



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, March 23, 1973

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INTERESTS OF FLAT OWNERS WILL BE PROTECTED

In Future Valuations Of Crown Rents

Small flat owners will be protected from the effect of the exceptional high prices prevailing in the land market in future assessments of Crown rents for renewable leases, under proposed legislation shortly to be introduced into the Legislative Council.

New legislation would also ensure that flat owners can pay a fair share of the Crown rent on the lot and will be able to discharge their individual liabilities without reference to their co-owners.

Two bills -- the Crown Leases Bill 1973 and the Crown Rent and Premium (Apportionment) (Amendment) Bill 1973 -- were published in the Gazette today. They will be introduced into the Legislative Council on Wednesday (March 28).

The provision, which will be of most interest to owners of property held on leases which will expire on June 30 this year, will enable the Director of Public Works to take into account the value of the ground on July 1, 1972 rather than follow the provision in these leases which stipulates that the value of the land should be determined at the date of expiry.

A Government spokesman said: "This will mean that the Director can disregard the extreme and exceptional rises in prices paid for land during the last nine months."

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In the case of leases expiring after June 30, 1973, the valuation date will be either the date one year before the date of expiry or the actual date of expiry, whichever is the most favourable to the lessee.

In order to safeguard the interests of property owners, the Crown Leases Bill provides for expiring renewable leases to be renewed by law. This will be of particular help to the owners of flats or undivided shares in a property who may be unable to secure the agreement of all the owners to renew.

Not infrequently one or more co-owners is away from Hong Kong or cannot be traced. The Bill will ensure that the rights of owners are preserved by the enactment of this legislation.

Concern

The spokesman said the Crown Leases Bill reflected the "Government's concern at the effect which the exceptional high prices prevailing in the land market might have on the small flat owner, and especially the owner/occupier."

He noted that Government had already decided in 1972 to reduce the level of renewal rents by 20 per cent and to phase them in over a period of five years.

"The effect of these concessions," he said, "would be reduced if present day values were used; on the other hand by taking into account value of the ground at July 1, 1972 property owners were being granted additional relief."

The Crown Rent Premium (Apportionment) (Amendment) Bill provides that the Land Officer may, in the case of lots or sections already developed and sold off to individual flat owners, apportion the new rents or instalments of regrant premium between the owners so that each flat owner will pay the proportion of the rent or premium instalment of the whole lot or section which the value of his flat bears to the total value of the lot or section.

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The bill provides for the valuations for apportionment to be done by the Director of Public Works.

There is provision for objections to be made to the Land Office against any apportionment being done, so that the views of individual flat owners may be fully taken into account.

"These amendments," the spokesman said, "would ensure that each flat owner can pay a fair share of the Crown rent on the lot and will be able to discharge his individual liabilities without reference to his co-owners."

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TEMPORARY CAR PARK FOR TAI KOK TSUI

A temporary open-air car park will be opened in Tai Kok Tsui for public use from 8 a.m. on Monday (March 26).

The car park, to be known as the Tai Kok Tsui Ferry Concourse Car Park, is located in an area bounded by Cherry Street, Hoi King Street and Foo Kwai Street. It will provide 113 parking spaces and will be under the control of the Urban Council.

Only private cars, private light buses, public cars and goods vehicles with an unladen weight of not exceeding two tons will be allowed to use this car park.

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LEGISLATION TO CONTROL EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

Licence Must Be Obtained From Labour Commissioner

Details of a proposed bill to give the Government greater control over employment agencies in Hong Kong were published in the Gazette today (Friday).

The bill itself will be introduced into the Legislative Council on April 11.

The bill, entitled the Employment (Amendment) Bill 1973, seeks to repeal part VII of the Employment Ordinance, which deals with the registration of employment agencies.

The Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. M.C. Lao, said today that every employment agency which fell within the scope of the proposed 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," he said.

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

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

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

Mr. Lao said that every employment agency which considered it might be in any way subject to the regulations of the bill should approach the following offices of the Local Employment Service of the Labour Department for guidance:-

- * New Rodney Block,
No. 99 Queensway, Ground floor,
Hong Kong.
Tel. No. 5-282523.

- * Canton Road Government Offices Building,
4th floor,
Kowloon.
Tel. No. 3-688131.

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ACCIDENTS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES

Five Killed And Over 270 Hurt In February

Five workers were killed and 271 injured last month in accidents on construction sites, according to reports received by the Labour Department.

Two of those killed died as a result of injuries sustained while working with powder-actuated tools.

Mr. A.H. Carter, Industrial Safety Training Officer of the Labour Department, stressed that such tools were not dangerous if used in the proper manner.

"Workers who use these tools should receive proper training," he said. "If the tools are used in the right way, they are safe and efficient."

Commenting on the accident at the Connaught Centre on February 26 in which two workmen died when they fell from the 32nd floor, Mr. Carter said: "The accident was the result of a chain of events - namely, apparent lack of maintenance of the cradle; lack of adequate supervision; and the unsafe act of an individual.

"The latter action is the most difficult to control, because supervisors cannot possibly keep an eye on their workers all the time.

"To overcome this, adequate safety training should be provided to make workers aware of the hazards of their jobs - not only for their own personal safety, but also the safety of others."

Mr. Carter said that as in the month of January, an unusually high percentage of accidents last month resulted from people tripping on or against objects.

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In February, 59 workers were injured in such accidents.

He said these accidents would keep happening until workers and management maintained a proper standard of housekeeping on work sites and created a sense of safety awareness by training and education at all levels.

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SWEARING-IN OF YOUTH TEAM COMMITTEE

The fourth swearing-in ceremony of committee members of the Wan Chai Youth Social Service Team will take place at the Lady Trench Training Centre on Sunday (March 25) at 3 p.m.

Mr. Ko Kai-man, the Social Welfare Department's District Community Officer in Wan Chai, said today that the team was made up of students and young workers who devoted much of their leisure time to organising recreational and educational activities.

Since the team was established in 1969 its members have taken part in summer youth programmes, work camps, the Clean Hong Kong campaign and visits to homes for the aged and for children.

Their voluntary efforts have won recognition from local residents and community leaders.

Mr. Ko said that he hoped other young people would be inspired by the team's example and join in the various activities which are arranged.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to send a reporter and photographer to cover the swearing-in ceremony.

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CASTLE PEAK CLINIC TO BE RENAMED TUEN MUN CLINIC

The Castle Peak Clinic is being renamed the Tuen Mun Clinic from March 30 (Friday), according to a notice in the Gazette.

The change is the result of a decision by the Government that the new town to be built in the area is to be named Tuen Mun.

The area known to the non-Chinese community as "Castle Peak" and to most Chinese residents in the urban area as "Tsing Shan" is known to rural folk in the New Territories as "Tuen Mun."

"Some confusion has arisen from the use of three different names for the same area, and there is an obvious advantage in the use of a single uniform name," a spokesman for the Medical and Health Department explained.

The name "Tuen Mun" is traditional, and believed to be of considerable antiquity. It may date back to the early Sung Dynasty when a garrison is thought to have been stationed in the area to protect merchant shipping from pirates.

It is for this reason that the new town is being called Tuen Mun.

But the mountain called "Castle Peak" or "Tsing Shan" will not be renamed, and it is also not proposed to change the name of the Castle Peak Hospital.

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NEW REGULATIONS ON "LUCKY" CAR NUMBERS PUBLISHED

First Auction Expected In May

Regulations providing for the allocation and sale by auction to the public of "lucky" car numbers were published for general information in the Gazette today.

Numbers which are to be regarded as "lucky" car numbers are also listed under the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 1973.

These numbers do not include those already reserved for government vehicles.

A "lucky" car number is defined as any number alone or any prefix plus a number listed in the regulations.

A person to whom a "lucky" car number has been allocated by auction should, within 12 months of the allocation, use it on his car.

Failing to do this, the Commissioner for Transport may, without giving any notice, re-allocate the number to a new successful applicant.

The Commissioner will also re-allocate the number to a new applicant when the ownership in a motor vehicle to which a lucky car number has been assigned is transferred.

However, a lucky car number may be transferred from one vehicle to another if the vehicle is in the same ownership.

Commenting on the regulations, a spokesman for the Transport Department said that the first auction of "lucky" car numbers is expected to be held some time in May.

The proceeds from the auctions will be paid into the Lotteries Fund and used for charitable purposes.

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DEEP BAY MARSHES OUT OF BOUNDS FOR HUNTERS

A considerable part of the Mai Po Marshes at Deep Bay, which is generally considered one of Hong Kong's most important wetland bird habitats, has been declared a prohibited area for hunting.

An order to this effect has been made by the Governor, under the Wild Birds and Mammals Protection Ordinance, and was published in today's Gazette.

The order has the effect of prohibiting hunting and the carrying of firearms (other than along a road) in the part of the Mai Po Marshes.

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said today: "The action is taken on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for Recreational Development and Nature Conservation in the New Territories. It will be welcome by conservationists."

The map showing the extent of the area concerned can be seen in any District Office in the New Territories and the Land Office, Victoria, he added.

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Release Time: 7.30 p.m.



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN SUPPLEMENT

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MR. LUDDINGTON APPOINTED HIGH COMMISSIONER, WESTERN PACIFIC

Her Majesty The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. Donald Collin Cumyn Luddington, at present Secretary for Home Affairs, Hong Kong, as High Commissioner Western Pacific, in succession to Sir Michael Gass, K.C.M.G., on the expiry of his present term of office.

Mr. Luddington was born in 1920 and educated at Dover College and St. Andrew's University where he obtained a Master of Arts degree. He is married and has one son and one daughter.

He joined the Hong Kong Government Service in 1949 and became District Officer, Tai Po. Since then he has served in various posts including Clerk of Councils, Administrative Secretary, Royal Hong Kong Police, Defence Secretary, Deputy Director of Commerce and Industry and District Commissioner, New Territories. He assumed his present post as Secretary for Home Affairs in May, 1971.

During the Second World War Mr. Luddington served as an officer in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and Royal Armoured Corps.

A member of the Legislative Council, he is also Honorary Colonel of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment.

The date on which Mr. Luddington will take up his new appointment will be announced later.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.