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DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, December 6, 1972

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Wednesday, December 6, 1972

MARINE DEPARTMENT EXERCISING STRICTER VIGILANCE IN HARBOUR

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The Marine Department is exercising stricter vigilance in the harbour to ensure that harbour regulations are enforced.

A department spokesman said that up to now, a total of 152 completed court cases concerning contravention of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance and Dangerous Goods Ordinance have been recorded since the beginning this year.

Altogether 439 summonses were issued during the period and the fines so far totalled about $46,000. At present, there are 93 cases pending court hearing and processing.

The spokesman described this "tightening-up" of port control by the department as "a last resort to steer the minds of vessel-owners to the vital significance of ship safety."

He deplored the relative inaction of the vessel-owners at large to the repeated advice and warnings given by the department that a reasonable standard of safety should be maintained on board vessels while in port.

"With the advice largely went unheeded, a stricter control of the port is both reasonable and inevitable," he said.

The spokesman recalled that a freighter was recently detained and its master fined $4,000 for overloading, while a fishing vessel owner was fined $500 for allowing his vessel to obstruct the Aberdeen fairway.

In another case, the master of a ship was fined $800 for failing to have sufficient crew on board the ship while in port.

/Referring to .....

Referring to the obstruction case, the spokesman said: "In the general interest of the floating population, the harbour and all fairways must not be obstructed in order to ensure that fire vessels and Marine launches can have proper access to typhoon shelters in case of emergency."

As to the types of offences, the spokesman said that they ranged in the main from overloading and pollution while bunkering on the part of the deep-sea vessels to obstruction, inadequacy and/or lack of fire-fighting and life-saving appliances and so forth on board on the part of the local crafts.

He added that the Seawise and Jumbo incidents underscored the grave lesson that ship safety should be accorded top priority.

"In strictly enforcing the various shipping ordinances," the spokesman said, "the Marine Department has the full backing of the Court."

"Heavy fines imposed by the Court are expected to go a long way towards rectifying the existing situation and deterring negligent vessel-owners who overlook the safety of their ships," he stressed.

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PUBLIC CAN HELP REDUCE FIRES

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The Fire Services Department today warned that incidents of fire will inevitably increase with the onset of the cooler weather and the accompanying low humidity.

However, a department spokesman said members of the public can help in reducing not only many of the fires but also the number of lives which are lost and the property which is destroyed.

In view of the heavy casualties involved in this morning's fire in Wan Chai, the spokesman urged members of the public to be always on the alert and never to ignore the fire-prevention advice given repeatedly by the Fire Services Department.

He said lower temperatures bring out,by the thousand,heating appliances such as kerosene stoves, fan heaters, electric fires and many other forms of heating equipment.

After a long period of idleness and before being used, he said, all these appliances should be thoroughly checked by a responsible person or an authorized electrician in order to ascertain that they are in good working condition and serviceable.

When in use, all such appliances should be kept well clear of any inflammable material or goods, and kerosene stoves and portable heaters should be secured so as not to be knocked or blown over.

/In the case .....

In the case of kerosene stoves, no attempt should be made to fill them whilst burning or even whilst still warm.

"Ensure that they are turned out and cool, then and only then re-fill, taking care to wipe away any excess or spillage of kerosene prior to re-lighting, ensuring that the caps are returned both to the heater and the kerosene container before doing so.

"When checking electric fires, ensure that the elements are clear and unrestricted, the wiring and plug are in good condition and that they are working from a power and NOT a lighting point whose electrical supply is normally insufficient to supply the fire," the spokesman said.

When not in use, the plugs of all electrical items should be removed from the socket in order that accidental turning on does not occur so minimising the risk.

During 1971/72, many lives were lost due to fires electrical in origin, and many cases can be traced to faulty installations including overloaded fuses.

"Do have a qualified electrician check your installation at least once per year. The trouble, effort and expence will be well worthwhile," he said.

He urged resident to make sure that matches are kept away from their children and locked up safely. "Children will play and do light fires, so make certain they do not have the means to set your premises on fire especially when they are unattended."

Make certain that the aged, the infirm and the sick are not placed in danger due to heating appliances being placed too near beds, settees and chairs, especially if they are paralysed, immobile and unable to move, he said.

/Keep dangerous .....

Keep dangerous goods such as kerosene, rubber solution, petrol etc., no matter how small the quantity, sealed in their containers well away from any source of ignition and wherever possible put the tins into a suitably sealed container in a reasonably well ventilated area.

"If relations or persons you know have any family member who is mentally unbalanced, or is suffering from an upset mind or is prone to fits, make certain that all incendiary materials are kept well away from them.

"Do not permit members of your family to smoke in bed."

The spokesman said many lives have been lost due to this practice over the years when the person has fallen asleep unaware that the cigarette in his hand is still alight. Each and every smoker should ensure that his cigarette end is completely extinguished prior to disposal.

"If then after taking all these precautions a fire should break out in your premises, make certain you have some equipment handy to deal with it and that you can escape easily in not only one, but two different directions and in some cases this may well mean your window.

"That lock on your window bars may keep the burglar out but it quickly becomes your prison especially in the early hours of the morning, the room full of smoke and fumes and you, unable to find the key.

Many lives have been lost in this way some quite recently and over the past years several persons have found themselves trapped behind locked bars and subsequently succumbed to the fire, he said.

"Make certain you can get away from your flat to the staircases, ensure your smoke lobby doors remain closed and do not attempt to try to use the lifts in the event of fire.

/"If the power .....

"If the power fails you will be trapped. If you see the staircases, corridors and lobbies blocked during your every day travels, ring the Fire Prevention Bureau who will send along an Inspection Officer to deal with the hazard."

The spokesman said that discounting the Jumbo Floating Restaurant fire, some 65 persons met their deaths last year from the causes mentioned earlier, but strict observance or basic safety precautions can help to reduce this terrible loss of life.

"As good citizens, we not only have to be on the alert when the Red Signal is showing, but at all times and more especially during these cold winter months," he stressed.

"The Fire Prevention Bureau, and of course, our operational staff are most anxious to see that incidents of fire such as those previously covered are reduced to the minimum and many of them do not occur, but appeals to the public to play their part in ensuring that each and every one of them become fire prevention minded."

He said the Bureau's motto is "Help us to Help You" and residents can all help themselves, their friends, their relatives and help tremendously, by carrying out the few basic rules enumerated above. "Should you require additional advice, guidance or assistance with your fire prevention problems the Bureau's officers are only too pleased to offer their sound advice 24 hours a day. The number to ring is H-222101."

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SPECIAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITORS TO SHOW

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The Transport Department today announced special bus and train services for members of the public visiting the four-day Agricultural Show which starts on Friday (December 8) at the Sek Kong Airstrip.

The Show will be opened to the public from 4.30 p.m. on Friday, and the normal daily opening time for the following three days will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

A department spokesman said the Kowloon Motor Bus Company will operate special buses for the Show - Route 18A between Yuen Long and the showground; Route 23A between Tai Po Market and the showground; and Route 26A between Tsuen Wan Ferry and the showground.

Special train services between Kowloon and Tai Po Market Station will also be introduced on Sunday (December 10).

There will be five up trains, leaving the Kowloon Terminus at 9.49 a.m., 10.57 a.m., 12.05 p.m., 3.39 p.m. and 5.31 p.m., and a similar number of down trains leaving the Tai Po Market Station 10.46 a.m., 11.54 a.m., 1.06 p.m., 4.31 p.m. and 6.23 p.m.

The spokesman advised train passengers intending to visit the show to alight from the train at Tai Po Market and then proceed to the bus terminus for connecting journeys on Route 23A.

/Show visitors .....

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Show visitors from Hong Kong Island may travel either by train from Tsim Sha Tsui or by bus Route 26 (with additional buses) at the Jordan Road Ferry, he said.

Private car parking spaces will also be provided at the showground, at a charge of $2.50 per car.

Appropriate traffic signs will be posted to guide motorists using the roads adjacent to the showground. One-way traffic routing will be introduced if necessary.

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WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTION IN WONG TAI SIN AREA

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Water supply to a number of premises in Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon, will be interrupted for eight hours from 10 p.m. on Friday (December 8) to 6 a.m. on the following day.

The temporary stoppage is to enable the Water Works Office to carry out fresh water mains connection work.

The premises to be affected are in Pok Oi Village, Pui Man Village, Sai Tau Village and No. 1-41, Tung Tau Tsuen Road.

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NEW SPEED LIMIT AND CLEARWAY ON WATERFRONT ROAD

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The Transport Department today announced that with effect from 10 a.m. on Friday (December 8), the speed limit on Waterfront Road between Arsenal Street and Hing Fat Street will be raised to 40 m.p.h.

However, on either side of the flyover complex in the centre, advisory signs will indicate a lower safe speed limit.

Also with effect from 10 a.m. on Friday, a clearway system will be imposed on Waterfront Road between Tonnochy Road and Hing Fat Street.

All motor vehicles, except franchised buses, will be prohibited from stopping to pick up or set down passengers and to load or unload goods.

Appropriate traffic signs will be erected to guide motorists.

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SAFETY TRAINING FOR INDUSTRY

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The Industrial Safety Training Centre of the Labour Department has recently circulated its safety training programme for 1973 to all trade associations, vocational training establishments, industrial undertakings, and other Government departments.

A total of 69 courses on work in confined spaces, fire prevention, basic and advanced industrial safety, safety in the operation of woodworking machinery and safety in the operation of power presses will be offered free of charge.

A six week training course for industrial safety officers has also been planned. The course is the first of its kind in Hong Kong.

Mr. A.H. Carter, Industrial Safety Training Officer of the Labour Department, said: "It is only by training and education at all levels in safe working procedures that we can ever hope to reduce the high rate of accidents."

"The purpose of the course is to provide industry with suitably qualified personnel to effectively perform the duties of a safety officer.

"The employment of a safety officer, who will act as an adviser to management in all safety matters, will make a positive contribution to the reduction of accidents. It is hoped that a similar course conducted in Cantonese will be run later in the year," he said.

There will also be new short courses on electrical safety in industry, safe operation of lifting equipment and slings , he added.

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TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENT FOR PRESS COVERAGE OF SHOW

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Note to Editors: The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, will officially open the four-day Agricultural Show on Friday (December 8) at the Sek Kong Airstrip, New Territories. After the opening ceremony which will take place at 2.30 p.m., Sir Murray will be shown around in the Show.

You are cordially invited to have the event covered. Press transport will be provided. Two government vans will leave the Kowloon sub-pool behind the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office at 12.45 p.m. sharp to take Press representatives to the Show, and later in the day back to Kowloon. An officer from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department will be at the Kowloon sub-pool to assist the Press.

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Wednesday, December 6, 1972

SHEK LEI PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE TO BE OPENED TOMORROW

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A public enquiry service centre has been set up in Shek Lei Resettlement Estate, Tsuen Wan, to provide better liaison facilities between the Government and residents living in the area.

The centre will be opened tomorrow (Thursday). Apart from answering enquiries and liaising with the local kaifongs, it will help mediate disputes among residents, and render statutory declarations service.

The centre will serve a total of over 115,000 residents of the Shek Lei Resettlement Estate, and the Shek Yam and Lei Muk Shu Low-cost Housing Estates, which is about one-third of the population in Tsuen Wan.

Public enquiry service centres now operating in the New Territories are those at Kwai Chung and Yuen Long. Provision for similar services in Tsuen Wan and Sheung Shui has been approved.

The District Commissioner, New Territories, Mr. D.C. Bray, will officiate at tomorrow's opening ceremony of the Shek Lei enquiry service centre.

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Note to Editors: You are cordially invited to send a reporter and/or photographer to have the opening ceremony covered. It will take place at 3 p.m. at the Centre in Block 14, Shek Lei Resettlement Estate.

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THE CHOICE OF A SUITABLE CAREER

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A careers exhibition depicting a wide spectrum of careers will be sponsored by the Labour Department and held at the City Hall on the last three days of the year.

Disclosing this today in a talk to a Lions Club luncheon meeting, the Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Paul Tsui, said teachers, parents, young people and interested parties are invited to visit the exhibition.

He pointed out that young people, who had selected a career unsuited to their temperament or aptitude, would not be able to develop their potentialities to the full. Consequently, they would become frustrated and unhappy, he added.

Mr. Tsui said the Youth Employment Advisory Service of the Labour Department is trying to cater for the needs of this section of the community.

It compiles careers pamphlets giving information on certain types of careers and regularly gives careers talks to secondary school students.

"Eighty-five per cent of the students specifically requested that more careers talks should be organised after hearing the talks. This shows that young people appreciate the needs for careers guidance," he said.

Working closely with the Youth Employment Advisory Service are the Apprenticeship Training Unit and the Local Employment Service.

/The former .....

The former, Mr. Tsui said, aims at promoting apprenticeship in industry so as to enable young people with suitable qualifications to be enrolled into a properly established modern apprenticeship scheme, while the latter offers free placement facilities for job-seekers.

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Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of Mr. Tsui's speech, in English and Chinese, are distributed separately in the G.I.S. Press boxes this evening.

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PAY INCREASE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

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About 40,000 Civil Servants will receive a pay increase of approximately three per cent on their basic salary, backdated to April 1, 1972, a Government spokesman announced today.

This increase was agreed at the Senior Civil Service Council meeting held last Monday, (December 4) and has already been approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council.

The increase will be awarded to the majority of officers paid on the Master Pay Scale and to the Disciplined Services.

About 3,000 staff in certain Technical and Engineering grades, known as the Works Class, are not included in this award. The salaries of these officers have recently been surveyed by the Pay Investigation Unit and are being dealt with separately.

The Government's pay policy is that, wherever possible government salaries should be based on a fair comparison with the pay for similar jobs in the private sector.

In time, all these groups will be surveyed but in the meantime some pay adjustment is considered appropriate for staff whose salaries have not yet been surveyed in detail.

In addition to this three per cent increase, the Government has also decided to pay a temporary non-pensionable allowance of $75 per month, backdated to April 1, 1972, to about 5,000 supervisory and technical staff on the Master Pay Scale.

/The salary .....

The salary of these officers has been overtaken, in some cases, by that of their subordinates, as a result of pay increases awarded to Model Scale I staff in recent years.

The award is temporary because the Government has now set up a special committee to study the problems of Scale I employment in detail. The committee will be submitting its recommendations to the Government early next year.

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Release time: 8.00 p.m.