HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Monday, September 3, 1973

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Monday, September 3, 1973

FORMAL TALKS ON PROPOSED OIL REFINERY AT LAMMA

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The government began discussions today with representatives of the Toa Oil Company Limited of Japan and Hong Kong's Textile Alliance Limited about the environmental aspects of their joint application for a petroleum refinery and petrochemical complex on Lamma Island.

Representatives of Messrs Cremer and Warner, who have been commissioned by the government to report on the environmental aspects of the proposed project, were also present.

At the meeting, the applicants raised the possibility of proceeding on a site which included Tung O Bay on the southern coast of east Lamma. This suggestion will be evaluated by the consultants in the same manner as that for the northern part of the island.

In the meantime, it is proposed to proceed with the publication of the consultants' report on the environmental impact of the Shell refinery and the report of the government group which visited refineries in Singapore and Australia.

It is expected that these will be available towards the end of this month.

Further meetings will be held during the week. These will be followed by a visit to Japan by Mr. David Akers-Jones, Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary (Lands), and Mr. Nip Kam-fun, Government Civil Engineer (Consultants Management), together with representatives of Messrs Cremer and Warner.

/During .....

During the visit, the party will inspect refineries and petrochemical works in Japan and it is hoped to hold discussions with officials in the Japanese Federal Environmental Agency and the provincial environmental bureaus.

A government spokesman recalled that the application had been announced by Mr. Akers-Jones in the Legislative Council on August 1.

It would be necessary, the spokesman said, to examine the project closely to determine the environmental impact on Hong Kong as a whole and on the local scene at Lamma.

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TWO NEW TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ON THE WAY

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Construction of the Kwai Chung Technical Institute -- the first of seven being planned to expand technical education in Hong Kong -- will begin in two months time.

At the same time, work is expected to start on a third institute at Kwung Tong towards the end of the year. Both should be ready at the start of the 1975/76 academic year.

To be built on a 73,400 square foot site between Kwai Shing and Kwai Fong estates, the Kwai Chung institute will comprise three different buildings -- a four-storey administrative block; an assembly hall block with a covered playground, a canteen and minor staff quarters; and a five-storey teaching block housing 46 classrooms and workshops. They will be linked together by covered corridors.

When completed in 1975, it will be administered through five different departments -- garmont making, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, textiles and business studies.

It will provide 1,300 full-time equivalent places in a wide range of courses at both elementary and intermediate level. Part-time day release courses and evening classes will also be run to allow maximum use of its facilities.

The new institute should be able to take in its first batch of students at the start of the 1975/76 academic year.

/Together .....

Together with the Kwun Tong institute, it should help ease the immense pressure on the Morrison Hill Technical Institute.

In the meantime, an additional floor of 6,000 square feet will be added to the workshop wing of the Morrison Hill Technical Institute to expand and improve existing facilities.

The new floor will house three workshops -- including one to provide much-needed facilities for technical teacher and workshop instructor training.

The other two new workshops will be for electrical installation and mechanical fitting.

Extensive improvements and alterations will also be carried out in other workshops and laboratories -- including the textile mechanics workshop, the power and machines laboratory, the welding section, the air-conditioning workshop, and the vehicle repair and engine-testing workshop -- so that maximum use could be made of these facilities.

These works should be completed by the start of the 1974/75 academic year.

Meanwhile, the planning for building and equipping a third technical institute in Kwun Tong is nearing completion and construction should begin at the end of the year. It will be fully operational at the start of the 1975/76 academic year together with the Kwai Chung Institute.

Planning work for the Cheung Sha Wan and San Po Kong technical institutes is also progressing smoothly, and they are scheduled to come into operation in 1976 and 1977 respectively.

These, together with a further three institutes being tentatively planned for new towns such as Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun, should go a long way towards meeting the increasing demand for skilled craftsmen and technicians in industry.

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HIGH NUMBER OF NEW BUILDING PLANS APPROVED

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A total of 148 new building plans was approved by the Buildings Ordinance Office in July this year -- nearly four times the number for the corresponding month last year.

The figure was only 15 short of the record of 163 reached in June.

More than half of the new plans approved were for residential or for combined apartment/commercial buildings. These included a 29-storey apartment/commercial building at the junction of Victoria Road and Cadogan Street, a similar 27-storey building in King's Road, and two blocks of 26-storey apartment/commercial buildings in Kai Yuen Terrace and Wun Sha Street respectively.

At the same time, plans were also approved for a 28-storey commercial building in Connaught Road Central, a 26-storey factory building in Ma Kok Street, Tsuen Wan, and a 9-storey sports centre in Caroline Hill Road.

Buildings certified for occupation during the month included seven for domestic use, 15 for non-domestic use, and 34 for combined domestic/non-domestic use. The declared construction cost of these buildings amounted to over $131 million.

In addition, the Building Authority gave permission for 71 building projects to commence work -- 26 on the Island, 12 in Kowloon and 33 in the New Territories.

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EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF MID-LEVELS BUILDINGS

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The Building Authority this (Monday) afternoon applied for emergency closure orders for Blocks A, B and C Grenville House, Magazine Gap Road, as a pre-cautionary move following yesterday's landslide which blocked May Road.

The decision was taken on the advice of consulting engineers who this morning carried out close investigations of the slope where the landslide occurred.

At the same time, the Building Authority confirmed that the ground floor, lower ground floor and the bottom five domestic storeys of the remaining blocks of Grenville House should remain unoccupied and appropriate closure orders were being sought. The occupants of flats on these five storeys were advised to leave yesterday.

A similar closure order was also being sought for the Chatham English School on Chatham Path whose occupants were also advised to quit the premises yesterday.

In the meantime, work has started on the task of completing the demolition of the remainder of Thorpe Manor, No. 1 May Road, immediately below which the landslide occurred yesterday. This operation has to be conducted with great care, to ensure that the remains of this structure are brought down in the direction of the hillside and do not fall outwards down the slope.

As this work proceeds, and given no recurrence of heavy rain, so will the danger recede, and it is hoped to reopen some of these premises as soon as possible.

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MORE GRANTS FROM SIR DAVID TRENCH FUND FOR RECREATION

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A sum of $697,900 will be granted this year from the Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation to various organisations for the provision of more recreational programmes for the community.

The grants, approved by the Acting Governor, Sir Hugh Norman-Walker, represent an increase of more than 100 per cent over the amount of $332,000 given out last year.

The number of organisations receiving the grants is also increased by 39 to 103.

The grants made are mostly for the provision of recreational facilities, library books and sports equipment.

Individual applicants for grants from the fund will be informed of the Acting Governor's decision by letter.

The Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation was set up in 1970 for the provision of facilities for recreation, sports, cultural and social activities, and related purposes with special emphasis on encouraging the purposeful use of leisure by young people.

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FREE ENTERTAINMENT FOR RESIDENTS

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A series of Chinese band concerts and operas will be held this month in various playgrounds throughout Hong Kong for the entertainment of residents in the urban and rural areas.

The shows are being organised by the Urban Council in conjunction with the Urban Services Department and Radio Hong Kong. They will start at 8 p.m. and last for about two and a half hours. Admission will be free.

The first will be held on Thursday (September 6) in Southorn Playground at Hennessy Road in Wan Chai. Others are scheduled for Sham Shui Po, Yau Ma Tei, Yuen Long and Wong Tai Sin.

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WATER CUT

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Water supply to a number of premises in Causeway Bay will be interrupted for five hours starting from 1 a.m. on Thursday (September 6).

The temporary stoppage is to allow staff of the Waterworks Office to conduct a leakage test in the area.

The area affected is bounded by Sugar Street, the north side of Yee Wo Street, Great George Street, Paterson Street, Kingston Street and Cleveland Street.

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CENTRE CONCLUDES SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME

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Note to Editors: The closing ceremony of the Princess Alexandra Community Centre's summer youth programme will be held on Wednesday (September 5) at 8.30 p.m.

Presentation of prizes to winners of the junior ping pong tournament and the Chinese chess competition will also be held.

Officiating will be Mr. So Cherk-ming, chairman of the Tsuen Wan Recreation Committee; Mr. Lo Yan-shing, chairman of the Tsuen Wan District Sub-Committee of City North; and Mr. Alexander Fung, Warden of the Centre.

You are welcome to have the event covered.

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NEW MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CENTRE

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A new maternal and child health centre opened today in the Yau Tong Housing Estate, Ko Chiu Road, Kowloon.

The centre is the 36th clinic to be set up by the Medical and Health Department for maternal and child health services.

The new health centre will operate from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday to Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

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NEW LABOUR COMMISSIONER STARTS WORK

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Hong Kong's new Commissioner of Labour, Mr. I.R. Price, marked his first full-day in office today by visiting a Tokwawan knitwear factory to discuss with management and workers the importance of good labour relations.

Mr. Price - accompanied by the head of the Labour Relations Service, Mr. T.F. Tsui, and the Labour Department's Principal Information Officer, Mr. Barry Walsh - spent more than an hour at the factory, Wintex Knitwear Co. Ltd. in Tokwawan Road.

He chatted with workers, asking them if they felt they had easy access to management to discuss their grievances. He also spoke with the factory's director, Mr. James Cheng Hok-lai, about setting up joint consultation machinery in the firm.

"There is no doubt that good labour relations make for good management and good business," said Mr. Price. "Everyone appreciates that severe industrial trouble such as strikes and go-slows costs management money. But even general discontent among workers can affect production - and that hits the management in the pocket.

"Industrial trouble hurts workers too, of course. Being out of work means being out of pocket. On the other hand, an efficient and happily operating company means good, secure jobs for workers.

"So good relations between management and workers benefit both - and benefit Hong Kong as a whole," he said.

/Mr. Price .....

Mr. Price said Wintex appeared to be a good example of employer and employees working together. Representatives of the firm's 160 workers - roughly 60 per cent of whom are women - have regular informal meetings with the management to talk over their problems.

"We have found that in this way we can stop trouble before it starts," said the firm's director, Mr. James Cheng Hok-lai, "so we have only had a couple of problems here in the last few years - and because we knew each other, we were able to talk those out sensibly and find a solution. We know each other and we talk to each other, so there is no communication gap," he said.

"In fact it seems to be working so well that I am now looking at the possibility of setting up formal joint consultation machinery along the lines suggested by the Labour Department's Labour Relations Service."

Workers representative Miss Wong Tam-tie, a linking worker who is one of the workers' representatives, said she felt the regular discussions between the workers and the management were the reasons for the happy working atmosphere in the factory.

"We always have a chance to air our complaints," she said. "We have a workers' representative on each floor and whenever we encounter any problem, the representatives will take up the matter with the management."

"There is not so great a gap between us and the management that we feel we have to take drastic steps straight away. And because management gets a chance to understand our problems, we find they meet us half way without our having to threaten industrial trouble.

/"The management .....

"The management is now experimenting with an 'employee welfare' scheme which provides severance pay and medical and other benefits for us," she said.

After leaving Wintex, Mr. Price paid a surprise visit to the Cheung Sha Wan factory estate where he chatted with proprietors and workers.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph of Mr. Price's visit to Wintex are boxed for collection.

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Release Time: 8.00 p.m.