



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, May 16, 1973

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GOVERNOR VISITS SHEK KIP MEI REHOUSING PROJECT

The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, said today that the way to "master crime" was to confront it not be dismayed by it.

"To have ease of mind you must feel safe. Therefore I urge you to participate to the full in the anti-crime campaign," he said.

Sir Murray, who made the remarks during a visit to the Shek Kip Mei rehousing scheme, also expressed his "intense interest" in the provision of proper housing for the people of Hong Kong.

"Redevelopment of the old resettlement estates is a part of this programme, and a part that involves many complex, technical and administrative and above all personal problems," he said.

The first stage of the Shek Kip Mei redevelopment was the first time these problems had to be faced in this form.

Since October last year, nearly 11,000 domestic tenants and 44 shopkeepers have been transferred from six blocks of the old estate to the nearby Pak Tin estate to complete this first stage.

Units in the vacated blocks will be converted into self-contained flats, and it was one of the first to be converted that Sir Murray saw today.

The Governor said that at present there were about 500,000 people living in old estates in need of redevelopment.

Although this scheme only rehouses 10,000 people, many lessons have been learnt that will be of great help in the later stages of the Shek Kip Mei rehousing scheme and in similar schemes elsewhere, he said.

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"I am here to express my personal interest in this programme and to confirm for myself that the problems have been solved," Sir Murray added.

Earlier, the Secretary for Housing, Mr. I.M. Lightbody, said that when Sir Murray last visited Shek Kip Mei in December 1971 the rehousing scheme was a paper concept and was explained to the Governor by means of a scale model.

"At that time", he said, "the problem of how to get people, deeply rooted in Shek Kip Mei, to move into Pak Tin reception estate stood huge and unresolved ahead of us."

"Today, 18 months later, I am glad to say that that problem is far behind us".

There has already been an overwhelmingly favourable response from the 4,800 tenants from blocks 3 and 4 in the current phase of the rehousing scheme. "This happy result is much better than expected and it raises our hopes for rapid progress in similar schemes to redevelop other old estates," Mr. Lightbody said.

The following is the full text of the Governor's speech:

"Thank you. I am indeed intensely interested in the provision of proper housing for the people of Hong Kong, and you know the programme that has been prepared.

"Redevelopment of the old resettlement estates is a part of this programme, and a part that involves many complex, technical and administrative and above all personal problems.

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"The first stage of the Shek Kip Mei redevelopment is the first time these problems have had to be faced in this form.

"There are at present about 500,000 people living in old estates in need of redevelopment. This scheme which only rehouses 10,000 people is thus only the first step in 50. But you know the Chinese saying that with all endeavours it is the beginning that is difficult.

"I am sure that in making this beginning you have learnt many lessons. These will be of great help in the later stages of the Shek Kip Mei rehousing scheme and in similar schemes elsewhere.

"I am here to express my personal interest in this programme, and to confirm for myself that the problems have been solved. I congratulate you all on their solution, and I say this equally to the staff of the Housing Department, the Kaifong Welfare Association, the tenants themselves and to all the others involved.

"There is now a prospect for a better life for everyone in this fine new building. To have ease of mind you must feel safe. Therefore I urge you to participate to the full in the anti-crime campaign. Do not be dismayed by crime, but confront it. This is the way to master it. The campaign managers will explain to you how to do this, and I look for your full support. You can certainly rely on mine."

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\$150 MILLION - ACCIDENT BILL FOR HK INDUSTRY

Hong Kong's construction industry can no longer afford to pay the tremendous cost in life, injuries and hard cash of its soaring accident rate, Mr. Szeto Wai said today.

He said that last year 65 people were killed on construction sites -- a 51 per cent increase over the 1971 figures. Another 4,435 were injured, 15 per cent more than in the previous year.

Accidents in the industry were now accounting for a quarter of all industrial accidents throughout Hong Kong, he said.

Last year they cost the construction industry some 130,000 man-days, and it was estimated that the total bill was in the region of \$40 million.

Mr. Szeto, Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council and one of Hong Kong's best-known architects and engineers, was officially opening a one-day conference on Accident Prevention in the Construction Industry at the Labour Department's Industrial Safety Training Centre in Canton Road Government Offices Building, Kowloon.

The conference -- the first of its kind jointly sponsored by the Labour Department and a major insurance company -- was arranged by the Industrial Safety Training Centre and Jardine Insurance.

About 40 senior management representatives from leading Hong Kong construction companies took part.

Mr. Szeto said the conference aimed at encouraging the management of construction companies to reduce the accident toll by implementing strict safety measures on worksites.

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He pointed out that last year's compensation bill was expected to exceed the \$4 million paid out to injured workers in 1971. But this was only the tip of the iceberg.

Experience showed the total cost of accidents was as much as 10 times the amount paid out in compensation -- taking into account such factors as loss of output by both the injured workers and other workers; the time taken for investigation; administrative time taken to deal with the matter; possible recruitment of new staff, and so forth.

And apart from accidents which involved injuries, there were the huge number of accidents -- many of them never reported to the management -- which damaged plant, equipment and property, raw materials and semi-finished or finished work.

Mr. Szeto said managements were still inclined to think that the responsibility for accident prevention rested solely with the government.

But, he stressed, from both a moral and a business standpoint; it was obviously a major management function.

"The total accident bill per year for the construction industry will be in the region of \$40 million", he said.

"For Hong Kong industry as a whole, the bill escalates to nearly \$150 million. And I must stress that this is a price we cannot afford to pay."

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AUSTRALIAN PRISON EXPERT IN HONG KONG

Note to Editors: The Commissioner of Corrective Services of New South Wales, Australia, Mr. W.R. McGeechan, is currently visiting Hong Kong at the invitation of the Commissioner of Prisons, Mr. T. Garner.

During his stay, Mr. McGeechan has been touring a number of Hong Kong's correctional facilities, including Stanley Prison, the Staff Training Institute, the Victoria Detention Centre, and the Tai Lam Addiction Treatment Centre.

Mr. McGeechan, who is also in charge of probation and parole in New South Wales, has visited Hong Kong once before. His current visit is part of a European tour and is in answer to an invitation extended to him by Mr. Garner during the latter's visit to New South Wales last September.

Mr. McGeechan will be holding a Press conference at 12 noon tomorrow (Thursday) when he will talk of his observations here.

You are cordially invited to send representatives to attend the conference which will be held in the G.I.S. theatre on the fifth floor of Beaconsfield House.

Television cameramen are requested to arrive early to set up their equipment.

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GOOD NEIGHBOURS PROJECT PLANNED FOR SAU MAU PING

Volunteer social workers in Sau Mau Ping (South) are to begin an experimental project from June 1 to keep residents informed of social services provided in the estate welfare building there.

Block 22 of Sau Mau Ping (South) has been chosen for the experiment. A number of voluntary workers who live there will be meeting the residents and explaining to them what type of services are available.

The project has been planned by the Management Committee of Sau Mau Ping (South) Estate Welfare Building.

On Friday (May 18) a ceremony will be held in the welfare building to inaugurate the project which forms part of the first anniversary celebrations of the building. In addition, there will be a variety show and distribution of certificates to volunteers.

An invitation football match between Kowloon Motor Bus and Sau Mau Ping United Team has also been arranged as part of the celebrations. This will be held in the estate's football pitch on Saturday evening (May 19).

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Note to Editors: You are invited to cover the inauguration ceremony and celebrations which begin at 8 p.m. on Friday (May 18) at the hall of the Sau Mau Ping (South) Estate Welfare Building.

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VISIT TO MARY STANTON CENTRE

Note to Editors: The chairman of the Government Lotteries Management Committee and the Mother Superior of the Mary Stanton Centre for Girls have extended a joint invitation to the Press to visit the Mary Stanton Centre for Girls at 307, Nam Long Shan Road, Aberdeen on Friday (May 18).

The centre, run by the Good Shepherd Sisters, has received a grant of over \$1 million from the Lotteries Fund.

The visit is part of the current drive to promote government lotteries.

Photographers will be permitted to take pictures at the centre but they are asked to co-operate by not taking full face photographs of the girls or publish any photograph which may reveal their identity.

Transport will be provided. Your representatives should assemble at Queen's Pier not later than 9.50 a.m. A GIS officer will be present to assist.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.