



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, June 29, 1973

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GOVERNMENT SURPLUS FOR 1972/73

The government recorded a surplus of \$637 million in the financial year ending on March 31, compared with a surplus of \$640 million in 1971-72.

Total revenue for the year was \$4,936 million, an increase of \$1,395 million over the previous year. Expenditure increased by an even greater amount - \$1,398 million - to reach a total of \$4,300 million.

Government accounts for the month of March showed a deficit of \$439 million compared with a deficit of \$100 million in March 1972.

Revenue for the month was \$498 million - an increase of \$236 million over the same month last year. However total expenditure amounted to \$938 million.

This figure included \$500 million towards the government's contribution to the equity of the Mass Transit Railway Corporation.

A government spokesman said today that even after discounting this contribution, expenditure during March was the highest ever recorded for a single month.

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NEW LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR APPOINTED

A prominent member of the banking profession, Mr. Li Fook-wo, has been appointed as an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council with effect from Sunday (July 1) until June 30, 1975.

At the same time, the re-appointment of three unofficial members to the Executive Council and of four unofficial members to the Legislative Council were also announced.

Re-appointed to the Executive Council for another two-year term, from Sunday, was Mr. Woo Pak-chuen, while Mr. Szeto Wai and Mr. G.R. Ross were re-appointed for another one year term.

Mr. Woo was also re-appointed to the Legislative Council until June 30, 1975. Mr. Szeto Wai and Mr. Wilfred Wong Sien-bing were re-appointed until June 30, 1974, and Mr. P.G. Williams was re-appointed until June, 1975.

The new Legislative Councillor, Mr. Li Fook-wo, was born in Hong Kong and is Chief Manager and Director of the Bank of East Asia Ltd. as well as being a director of several local public companies.

He acted as a temporary member of the Legislative Council on three occasions in 1971 and 1972 and was a member of the Public Services Commission from 1964 to 1970. He was also a member of the 1971 Salaries Commission and the Working group in 1972.

/Mr. Li

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Mr. Li is presently serving as a member of the Banking Advisory Committee, Social Welfare Advisory Committee, Community Relief Trust Fund Committee, Board of Review, Inland Revenue Department, and the newly constituted Medical Development Advisory Committee. He is also a Steward of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club.

He was appointed an Unofficial Justice of the Peace in 1964 and awarded the O.B.E. in 1968.

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TOUGHER SAFETY MEASURES ON CONSTRUCTION SITES

The government is to extend industrial legislation in Hong Kong to allow for strict safety measures on construction sites and in the handling of cargo.

The Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. David Lin, said today the department was alarmed at the soaring rate of accidents in the two industries.

Sixty-five workers were killed and 4,435 injured last year in the construction industry, and four were killed and 193 injured in cargo handling on shore during the period July 1972 to March 1973.

"We intend to make sure that safety measures are taken to cut back this huge toll in life and injuries", he said.

As a first step, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance is to be modified to make way for the enactment of new safety regulations.

An amendment bill - the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Amendment) Bill 1973 - published in today's Government Gazette includes "construction work" and "cargo handling" in the definition of "Industrial Undertakings" under the ordinance, thus paving the way for the introduction of new safety regulations.

The new bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council next Wednesday (July 4).

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The bill also doubles the maximum fine for breaking regulations under the ordinance from \$5,000 to \$10,000. And there will be an additional penalty of up to \$1,000 a day for each day the offence continues.

Mr. Lin said: "We hope people will take this as an indication of our determination to make building sites and cargo handling safer for workers."

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EXTENSIONS TO SHAU KEI WAN TECHNICAL SCHOOL

The Shau Kei Wan Government Secondary Technical School is to be expanded to include sixth form accommodation.

The project will enable the enrolment at the school to be increased from 800 to 920, as well as bringing the facilities up to the standards applied in other government secondary technical schools.

The extension, in the form of a two-storey annex building with an area of 20,000 square feet, will have a science laboratory, two classrooms and a library on the ground floor and an additional assembly hall on the top floor.

Construction work will begin in August and is expected to take about nine months.

The new building will be connected to the existing school by a covered walkway.

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RE-INTRODUCTION OF STATUTORY TIME LIMIT
FOR APPROVING BUILDING PLANS

Statutory time limits for the approval of all building plans are to be re-introduced from Sunday (July 1).

Under regulations gazetted today, all new building plans will be required to be processed within 60 days. In the case of re-submission of plans, the maximum period for approval will be 30 days except where, in the opinion of the Building Authority, there has been a major revision of the former plans. In such an event the 60-day period would apply.

Commenting on the changes, the Principal Government Building Surveyor, Mr. J.G. Stean, said that plans submitted before July 1, but not dealt with, will now have to be processed within the limit of the new regulations from the date on which such plans were submitted.

The old 28-day statutory period which had previously been in force, was suspended in June last year, following the rainstorm disasters, in order to relieve pressure of work on the Buildings Ordinance Office.

Mr. Stean explained that the increase in the statutory period, compared to that in operation before the suspension, was necessary to process not only matters under the Buildings Ordinance, but also other important aspects. These included checks to ensure Mass Transit and Long Term Road Study Proposals were not adversely affected, all of which was clearly in the public interest.

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"Every attempt will be made to process plans within the new statutory periods, but since the large number of submissions has been maintained, many of which are of a highly complex nature, there may well be difficulties, particularly as there is currently a serious shortage of professional staff in the Buildings Ordinance Office."

However, Mr. Stean said that private engineering consultants, who are assisting in the processing of structural and civil engineering aspects of submitted plans, will continue to be engaged for the time being. Prospects of substantial recruitment of professional staff over the next few months are also quite high.

"Moreover, a system of curtailed checks consistent with structural safety, which commenced on May 15 this year will continue which will further help in the reduction of delays."

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NEW KWAI CHUNG HOUSING PROJECT

Homes for about 15,000 people are to be provided in the first stage of the new Lai King housing project in Kwai Chung.

Costing nearly \$27 million, this phase will involve the construction of a 22-storey and three 15-storey blocks for domestic accommodation.

A spokesman for the Housing Department said today there will also be a kindergarten and two estate primary schools containing 48 classrooms, a modular market with 40 hawker stalls, 12 shops, a restaurant, a cafe and recreational facilities.

The Lai King estate will be built on a series of platforms off Kwai Chung Road which were formed as part of the overall development plan for the area.

Ultimately the estate will house 27,000 people in more than 4,000 flats. Work on this second and final phase is expected to begin in February next year and will include another 22-storey and two 15-storey blocks to accommodate 12,000 people.

Several other schools providing kindergarten, primary and secondary education also form part of the final phase.

The whole estate should be ready in mid-1976.

Residents living there will have easy access to the urban areas when the proposed mass transit system is completed as provision has been made for an underground station to be built in the centre of the estate.

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Note to Editors: Photographs of a model of the estate are boxed today.

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MAJOR FLYOVER PROJECT IN YAU MA TEI

Work on the first stage of the West Kowloon Corridor project -- a major scheme to distribute traffic in western Kowloon and provide a direct link from the cross harbour tunnel to Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan -- will begin in August.

This first phase involves the construction of a section of a 4,200 foot-long flyover in Yau Ma Tei.

This part of the flyover, measuring 2,200 feet long and 40 feet wide, starts in Gascoigne Road near Wylie Road. It will run above Gascoigne Road and across Nathan Road to terminate at the Yau Ma Tei multi-storey car park.

Construction for this section, costing about \$20 million, is expected to begin in about two months' time, and is scheduled for completion in two years. Tenders are now being invited for the work.

Caisson foundations will be used to eliminate noisy pile-driving during construction.

This is done by sinking a large hollow tube into the ground by means of excavating through the tube itself.

A heavy weight is then placed on top of the tube, forcing it down further into the ground. This "dig and weight" process is continued until solid rock is penetrated.

Concrete is then poured into the tube to form the foundation for the flyover.

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The remaining portion of the flyover, the western section, will pass through the multi-storey car park and continue for 2,000 feet to the reclamation near the Yau Ma Tei typhoon shelter where it will join the Tong Mi Road extension now under construction.

A separate contract for this section will be called early next year.

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INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL WORK TRAINING NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Applications are now being accepted by the Institute for Social Work Training for admission to its first course for the academic year 1973 to 1974.

The two year full-time non-university course will lead to a Certificate in Social Work.

Giving details of admission requirements today, the Principal of the Institute, Mr. L.B. MacQuarrie, said applicants must be at least 19 years of age.

"Preference will be given to those aged 21 or over, and those who have acquired some previous work experience though not necessarily in the social welfare field," he said.

The minimum academic requirement is possession of a Hong Kong Certificate of Education and applicants should be able to read and write Chinese. Candidates will be required to pass an entrance examination.

"The mature or older candidate who does not hold any of the necessary academic qualifications will be required to prove his ability to undertake the course. All candidates will be expected to have the personal qualities necessary for social work and the final selection will be by interview," Mr. MacQuarrie said.

Details for admission are advertised in some newspapers today.

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Application forms can be obtained from the Institute for Social Work Training at 44, Oi Kwan Road, Wanchai and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, Anne Black Red Cross Building, Harcourt Road. The forms should be completed and returned to the Institute by August 1.

The Institute, which will operate initially under the Social Welfare Department, is one of the major proposals in the plan for developing social welfare services in the next five years.

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NEW LIST OF CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS AND TRUSTS PUBLISHED

A revised list of charitable institutions and trusts which have, as at May 31 this year, been recognised as being exempt from tax, is published in a supplement to today's gazette.

The new list supersedes all others published previously.

Anyone who makes donations to any of the 2,000-odd charitable institutions or trusts on the list may claim tax relief, under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance.

Donations made to charitable institutions or trusts not included in the list may also qualify for relief if the particular institution or trust produces evidence to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue that it meets the requirements of this section of the ordinance.

The usual evidence required is a copy of the written constitution or trust deed.

Claims for tax relief may be made when completing return forms required for profit tax, salaries tax or personal assessment, and should be supported by an official receipt issued by the institution or trust.

Relief will only be given when the total approved charitable donations amount to \$100 or more in a year.

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TYPHOON PRECAUTIONS: STEPS TO TAKE

Weather conditions are becoming favourable for the formation of tropical cyclones and the Director of the Royal Observatory, Mr. Gordon Bell, today stresses that it is necessary to take precautions as soon as possible.

Fastenings on doors and windows should be checked to make sure that they are working properly. Drains should be cleared of obstructions and checked for damage, and emergency stocks of food, candles, torches and first-aid equipment should also be at hand.

Those who have special responsibilities should now ensure that all their instructions and relevant telephone numbers are up-to-date and that any equipment they need is in good order.

Some of the warning signals have been renumbered this year to make them simpler to understand. The signals now employed are:

- * No. 1 - This is the "standby signal". The hoisting of this signal does not warn of the onset of high winds and it should be possible for most normal activities to continue while it is up. However people should be prepared to take appropriate action as soon as the No. 3 signal is hoisted.
- * No. 3 - This is a definite warning of strong winds; that is winds of 22 to 33 knots.
- * No. 8 - There are four No. 8 signals -- 8NW, 8SW, 8NE and 8SE -- which give positive warning of gale or storm force winds from the direction indicated. The No. 8 signals cover a wide range of wind speeds, from 34 to 63 knots.

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* Nos. 9 & 10 - These two signals imply that the centre of a severe tropical storm or typhoon will come very close to Hong Kong. When this happens the direction of the wind can be expected to change very quickly.

Mr. Bell warned that it is not possible to predict the future path or intensity of tropical cyclones with certainty.

Although the errors of 24-hour forecast positions in recent years have been on average less than 100 miles it is nevertheless still possible for a tropical cyclone occasionally to move in an unexpected direction, or at a different speed, or to intensify or weaken more rapidly than forecast.

A small change in the distance of the nearest approach of the centre can also make a tremendous difference to its effects on Hong Kong, he said.

The public should therefore listen to weather broadcasts to keep abreast of developments and should not relax precautions until all signals are lowered.

When No. 8, 9 or 10 signal is displayed, special weather bulletins are prepared, every hour and broadcast at two minutes before the hour and at half past the hour throughout the day and night.

These bulletins give the latest information on the progress of the storm and the position of its centre.

Residents are strongly advised not to set out for long pleasure trips in small boats and not to leave on camping or walking holidays to remote parts of the New Territories when the standby signal, No. 1, is hoisted.

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All schools are closed automatically when number 8, 9 or 10 signal is hoisted and the Director of Education may make a public announcement about closing schools even when No. 3 is hoisted, if conditions are expected to deteriorate.

The government and many large concerns permit staff not required for duty to return home or to stay at home whenever number 8, 9 or 10 signal is hoisted.

If anyone wishes to know which signal is hoisted, he should telephone the Secretariat for Home Affairs at telephone 5-456381 and not the Royal Observatory. In case special notification is required every time signals are changed, the Telephone Company can provide the service for a nominal charge.

Details of the warning signals are printed in the front of every telephone directory and on special cards issued by the Royal Observatory.

These cards also contain advice on precautions to be taken and are available free of charge from the enquiry counters of City District Offices, the Information Services Department in Beaconsfield House, the Government Printer and from the Royal Observatory.

For newcomers or those who would like more information, a booklet entitled "Typhoon" is available in English and in Chinese at three dollars a copy from the Government Printer and the Royal Observatory.

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COMPENSATION SCHEME INTRODUCED TO MEET PUBLIC DEMAND

The scheme to compensate victims of violent crimes was introduced because the people of Hong Kong wanted it.

This was stated today by Mr. Stephen Chau, Principal Social Welfare Officer (Accident Compensation), who is also Secretary to the Compensation Boards.

Speaking at the monthly meeting of the City District Office, Kowloon City, he said that before the scheme came into operation, the need for having compensation from the government for victims of crimes of violence had been repeatedly advocated in the press and by local groups. In other words, the scheme represented the wish of the people.

Because of these comments, he explained, a working party was appointed to study the matter resulting in the scheme being introduced on May 23 this year.

"The scheme is a permanent measure under the developing social security system of Hong Kong for the protection of victims of violent crimes against undue financial loss as a result of injuries, disability and fatality."

It came into effect at an appropriate time as it coincided with the current anti-crime campaign, but, he stressed that it was not a by-product of the campaign.

"It is contributory to crime fighting in the sense that people who are accidentally injured as a result of fighting, resisting, or assisting in the prevention of crime are compensated.

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"It is a public scheme of non-contributory social insurance as necessary as other social security provisions," he said.

The scheme is administered by two boards - the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and the Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation Board - comprising members of the community, including solicitors and barristers who have the competence to determine each application according to its merits from the social and legal points of view.

The procedure for applying is very simple. All an applicant has to do is to get a form from any police station, city district office or district office of the New Territories Administration.

Mr. Chau said that while there would not be any "bureaucratic delay" in the processing of an application, some time was usually required for the applicant or the Secretary to the Boards to obtain an accurate medical report. This report was needed in order to understand and assess how the victim was injured or disabled and in what way he should be compensated.

Awards to fatal cases can be paid out within a very short time after the receipt of an application which is considered eligible by the compensation board.

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Release time: 8.30 p.m.