



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, January 10, 1973

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GOVERNOR TOURS MEI FOO SUN CHUEN

At Invitation Of Management Of The Estate

The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, today visited the Mei Foo Sun Chuen in Lai Chi Kok -- one of the largest private housing projects in Hong Kong.

Sir Murray, who has shown great interest in Hong Kong's housing problems, toured the estate at the invitation of Mei Foo Investments Limited, which is responsible for the management of the buildings.

The Governor announced last October a ten-year housing programme to build, with contribution from the private sector, sufficient permanent self-contained accommodation in a reasonable environment for every person in Hong Kong.

At Mei Foo Sun Chuen, Sir Murray was shown a model of the estate, and briefed on the history and the present status of the project by Mr. R.R. Kendall, Managing Director.

Mr. Kendall told the Governor of the project organisation, the legal agreements and obligations upon which the project is founded.

Mr. A.J.C. Haddon, General Manager, outlined the nature of the project, the planning concepts of Mei Foo, and the method by which continuous monitoring of the design and construction operation is maintained by officers directly representing the equity participants.

Sir Murray then toured the estate and saw for himself the facilities there. These include function rooms for social activities, a community centre under construction, a children's playground, a market and some recently finished flats.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph showing the Governor at Mei Foo Sun Chuen are distributed separately in the G.I.S. press boxes.

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PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME

December Figures Show Continuing Expansion

The total number of active cases in the public assistance scheme reached 17,728 at the end of December last year.

New applications received during the month totalled 960, and cases reactivated numbered 133. At the same time, 905 cases were closed.

Cash payments during December totalled \$2.6 million, bringing to \$34.3 million the grand total spent so far since the expanded scheme was implemented on April 1, 1971.

In addition to public assistance, Mr. Tsau Tsor-yan, Senior Principal Social Welfare Officer and head of the Public Assistance Division, says during December, divisional officers responded to four emergencies produced by fires.

As a result, 697 families were registered for emergency aid, and 3,629 people making up these families received hot food, blankets, cooking utensils, and so on.

During December, the 17th field unit of the Public Assistance Division was set up in the Sau Mau Ping Resettlement Estate to serve residents in the Sau Mau Ping and Kwun Tong areas.

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It is proposed, according to present plans, that there will be eventually 20 field units attached to the Public Assistance Division to handle the growing caseload.

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Note to Editors: Representatives of the Press, radio, and TV are invited to visit the Public Assistance Division's Mongkok Field Unit, 17th floor, and the Yau Ma Tei Field Unit, 18th floor, in the Kowloon Government Offices Building, Nathan Road, at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 17, 1973.

They will see public assistance cases being processed, and a number of recipients receiving cash across the counter in the Kowloon Central Post Office on the ground floor of the Building. Photographs will be possible. In addition, they will be invited to tour the Payments Control Section of the Social Welfare Department, also in the same building.

In attendance will be Mr. Tsau, and Mr. Lu Yu-hua, Principal Social Welfare Officer (Operations). Both will be available to answer questions on public assistance. The tour is intended to help familiarise members of the Press, radio and TV with the operational side of the public assistance scheme.

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MEDICAL FACILITIES IN HONG KONG

Dr. Choa Gives Illustrated Talk To Rotary Club

Medical facilities in Hong Kong are continuing to grow in proportion to the needs of the population, and the services already provided match with the best anywhere in the world.

Dr. G.H. Choa, Director of Medical and Health Services, told members of the Rotary Club of Kowloon West this today during the course of an illustrated talk.

In a 20-minute show of coloured film slides, Dr. Choa took Rotarians on a capsule tour of the medical and health establishments in Hong Kong, visiting not only hospitals already in operation, but also the exteriors of hospitals only recently completed, such as the Siu Lam Hospital in Tai Lam, and the Princess Margaret Hospital, in Lai Chi Kok, to be opened in 1974.

Radiological services, mental health services, physiotherapy, the Institute of Pathology, the Flying Doctor service, Port health, the Auxiliary Medical Services, and even the forensic museum in the Police headquarters, all formed part of Dr. Choa's wide ranging travelogue.

In a running commentary, he emphasised that the medical services in Hong Kong, as the pictures showed, were not static but were growing as the needs of the population grew.

He pointed to some of the sophisticated equipment shown as evidence of the Government's determination to provide Hong Kong with the best and the latest in the medical and health fields.

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FIRE DANGER WARNING SYSTEM IS SHOWING EFFECT

Greater Awareness Leads To Drop In Fire Calls

The number of fire calls in Hong Kong has dropped by almost a thousand and estimated fire losses have fallen by \$20 million in the three months since the introduction of the new Fire Danger Warning System, the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. F. Jackson, said today.

"Of course a major reason for the drop in calls has been the higher humidity during the final months of the past year compared with the same period of 1971. But we are convinced that public awareness of the higher fire danger during the winter months has contributed to the fall in the number of fires," he said.

"For instance in December, when the average humidity was the same as for the previous December, there were 679 fires compared to 749 in 1971, and fire loss was estimated at \$400,000, compared with \$2.6 million.

"It's quite a change to see any downward trend at all in the havoc wrought by fire in Hong Kong each year, and it does show that an awareness of the danger, and attempts to prevent fires, can work.

"We know this is just a small step, but it is a step in the right direction, and we hope it is just the beginning."

Mr. Jackson said the fire figures for the last three months illustrated the relationship between falling humidity and rising fire danger -- which was the basis of the new Fire Danger Warning System.

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There were 1,845 fires in the period, compared with 1,381 in the previous three months, when humidity was higher. In 1971, there had been 2,736 fires in the October-December period, compared with 1,481 in the three months from July to September.

And in November 1971, when the average humidity had been 58 per cent -- which would mean a "red" fire danger period under the new system -- there had been 1,158 fire calls, against 564 last November, when the humidity averaged 76 per cent.

Despite the fall in the number of fires, there was no reason for complacency, he said. In the three months to December, 26 people had died and 398 had been injured in fires, compared with 13 killed and 149 injured in the previous three months.

Fire Risk

Mr. Jackson reminded the public that Hong Kong was now in the middle of its most dangerous fire risk period. He stressed that the risk of an outbreak now was greater than at any other time during the year, and that any outbreak now would spread with such speed that it could be out of control before help arrived.

"A few simple precautions can stop nearly all fires before they start," he said.

"Just make sure you don't overload or tamper with any electrical fitting or appliance. Store inflammable liquids or gases well away from heat or flames and take great care with cooking or heating appliances using such fuels.

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"Keep matches out of the reach of children, and always make sure cigarettes, matches, joss sticks and so forth are properly extinguished.

"Newspapers, old clothing, cardboard cartons and other rubbish should never be allowed to accumulate, and you should always have two escape routes from your premises clear of any obstruction at all times.

"And finally, should you see a fire, however small, dial 999 immediately. Don't assume someone else will.

"If everybody takes these steps now, we will have fewer fires, fewer injuries, and fewer deaths.

"Remember, everyone owes it to his family to keep it safe."

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POST OFFICE ANNUAL CHILDREN'S PARTY

The Post Office Recreation Club's Annual Children's Party will be held at Club Grounds, Caroline Hill, Causeway Bay, on Sunday (January 14) commencing at 1.00 p.m.

About 1,000 children of Post Office employees will attend.

Amusement stalls, games, stage shows and refreshments will be provided.

Both the staff and their children are looking forward to this function as a timely event after the busy Christmas period.

Entertainment will be provided by guest artistes of Radio Hong Kong, RFTV and TVB.

The Drum Band of the New Method College and Band of the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps will give performances at the party.

By kind permission of the British Army Land Forces Headquarters in Hong Kong, donkeys have been made available for the entertainment of the children.

Prizes for the lucky draw will be presented by Mrs. M. Addi, wife of the Postmaster General.

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HELP OFFERED TO WATSON ESTATE FIRE VICTIMS

In connection with yesterday's fire at Watson Estate, a spokesman of the Labour Department said that the Workmen's Compensation Unit of the Department would offer assistance to those injured or dependants of those who died as a result of the accident to obtain Workmen's Compensation.

He stressed that all manual workers irrespective of their earnings and all non-manual workers earning \$1,500 or less a month are entitled to Compensation under the Ordinance if they suffered injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment.

He also reminded the employers concerned of their obligations to notify the Labour Department on prescribed forms of any injury to their workers within seven days after the accident and to make periodical payments to the injured workers on their normal pay-days during the period of incapacity.

Finally, he invited employers, injured workmen and dependants of victims to obtain further information about their respective obligations and entitlements under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance from the following offices of the Workmen's Compensation Unit of the Labour Department:-

- * New Rodney Building,
Ground floor,
Queensway,
Hong Kong. (5-249081 Ext.. 97)

- * Canton Road Government Offices,
5th floor,
Canton Road,
Kowloon. (3-669014) (3-688856) (3-688626)

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Release Time: 6.30 p.m.