

THE HONG KONG-CHINA BORDER

Hong Kong's land frontier with China is 22 miles in length, running from Mirs Bay, in the east, to Deep Bay in the west. For most of its distance it follows the course of the Shum Chun River, which flows into Deep Bay.

The border is under the jurisdiction of the Hong Kong Police. Headquarters of the Police Frontier Division are at Fanling and total Police strength in the area is 750 officers and men.

There are three police stations on the frontier, at Sha Tau Kok, Ta Ku Ling and Lok Ma Chau. There are also 12 observation posts spaced along the frontier. From these, each sector of the frontier can be kept under observation.

The railway to China crosses the border at Lowu. Passengers travelling to China disembark at Lowu, go through health and emigration formalities, and walk over the railway bridge into China where they can catch connecting trains three times a day at Shum Chun railway station. There is no road passenger traffic into China.

There is a closed area approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in depth running parallel with the border. No one is allowed into this area without a Police permit.

NOTE: Refugees entering Hong Kong from China do not in most cases cross the border. The majority travel by junk down the Pearl River Estuary or the east coast of China, landing secretly in Hong Kong during the night.

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BACKGROUND NOTES ISSUED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

VIEW FROM LOK MA CHAU POLICE STATION

Lok Ma Chau Police Station commands a fine view both of the west coast of the New Territories and of a large area on the Chinese side of the frontier.

To the west is Deep Bay, with the hills of China rising steeply beyond. The western boundary of Hong Kong territory is the high water mark along the shore of this bay. Flowing into the bay is the Shum Chun River, which marks the Hong Kong-China frontier. On the southern bank of the river (i.e. the nearest bank) is a wire mesh fence, which runs for more than 15 miles along the frontier. The river is navigable and is used by junks travelling to the town of Shum Chun, which is the principal town on the Chinese side. At the mouth of the river is the Pak Hok Chau Police Post, which is typical of posts spaced along the frontier on the Hong Kong side.

To the east, on the Chinese side of the river, is the village of Sha Tau, which is the centre of a People's Commune. Nearby is the village of Wong Kong, which is an agricultural centre. There are usually a number of small craft on the river near Wong Kong, and there is a sampan ferry connecting China and Hong Kong. Further eastwards are the villages of Chek Mei and Kak Tin, where there are also sampan ferry services connecting Hong Kong and China. These ferries are necessary because some of the villagers on the Hong Kong side own land on the Chinese side, and vice versa. Under an agreement between the Hong Kong and Chinese authorities the villagers are allowed to cross in both directions on certain days of the week to graze their cattle and till their fields. In most cases the villagers are not prepared to part with the land because it is ancestral -- i.e. it has been owned by the same villages for many years, in some cases for centuries. Also on the river are a number of small boats which the Chinese are using to dredge the river in order to make it suitable for larger craft.

The villages on the Chinese side of the frontier have a number of tall towers. These are characteristic of villages in South China and were originally used as watch-towers and strongholds for the storage of grain and valuables. Nowadays they are mostly occupied by detachments of Chinese police and militia. Due east can be seen the buildings on the outskirts of Shum Chun, which in addition to being the largest town in the area is also the Chinese centre of administration and the rail centre for Canton.

Immediately below the Lok Ma Chau Police Station is the village of Lok Ma Chau. On both sides of the border the land is mainly used for rice cultivation.

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