



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, November 21, 1972

PUBLIC SUPPORT NEEDED TO ELIMINATE DRUG PROBLEM

Hong Kong was described today as having one of the worst, "if not the worst", opiate drug addiction problems in the world.

The Commissioner for Narcotics, Mr. Norman Rolph, making his first public address since assuming his new office three months ago, said criminal statistics revealed that there must be at least one drug dependent person in the community for every 70 people.

"The true figure is probably rather more depressing than this, but what it is we will not know until the product of the new Central Registry (of Drug Addicts) becomes available," he said.

Mr. Rolph described it as a "horrifying figure" and said it was a "stain on the fair name of Hong Kong" for which each and everyone of us must bear a share of the responsibility.

"That the illegal narcotics trade flourishes in Hong Kong is only because the people of Hong Kong permit it to flourish."

He said it was the civic duty of all "right minded" people in Hong Kong to report to the law enforcement agencies the existence of any illicit drug activities they may know about or reasonably suspect.

"To do otherwise is to stab your community in the back by default."

/Mr. Rolph

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Mr. Rolph said people could report by letter if they did not want to do it in person and he urged everyone to give their support and co-operation so that together "we can and will master and defeat the narcotics problem".

The Commissioner for Narcotics also spoke about the use of cannabis and man-made stimulant and depressant drugs and said this abuse was the "product of the permissive society and is the subject of more muddled and wrong thinking than most topics which have come my way".

Fortunately the consumption in Hong Kong of these drugs was very small when compared to the opiates. But the position could change when opium and heroin become more difficult and much more expensive to obtain, he said.

For this reason, the situation would need to be watched closely in the years ahead.

Mr. Rolph added that scientific research completed so far under the auspices of the United Nations clearly indicated that as a regular habit "the consumption of cannabis is harmful to the human body and in the long term lends to both mental and physical deterioration. The abuse of man-made drugs is equally harmful and anti-social".

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SLIGHT DROP IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

A drop of three points was recorded in the General Consumer Price Index during October and at the end of the month the index stood at 140.

This was mainly brought about by a drop of eight points in the index for food.

On the other hand, there was an increase of four points in the index for services and rises of one point each in the index for clothing and footwear and the index for miscellaneous goods.

Changes in the other sections of commodity were described by the Census and Statistics Department as "insignificant".

The spokesman said that compared with September, there was a significant drop in the average retail price of fresh vegetables, generally as a result of an increase in supplies locally and from China.

Lower average prices were also recorded for poultry, fresh water fish and fresh fruit. However, retail prices for rice and salt water fish rose.

For non-food items, increases were recorded in fees charged by private schools and prices of text books, which caused the index for "education, including the purchase of text books" to move upwards.

The Modified Consumer Price Index for October was 144 -- four points lower than September's figure and nine points higher than that for the corresponding month last year.

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RESETTLEMENT FLATS ARE NOT FOR SALE

The Resettlement Department has again warned members of the public that resettlement flats are not for sale.

The warning was issued today following the discovery of a suspected swindle in which a family was cheated of \$2,700 by a man who "offered" for sale a room in the Sau Mau Ping Estate.

The empty room had already been allocated to a squatter family from a clearance operation. The suspected swindle came to light when the unauthorised family arrived at the estate office to pay their rent.

A Resettlement Department spokesman said today that people, when they are approached with such a sale offer, should not only ignore it, but should report the matter to the police.

The spokesman said that the case involving the family in Sau Mau Ping Estate had been referred to the police who are now making inquiries.

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REGULATIONS ON EXPORT OF RESTRAINED TEXTILES TO U.S.

New regulations covering the export of restrained cotton, man-made fibre and wool textiles to the United States will come into force from December 1.

From that date, these exports must be covered by Certificates of Hong Kong Origin issued by the Commerce and Industry Department.

The certificates will bear a "textile export visa" signed by an officer authorised by the department to issue such visas.

The Director of Commerce and Industry said today that the United States Customs will soon require for entry purposes the production of visaed certificates of origin by American importers in respect of all restrained textiles from Hong Kong.

The responsibility for transmission of the visaed certificates to the U.S. importer lies with the local exporters or manufacturers concerned, he said.

Exemptions from the certificate of origin will be exports of unrestrained textiles to the United States; bona.fide samples; or postal packets not exceeding \$1,000 f.o.b., being gifts, personal effects or items not intended for sale.

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MORE PEOPLE COMING TO HONG KONG

The Immigration Department has had another record-breaking year.

Travellers receiving immigration clearance at the three points of entry to Hong Kong (Kai Tak, the harbour, and the land border with China at Lowu) reached a new high level of over 6½ million.

New records in the amount of business conducted were also set in most sections of the Documents Division, and in the branch offices, which collectively dealt with over one million applications for travel documents.

In the 12 months to the end of last March, 3,344,916 people arrived in Hong Kong and another 3,397,326 left, making a total of 6,742,242 authorised movements.

In 1970-71, the respective arrival and departure figures were 2,965,064 and 2,936,169, a total of 5,901,233.

In the last quarter of the year authorised movements totalled 2,221,587, and was the highest number ever recorded in any three-monthly period. It also represented an increase of 31 per cent over the equivalent period of 1971.

In all, there was a 14.25 per cent increase in traffic this year. But it was in traffic over the land border at Lowu that the most spectacular increase of 76 per cent occurred.

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ASSISTANT REGISTRAR GENERAL RETIRES

The Assistant Registrar General, Mr. J.A.H. Tilley is to retire soon after serving the Government for more than 12 years.

Mr. Tilley came to Hong Kong in May 1960 as a Solicitor in the Registrar General's Department after having served for four years as Assistant Land Officer in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in East Africa.

He was promoted to Senior Solicitor in April 1962 and Assistant Registrar General (Official Receiver) in December 1964.

To mark his retirement, the Registrar General, Mr. W. Hume, will make a presentation to Mr. Tilley on behalf of his colleagues on Friday (November 24).

The vacancy created by Mr. Tilley's retirement will be filled by Mr. J.L.G. McLean, Senior Solicitor in the Registrar General's Department.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to have the presentation ceremony covered. It will be held at 6 p.m. in the Central Government Offices, East Wing, First Floor, Hong Kong.

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QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

The Port Health Authority announced today that quarantine restrictions imposed on arrivals from Dacca (excluding the airport) and Karachi (also excluding the airport) have now been lifted.

The restrictions had been in force because of an outbreak of smallpox.

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Release Time: 7.00 p.m.