:	14 January 1997
Paper on offer	:	EF bills
Issue number	:	Q703
Issue date	:	15 January 1997
Maturity date	:	16 April 1997
Amount applied	:	HK\$7,375 MN
Amount allotted	:	HK\$2,000 MN
Average yield accepted	:	4.58 PCT
Highest yield accepted	:	4.60 PCT
Pro rata ratio	:	About 92 PCT
Average tender yield	:	4.75 PCT

Tender date : 14 January 1997
Paper on offer : EF bills
Issue number : H756
Issue date : 15 January 1997
Maturity date : 16 July 1997
Amount applied : HK\$3,925 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$1,000 MN
Average yield accepted : 4.83 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 4.85 PCT
Pro rata ratio : About 86 PCT
Average tender yield : 4.93 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning 20 Jan 1997:

Tender date : 21 January 1997
Paper on offer : EF bills
Issue number : Q067
Issue date : 22 January 1997
Maturity date : 19 February 1997
Tenor : 28 days
Amount on offer : HK\$5,000 MN

Tender date : 21 January 1997
Paper on offer : EF bills
Issue number : Q704
Issue date : 22 January 1997
Maturity date : 23 April 1997
Tenor : 91 days
Amount on offer : HK\$2,000 MN + 500 MN
Tender date : 21 January 1997
Paper on offer : EF bills
Issue number : Y785
Issue date : 22 January 1997
Maturity date : 21 January 1998
Tenor : 364 days
Amount on offer : HK\$500 MN + 150 MN

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Interbank Liquidity

		Time	Aggregate Balance of Settlement Accounts
Opening aggregate balance	484 mn	0930 hr	8,282 mn
Closing aggregate balance	506 mn	1000 hr	9,450 mn
Change attributable to :		1100 hr	21,041 mn
Money market activity	-12 mn	1200 hr	25,366 mn
LAF reversal	+7,453 mn	1500 hr	28,331 mn
LAF today	-7,419 mn	1600 hr	26,477 mn

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 125.7 *+0.0* 14.1.97

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes/MTRC notes				
Terms	Yield	Terms	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	4.40	2 years	2811	5.72	100.04	5.77
1 month	4.45	3 years	3001	6.17	99.85	6.32
3 months	4.58	5 years	5112	6.57	99.43	6.82
6 months	4.81	7 years	7311	6.80	98.83	7.14
12 months	5.16	10 years	1610	7.37	100.73	7.39
		5 years	M503	7.35	101.46	7.09

Total turnover of ef bills and notes - \$15,751 mn

Closed January 14, 1997

End