



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, January 31, 1974

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Daily guide to wholesale prices and supply of basic food commodities

Release time: 8.00 p.m.

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RECORD NUMBER OF PASSENGERS PASS THROUGH KAI TAK

Hong Kong International Airport had another hectic year in 1972/73 when the number of airline passengers passing through the airport exceeded the three million mark for the first time.

In his annual review, the Director of Civil Aviation, Mr. Roy Downing, reports that 3,056,795 incoming and outgoing passengers used the airport - 567,364 or 22.37 per cent more than in the previous financial year. Transit passengers totalled 415,213, an increase of almost 34 per cent.

The increases added considerably more strain on the already heavily taxed airport facilities, but on the whole traffic was handled efficiently without any breakdown in services.

Present deficiencies were particularly obvious during the busy October-December season when the number of passengers using the terminal building frequently approached and at times exceeded the number which it was designed to handle.

The Director notes that while large scale expansion and improvements are proceeding or about to start, passengers are likely to suffer inconvenience for some time yet until significant developments are completed by 1977.

In the immediate term, some relief was in sight however with the expected completion of two large development programmes to the terminal building by the end of next year, and contingency plans are being developed to do everything possible in the short term to alleviate the problems, Mr. Downing says.

/While air

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While air passenger traffic continued to rise there was a 10 per cent drop in total air movements. Total air cargo at 84,549 metric tons remained disappointingly low for the third year running, showing an overall increase of only eight per cent.

This was well below forecast rates and under the worldwide increase of about 17 per cent for the year under review.

The Director attributes this fall-off largely to the decrease in traffic to North America resulting from a drop in the number of charter aircraft operating to Southeast Asia and returning to the U.S.A. via Hong Kong to pick up cargo.

He notes, however, that plans for the new Air Cargo Complex had gone ahead with an informal agreement reached with the Government, and it was hoped that the complex would begin operations towards the end of 1975.

While he was concerned that the airport was becoming increasingly overloaded, Mr. Downing feels that in general the year was one of satisfactory progress with many projects making headway.

In particular, the \$4 million Airport Long-Term Planning Study was a major step forward which offered the prospect of providing an efficient, well-organized system of civil aviation in the future, he says.

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FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPORT QUOTA CONTROLS ON PLASTICS

Export quota controls are to be imposed on a further two categories of plastic raw materials, the Commerce and Industry Department announced today.

The items concerned are low density polyethylene granules, moulding and extrusion compounds and P.V.C. resins.

Both materials are used extensively by the local plastics manufacturing industry for the production of polythene bags, imitation flowers, toys, footwear and piping.

A Commerce and Industry Department spokesman said that export quota controls are being imposed because the quantities licensed for export since January 1 this year are substantially in excess of the monthly average for 1973.

The issue of export licences has been suspended until quotas have been calculated and notified to the trade.

An export licensing scheme to cover 55 different categories of plastic raw materials was introduced at the beginning of the year, and four of these items have now been made subject to quota control.

The two categories on which controls are already in force are polypropylene and high density polyethylene. The local plastics industry uses substantial quantities of both items for the manufacture of household products.

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DIRECT POWER SUPPLY FOR ESTATE HAWKERS

Hawkers in the Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate are now able to get electricity supply direct from the power company through arrangements made by the Housing Department.

The scheme is part of a continuing programme to improve living conditions in the older public housing estates.

The work includes the installation of several power distribution rooms at the three temporary hawker bazaars on the estate to enable the 500-odd hawkers trading there to obtain legal electricity supply.

It costs about \$27,000. Wiring installations to individual stalls at a cost of \$150 per stall were met by the hawkers.

Before this was introduced, hawkers had to rely on illegal electrical connections which not only created a fire hazard, but also exposed tenants in the estate to the risk of electrocution.

Mr. Frank Fraser, Chief Maintenance Surveyor, said the project formed part of a long-term environmental improvement programme being implemented in the 25 older public housing estates.

"The bazaar at Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate now looks much more orderly than previously. We are planning to introduce this to all hawker bazaars on our estates and we have put aside \$350,000 this year for the programme," he said.

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PUBLIC WIDELY CONSULTED ON EDUCATION GREEN PAPER

Report Expected By End Of February

Reaction to the Green Paper on Secondary Education has been sampled at every level of the community.

This was stated today by Mr. Augustine Chui, Deputy Director of Home Affairs, who has headed a survey team to collect and analyse the public response.

Mr. Chui said that in addition to the extensive comments appearing in the press, and the letters received from individuals, professional bodies and other organisations, his team had also amassed opinion through group discussions and household surveys.

"We have not been content to sit back, waiting to see what arrives in the mail," he said. "We have gone out to solicit opinion from those who might otherwise be reluctant to communicate in writing.

"Through the co-operation of Mutual Aid Committees, the Neighbourhood Advice Council, the Civil Aid Services and other public bodies, we have organised group discussions and open forums that have generated a considerable amount of valuable debate.

"We have reached a representative cross-section of parents and teachers through the City District Office network, and we have also conducted household interviews with the aid of more than 4,000 questionnaires," Mr. Chui said.

/He went

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He went on: "Naturally the professional bodies concerned with education have had the most to say on the subject, and much of their comment has already been well ventilated in the press.

"But we have also given a great many others the chance to speak out and air their opinions.

"What we now have is a mass of material that will take some time to sort out and analyse, but we hope to complete this operation, and submit our report to the Colonial Secretary, before the end of February."

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POPULATION GOES UP TO 4.21 MILLION

More Births, Less Deaths In 1973

Hong Kong's estimated population on December 31 last year was 4,219,300, according to the Commissioner for Census and Statistics.

This is an increase of 115,000 over the 1972 year-end estimate. Nearly half of the increase is attributable to a positive balance of migration for the past 12 months, the Commissioner said.

Migration statistics showed a positive balance of 54,000 for the year ending December 31, 1973.

The total number of births for 1973 was 82,252 which was 1,908 more than in 1972. The crude birth rate was 19.8 per thousand population.

Deaths for the same period totalled 21,245 compared to 21,397 in the previous year. The crude death rate was 5.1 per thousand population.

The Commissioner explained that the figures of births and deaths are based on events occurring rather than on registrations made, and therefore differ slightly from those released by the Registrar General.

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT ADVISER TO REVIEW PLANS

Mr. Morgan Owen, a curriculum development adviser, is to advise on and review plans drawn up by the Education Department.

Mr. Owen, who arrived in Hong Kong on Monday afternoon, is on an eight-week visit at the invitation of the Department.

Recently retired from Her Majesty's Inspectorate, Department of Education and Science, Mr. Owen was selected by the Centre for Education Development Overseas in London.

A spokesman for the Education Department said today that Mr. Owen, who has wide experience of curriculum development in Britain and overseas, will be working closely with people engaged in this task in Hong Kong.

"His terms of reference are wide and it is expected that Mr. Owen's experience and background will be of great value to the improvement of curriculum development in Hong Kong," he said.

"With the expansion of secondary education under way, the Education Department is seeking to ensure that the curricular needs of students are being fully and effectively met.

"Steps have already been taken to enable practising teachers and others to contribute to the process of curriculum reform."

Mr. Owen, 61, has served as curriculum adviser in Jordan and Ghana.

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MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF LABOUR DISPUTES SETTLED

By Labour Department Last Year

The Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department dealt with 4,584 labour disputes last year and helped solve 3,371 cases or 73.53 per cent, compared to the settlement rate of 72.4 per cent in 1972.

Mr. Tsui Tim-fook, Senior Labour Officer in charge of the Labour Relations Division, said as a result of agreements reached, 12,444 employees had received a total of \$7,522,270 from management as outstanding wages, payment in lieu of notice, statutory holiday pay, bonuses, severance pay and other *ex-gratia* payments.

"The remaining cases were mostly referred to the Labour Tribunal, and cases involving winding-up or bankruptcy proceedings were referred directly to the Legal Aid Department."

During the year the five branch offices of the Labour Relations Service handled some 18,716 enquiries and consultations about personnel management and labour laws. "Advice given by the Service prevented many disputes from arising or deteriorating," said Mr. Tsui.

The Labour Relations Service functions as an independent party to help employers and employees resolve their differences.

"Although the Service does not have statutory power to require any party to attend a conciliation meeting, yet experience shows that both employers and employees are only too willing to make use of our conciliation service."

/The conciliation

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The conciliation facilities of the Service were heavily utilised by employers and employees in a series of disputes which occurred during last summer and autumn in the plastics industry, wig industry, major construction projects, a telecommunications company and a dockyard. All these disputes were amicably settled.

The Service takes up new responsibility as a result of the incorporation into the Employment Ordinance of the new provisions for sickness allowance and holidays with pay. These provisions, which were introduced by two stages on July 1, 1973 and January 1, 1974, substantially improved the benefits provided by the legislation.

According to Mr. Tsui, industrial workers and non-industrial workers are equally entitled to such benefits.

"An employee can now accumulate sickness allowance up to 24 days at a time. He would be qualified for sickness allowance as well as holiday pay for the ~~six~~ statutory holidays if he has three months' continuous employment with a particular employer," he said.

"The new law is well received by workers and is operating smoothly."

Commenting on labour relations in Hong Kong, Mr. Tsui said the Hong Kong economy was affected by the secondary effects of a world-wide energy crisis and shortage of raw materials.

"However, the employers and workers of Hong Kong have set a unique example of mutual understanding by steadfastly maintaining their traditional co-operation and harmony in the face of economic difficulties, which have arisen through no fault of Hong Kong's own."

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WALLA-WALLA HIRE CHARGES RAISED

The maximum private hire charges for walla-wallas will be increased with effect from tomorrow (Friday).

The new charges are based on the period of hire and vary from small boats (those licensed to carry up to 30 passengers) and boats which are licensed to carry more than 50 passengers.

The revised fare scale has been simplified to standardise the hire charges at periods of 15 minutes from half an hour upwards.

A spokesman for the Transport Department said today the rates were introduced following lengthy discussions with the Hong Kong and Kowloon Motor Boats Association, and a detailed examination of the profitability of the operation of walla-wallas.

They take into account the higher operating costs and the drop in business as a result of the opening of the cross-harbour tunnel and the new container terminal at Kwai Chung.

The new fare scales are:

<u>Period of Hire</u>	<u>Boats licensed to carry up to 30 passengers</u>	<u>Boats licensed to carry between 30 & 50 passengers</u>	<u>Boats licensed to carry more than 50 passengers</u>
(1) Any period not exceeding 30 minutes	\$ 8.00	\$10.00	\$12.00
(2) Any period between 30 and 45 minutes	\$11.50	\$15.00	\$18.00
(3) Any period between 45 minutes and 1 hour	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$24.00
(4) Each subsequent period of 15 minutes or part thereof	\$ 4.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00
(Rate per minute:	26¢	33¢	40¢)

/The old

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The old provision for the rate of hire to be doubled on the hoisting of typhoon signal No. 3 or higher is retained in the revised scale.

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Motor Boats Association has indicated that its present \$1 fractional fare for the late night walla-walla service between Kowloon Public Pier and Queen's Pier will remain unchanged.

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TOMORROW'S PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS OF LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Note to Editors: Lord Mountbatten will visit the Lord Mountbatten Hall at Repulse Bay at about 4 p.m. tomorrow (Friday), in his capacity as Honorary Grand President of the Royal Life Saving Society.

During the visit, he will present a special certificate to Sir Kenneth Fung Ping-fan, who has been elected Vice-President of the Commonwealth Council of the Royal Life Saving Society in 1973.

Reporters and photographers are welcome to cover the occasion.

Later in the evening, Lord Mountbatten will meet the media representatives in the Airport V.I.P. press conference room at 8 p.m.

Those assigned to cover the press conference are requested to assemble not later than 7.45 p.m. in the press room of the airport terminal building.

G.I.S. officers will be present to meet and assist them.

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FIRE RISK STILL HIGH

Public Urged Not To Relax Vigilance

Although the level of humidity has risen significantly during the past few days, the public should continue to remain alert to fire hazards.

A Fire Services spokesman said today that the danger of fire was still very high and any relaxation of precautions on the part of the public could lead to outbreaks.

He urged members of the public to make sure all cigarette ends and matches were out before disposing of them. "Do everything you can to stop children playing with matches and take sensible precautions in the home."

Due to the cooler weather, he said, there would be an increase in the use of kerosene for heating purposes and recommended that the public treat kerosene with the greatest care. On no account should large quantities be stored, except with a licence from the Fire Services Department.

He pointed out that there was one fire almost every hour in Hong Kong last year, with losses amounting to over \$85 million. The number of deaths in fires was 35.

"It is no good anyone saying it couldn't happen to them," the spokesman said. "Fire can happen anywhere and in most instances is caused through lack of proper care."

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES TO PEAK

The Transport Department today advised passengers travelling to and from the Peak that additional public transport services will be available during the temporary closure of the Peak Tram from tomorrow (Friday) night.

Alternative services are already provided by the China Motor Bus Company and the Peak Maxicab service.

A spokesman for the department said today that CMB has arranged to operate additional buses as necessary on its Route 15 to cope with any increase in demand.

The Peak Tramways Company announced yesterday that its service will be suspended for 10 days from 11 p.m. tomorrow to carry out maintenance and major overhaul work on its main haulage plant.

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SIR KENNETH TO BUY FIRST SET OF ARTS FESTIVAL STAMPS

Note to Editors: A set of special stamps to commemorate the 1974 Hong Kong Arts Festival will go on sale at all post offices tomorrow (Friday).

To mark the occasion, Sir Kenneth Fung Ping-fan, Chairman of the Festival Committee, will buy the first set at the General Post Office in Pedder Street at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

The Postmaster General, Mr. M. Addi, will afterwards present Sir **Kenneth** with a first day cover and a souvenir stamp sheet.

Your representatives are welcome to cover the occasion.

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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	1.80
-- new crop		1.84
S.C.Jion -- old crop	-	-
Po Hgai	Good	1.47
Chu Cho	Good	-
<u>Thai Rice</u>		
100% Whole	Good	1.74
10-15% Broken	Good	-
A1 Super Extra	Good	1.52
A1 Super	Good	1.32 1.42
Whole Glutinous	Good	1.82
<u>U.S. Rice</u>	Good	1.74
<u>Australian Rice</u>	Good	-
<u>Pakistan Rice</u>	Good	1.42
<u>Taiwan Rice</u>	Good	1.50

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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	Normal	4.8	3.0	4.0
Big-Eyes	Good	2.8	0.8	1.8
Squid	Limited	6.5	2.5	5.2
Hair-Tails	Normal	2.0	1.4	1.8
Lizard Fishes	Normal	2.5	1.2	1.8
Croakers	Normal	2.2	0.7	1.5
Conger-Pike-Eels	Good	2.9	2.5	2.7
Melon Coat	Good	2.0	1.2	1.6
Breams	-	-	-	-
Yellow Belly	Limited	2.0	1.2	1.8
Mackerels	Good	4.3	3.0	3.8
Red Goat Fish	Limited	2.6	0.9	1.5
Fork-Tail	Normal	2.0	1.1	1.5
Horse-Head	Limited	6.0	3.0	5.0
Melon Seed	Limited	3.2	1.6	2.7
Pomfrets	Scarce	12.0	7.0	9.5
Garoupas	Scarce	9.0	6.0	8.0
Yellow Croaker	-	-	-	-

/Supplies and

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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	Normal	1.20	0.30	0.80
White cabbage	Normal	0.40	0.10	0.30
Chinese Lettuce	Normal	0.50	0.20	0.40
Chinese Kale	Normal	0.80	0.20	0.50
Spring onion	Good	0.60	0.20	0.40
Spinach	Normal	0.70	0.20	0.50
Water cross	Normal	1.00	0.20	0.70
Leaf mustard cabbage	Scarce	0.40	0.20	0.30
Tomato	Normal	1.00	0.30	0.70

Supplies and Wholesale Prices of Pork (Live weight)

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

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