



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, May 11, 1973

CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
New legislation to be introduced to help fight violent crime	1
Winners of 1973 Government Lotteries will get more prize money	4
Three tenders for licences to operate new wireless TV stations	6
A new committee set up to study trade documents and procedures	7
Sir Hugh Norman-Walker appointed Lt. Governor of Isle of Man	9
'Keep Your Beaches Clean' spectacular at Repulse Bay on Sunday	9
Conference on accident prevention in the construction industry	10
Austin Road to be extended to the Hung Hom Reclamation	12
Legislation introduced to control employment agencies	13
Tenders invited for the supply of sand	14

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 1 -

NEW MEASURES TO HELP FIGHT VIOLENT CRIME

A series of new measures to deal with criminals is to be introduced as part of the government's effort to reduce violent crime in Hong Kong.

The new measures are contained in proposed new legislation, published in today's gazette, and include wider powers of punishment for District Judges and certain Magistrates and a new type of sentence designed to isolate habitual criminals for long periods from society.

Under a system of preventive detention envisaged in the Criminal Procedures (Amendment) Bill 1973, a person convicted of serious crimes on four or more occasions may, on the application of the Attorney General, be confined in a special institution for a period between five and 14 years..

The length of sentence will be decided by the Supreme Court or the District Court. The persons liable to preventive detention under this system are those who:-

- * are not less than 25 years of age
- * are convicted of an offence punishable with at least two years jail
- * have been convicted on at least three previous occasions since the age of 17 of offences punishable with such a sentence
- * were sentenced to a custodial sentence on at least two of those three previous occasions; and
- * were on one or more of the three previous occasions sentenced to not less than three years total imprisonment.

/The aim

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 2 -

The aim of these conditions is to make it clear that preventive detention will only be used as a last resort, when all other forms of punishment have failed to protect society against a person who has, in effect, become a professional criminal.

The Bill provides that a sentence of preventive detention will be in addition to any sentence imposed for the offence of which the accused has last been convicted.

In order to reduce the very large number of cases being tried by the Supreme Court and District Court, it is also proposed to arrange for more indictable offences to be tried summarily before magistrates' courts.

Provisions for this are made in the Magistrates (Amendment) Bill 1973 which seeks to empower the Chief Justice to appoint permanent magistrates as Principal Magistrates.

These will be magistrates of considerable experience and who will have greater power of punishment.

Under this Bill, they will be able to impose a maximum sentence of four years' imprisonment and a fine of \$10,000, as against the two years' imprisonment and \$10,000 fine which can be meted out by a permanent magistrate.

The maximum aggregate total of consecutive sentences that can be imposed, which is at present three years for permanent magistrates, will be increased to five years for Principal Magistrates.

It is also intended that some of the more serious cases presently tried in the Supreme Court should be tried in the District Court.

/To enable

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 3 -

To enable the District Court to deal adequately with such cases, the District Court (Amendment) Bill 1973 raises, from five to seven years the maximum sentence which may be imposed by a District Judge.

Another Bill, the Public Order (Amendment) Bill 1973, repeals and replaces the section in the ordinance dealing with the offence of possession of an offensive weapon in a public place, and widens the scope of the powers of punishment available to the courts when dealing with persons convicted under this section.

The main changes are:

- * To permit a person over 13 but under 17 years to be sentenced to corporal punishment or to detention in a training centre, if there is no room for him in a detention centre, as alternatives to imprisonment or a detention centre order.
- * To allow persons aged 17 or over to be sentenced to corporal punishment, as an alternative to imprisonment or a detention order.

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/4

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 4 -

MORE MONEY FOR LOTTERY WINNERS

Winners of the 1973 Government Lotteries will get more money this year. A new prize structure has been adopted to encourage more people to buy lottery tickets.

The Chairman of the Government Lotteries Management Committee, Mr. Chau Kaiyin announced today that under the new system, the first prize will amount to 40 percent of the total income, 10 per cent higher than that of last year.

"This means that if one million tickets are sold, the winner will get \$800,000, or \$200,000 more than last year," he said.

There will be one second prize of 10 per cent of the total amount, compared with last year's two per cent. On the sale of one million tickets, this winner would get \$200,000.

There will be five third prizes with each winner getting one percent of the total receipts.

In addition, 50 tickets will be drawn for special prizes. Each winner will get 0.1 per cent of the total income or \$2,000, assuming again that one million tickets are sold.

"The ratio between prize value and proceeds to the Lottery Fund will remain unchanged," Mr. Chau said, "sixty per cent prizes and 40 per cent for proceeds.

/Tickets

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 5 -

Tickets for the first lottery are now available at banks and they will be on sale at the Royal Hong Kong Kockey Club offices from May 21.

The draw for the first lottery will be held on June 1 at the HK-TVB studio to be partly televised in the 'Enjoy Yourself Tonight' show.

Four HK-TVB personalities, Tam Bing-man, Lydia Shum, Yu Ming and Wong Oi-ming will draw the lucky numbers.

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/6

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 6 -

TENDERS FOR NEW WIRELESS TV STATIONS

When tenders for licences to operate new wireless television stations in Hong Kong closed at noon today, three tenders had been received.

One of these was for the new dual channel service and two for the new single channel service.

The licences will run for a period of 15 years, subject to renewal on December 31, 1980.

A government spokesman said today that in accordance with section 8 of the Television Ordinance, the Governor has appointed a committee to examine the tenders and make recommendations.

The chairman of the committee is the Secretary for Information Mr. Jack Cater. The other members are the Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr. D.G. Jeaffreson, who is vice chairman; the Director of Social Welfare, Mr. F.K. Li; the Commissioner for Chinese Language, Mr. Christopher Wong; Mr. B.G. Jenney from the Colonial Secretariat; and Assistant District Commissioner, New Territories, Mrs. A. Chan. The Secretary is Mr. E.C. Whitby from the Colonial Secretariat.

The Committee members have been appointed on a personal basis and not as representatives of their departments.

The government's technical experts in the telecommunications field will be consulted freely and the committee members will call on the Television Authority, Mr. Nigel Watt, and the Television Advisory Board for advice.

They will also consult other government departments on technical aspects of the tenders.

The spokesman said it was hoped to announce the names of the new licencees during August.

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/7

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 7 -

PERMANENT TRADE DOCUMENTS COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED

A new committee has been set up to study trade documents and procedures with a view to proposing improvements to help facilitate the flow of Hong Kong's international trade.

Known as the Trade Facilitation Committee, it comprises representatives from a wide selection of export and manufacturing associations as well as from chambers of commerce, airline, shipping and banking organisations and government departments.

The Committee is chaired by Mr. I.R. Tomlin of the Hong Kong Exporters' Association, with Mr. R.T. Griffiths of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce as the vice-chairman.

The secretary is Mr. Michael Wu, Assistant Trade Officer of the Commerce and Industry Department.

The new committee replaces the ad hoc committee known as the Hong Kong Working Party on Simpler Trade Documents which was set up six years ago under the sponsorship of the Trade Development Council.

At the Committee's inaugural meeting on April 25, the Deputy Director of Commerce and Industry, Mr. J.D. McGregor, stressed the growing significance internationally of simplification and standardisation of trade documents and trade procedures.

He noted that almost all trading nations were cooperating through international agencies, such as the United Nations and the GATT, to bring about alignment of trade documents, and to simplify and standardise trade procedures.

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Friday, May 11, 1973

- 8 -

As far as Hong Kong was concerned, he said, part of the work in this field necessarily involved government participation at the international level and encouragement at the national level.

Mr. McGregor stressed that the increasing complexity of international trade merited the "closest consideration", not only of documents, but also of the procedures which govern the conduct of trade.

Trade controls had tended to increase in recent years and these, together with the development of new port working techniques (in particular containerisation) made it necessary for trade procedures affecting imports and exports to be kept under continuous scrutiny by a properly authorised and expert body.

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/9

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 9 -

SIR HUGH APPOINTED LT. GOVERNOR OF ISLE OF MAN

The Queen, on the recommendation of the Home Secretary, has approved the appointment of Sir Hugh Norman-Walker KCMG, OBE, as Lieutenant Governor of the Isle of Man in succession to Sir Peter Stallard KCMG, CVO, MBE.

The appointment will take effect towards the end of this year.

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KEEP YOUR BEACHES CLEAN SPECTACULAR AT REPULSE BAY

Note to Editors: You are invited to send a reporter and a photographer to cover the launching of the Keep Your Beaches Clean Campaign - part of the Clean Hong Kong Campaign - to be held at Repulse Bay on Sunday (May 13) at 11 a.m.

The launching will take the form of a variety show on the beach with a programme of singing and dancing by TVB artistes, as well as the reappearance of Lap Sap Chung.

Other attractions will include a helicopter "skyshout".

After the show, slogan-bearing beach balls, bags and caps will be distributed free.

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/10

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 10 -

CONFERENCE ON ACCIDENT PREVENTION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Safety on Hong Kong building sites -- or the lack of it -- will be the subject of a special conference next Wednesday (May 16) being organised jointly by the Labour Department's Industrial Safety Training Centre and Jardine Insurance.

About 40 management representatives from leading Hong Kong construction companies will attend the day-long conference, which will be held in the Canton Road Government Offices, Kowloon.

The conference will be officially opened at 9.30 a.m. by Mr. Szeto Wai, Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council and one of Hong Kong's best-known architects and engineers.

The agenda will include a series of papers, films, and discussion sessions specifically designed to illustrate different aspects of accident prevention on construction sites.

Mr. A.H. Carter, the Labour Department's Industrial Safety Training Officer, will present the first paper, and Mr. David Lin, Assistant Commissioner of Labour, will conclude the conference with a paper entitled "Building Construction, Safety and The Law".

The conference is the first joint venture of its kind between the Labour Department and a major insurance company.

"We are delighted that Jardine Insurance has joined us in sponsoring this project," Mr. Carter said today.

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/ "Insurance

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 11 -

"Insurance companies can play a very worthwhile role in the promotion of accident prevention in Hong Kong. By stressing the importance of industrial safety to their clients, and by encouraging them to take effective safety measures, insurance companies can not only help prevent deaths and injuries, but also make considerable financial savings both for their clients and for themselves."

Mr. T.T. Harley, Manager of Jardine Insurance, who is one of the speakers at the conference, said: "Most accidents on construction sites are caused by carelessness, ignorance of hazards, and a lack of common-sense precautions."

"The toll in injuries and deaths is frightening. Last year 65 people were killed and 4,435 injured - a very great number of them just for want of basic safety measures.

"The Industrial Safety Training Centre provides excellent facilities for instructing site supervisors in accident prevention methods and we hope this conference will persuade many construction companies to take advantage of these courses," he said.

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/12

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 12 -

AUSTIN ROAD TO BE EXTENDED

A project has been designed to provide road access from Austin Road to the new railway terminus complex, the polytechnic and other development on the Hung Hom Reclamation.

A road bridge will be built across the harbour tunnel toll plaza and will connect to the podium above the new railway terminus now under construction.

Another road will extend westwards from the bridge to the junction of Austin Road and Chatham Road. Slip roads serving a loop road around the tunnel toll plaza will also be constructed to form part of the Salisbury Road Extension.

Chatham Road at its junction with Austin Road will be widened to improve the traffic flow.

The estimated cost of the project is \$10.5 million. Work will commence in July and take about 18 months to complete.

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Friday, May 11, 1973

- 13 -

LEGISLATION TO CONTROL EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

The Employment (Amendment) Bill 1973, which repeals part VII of the Employment Ordinance dealing with the registration of employment agencies, has been passed by the Legislative Council and was published in the gazette today. It will become effective in six months.

The Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mrs. Soo Mok Sau-ha, said today that as from November 8 every employment agency which fell within the scope of the legislation would have to obtain a licence from the Commissioner of Labour.

"A non-profit-making agency may apply for a certificate of exemption, but it will still be governed by certain regulations," she said.

The legislation excludes certain types of employment agencies. In particular it excludes those dealing solely with domestic servants.

Mrs. Soo said that the fees chargeable by an agency from a job-seeker on first registration - and on subsequent registrations - would be limited to HK\$3.00 per registration. The commission chargeable from a job-seeker on successful placement would be limited to 10 per cent of his first month's wages.

The legislation also limits the fees chargeable by an agency from an employer for obtaining an employee, while the commission chargeable from an employer on successfully obtaining for him an employee will be a matter of agreement between the employer and the agency.

Regulations under the legislation are being made by the Executive Council.

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/14

Friday, May 11, 1973

- 14 -

TENDERS FOR SAND

Tenders are being invited for the supply of sand to the government from waters not adjacent to the coastline of Hong Kong.

The contract will be for a period of three years starting in July.

A spokesman for the Public Works Department explained today that sand for building purposes was only in exceptional cases taken from waters adjacent to Hong Kong's coastline and then only from carefully selected sites.

"The reason for this is to preserve the amenities of Hong Kong's coastline," he said.

"To supply the large quantities of sand required to meet the demand," he added, "the successful contractor has therefore to have made prior arrangements with the appropriate Chinese authorities to dredge sand from deposits in waters not adjacent to the Hong Kong coastline."

Building sand used in Hong Kong is mostly that dredged from the seabed by a contractor operating under a government contract.

The sand is sold to the public through the Sand Monopoly by the Public Works Department which has sand issuing depots on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories.

Last year, 1.2 million cubic yards of sand was sold in this way.

The closing date for tenders is 12 noon on Friday, June 1.

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Release Time: 8.00 p.n.