



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1978

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DRUG PROBLEM IN HONG KONG IS CONTAINED

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A NEW COMPUTER RESEARCH PROGRAMME INDICATES THAT THE SPREAD OF NARCOTIC ADDICTION IN HONG KONG HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY CURTAILED.

THIS OBSERVATION WAS MADE IN THE FIRST ANALYSIS REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S RE-ORGANISED AND COMPUTERISED CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ADDICTS.

DETAILS OF THE REPORT WERE PUBLISHED TODAY (THURSDAY) AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY MR. E. I. LEE, COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS, AND DR. ROBERT NEWMAN AND MR. BENT WERBELL, CONSULTANTS FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST IN THE RE-ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE REGISTRY.

THE REPORT COVERS A 22-MONTH PERIOD BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1, 1976 AND JUNE 30, 1978, DURING WHICH REPORTS ON 26,429 INDIVIDUAL ADDICTS WERE RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ENGAGED EITHER IN ANTI-DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT OR TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION WORK. A TOTAL OF 58,873 REPORTS WERE RECEIVED ON THESE ADDICTS, HALF OF WHOM WERE REPORTED ONLY ONCE, WITH THE OTHER HALF BEING REPORTED TWICE OR MORE.

OF THE 26,429 INDIVIDUALS, ONLY THREE PER CENT WERE AGED 19 OR UNDER.

THE REPORT SAYS THIS EXTREMELY SMALL PROPORTION OF TEENAGERS STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE PROBLEM OF NARCOTIC ADDICTION IN HONG KONG IS NOT ON THE INCREASE.

THE REASON, IT SAYS, IS THAT REPORTS FROM COUNTRIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ARE CONSISTENT IN FINDING THAT AN INCREASE IN INCIDENCE OF ADDICTION OCCURS OVERWHELMINGLY AMONG THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY= +THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IN HONG KONG THE SITUATION WOULD BE DIFFERENT.+

OF THE REMAINING 97 PER CENT, THE LARGEST PROPORTION (32 PER CENT) APPEARED IN THE 20 - 29 AGE GROUP AND THE OTHER 65 PER CENT WERE DISTRIBUTED QUITE EVENLY ABOVE THE AGE OF 30.

ANOTHER ENCOURAGING INDICATION QUOTED IN THE REPORT IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN A DOWNWARD TREND IN THE NUMBER OF ADDICTS WHO ARE REPORTED TO THE REGISTRY FOR THE FIRST TIME. BY THE END OF THE 22-MONTH PERIOD OF ANALYSIS, NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF ALL THE REPORTED INDIVIDUALS WERE ALREADY KNOWN TO THE REGISTRY.

THE REPORT NOTES, HOWEVER, THAT ALTHOUGH WOMEN ADDICTS ACCOUNTED FOR ONLY FOUR PER CENT OF THE 26,429 INDIVIDUALS, THIS IS AN INCREASE WHEN COMPARED WITH ONLY 1.4 PER CENT AS REPORTED BY THE +OLD+ REGISTRY FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN APRIL 1972 AND MARCH 1974.

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ANOTHER FINDING BY THE COMPUTERISED REGISTRY WHICH IS OF CONCERN TO ANTI-DRUG WORKERS IS A MARKED INCREASE IN THE USE OF THE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS METHOD OF INJECTION BY THE ADDICTS TO TAKE HEROIN. ABOUT 32 PER CENT OF THEM USED THIS METHOD, COMPARED WITH ONLY ABOUT 14 PER CENT DURING THE 1972-74 PERIOD, OBVIOUSLY BECAUSE THIS METHOD REDUCES THE WASTAGE OF THEIR EXPENSIVE SUPPLIES WHICH OCCURS IF EITHER THE SMOKING OR FUME INHALING METHODS ARE USED.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NARCOTICS DIVISION OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT SAID THE INJECTION METHOD IS DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE ADDICTS MAY CONTRACT DISEASES SUCH AS HEPATITIS BY USING DIRTY SYRINGES OR SUFFER OTHER PHYSICAL DAMAGE DUE TO THE IMPURITIES IN +NO. 3 HEROIN.+

AS TO THE TYPES OF DRUGS USED BY ADDICTS, THE CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ADDICTS REPORT STATES THAT 83 PER CENT OF THE ADDICTS USED HEROIN, 12 PER CENT USED OPIUM AND THE REMAINING FIVE PER CENT USED DRUGS SUCH AS MORPHINE, AMPHETAMINES, BAREITURATES AND METHADONE.

AS FAR AS GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION IS CONCERNED, IT IS REPORTED THAT THE ADDICT PATTERN IS QUITE SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE GENERAL POPULATION= 22 PER CENT LIVED ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 24 PER CENT IN KOWLOON, 36 PER CENT IN NEW KOWLOON, 17 PER CENT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND ON OUTLYING ISLANDS, AND 0.2 PER CENT IN MARINE AREAS.

COMMENTING ON THIS INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE REGISTRY, THE NARCOTICS DIVISION SPOKESMAN SAID THE POTENTIAL RESOURCE WHICH THE REGISTRY REPRESENTS IS JUST BEGINNING TO BE TAPPED.

+ADDITIONAL VALUABLE INFORMATION WILL BE OBTAINED AND ANALYSED AS TIME GOES ON, THUS PERMITTING A CONSIDERABLY GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DRUG ADDICTION PROBLEM IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CAPABILITIES OF THE REGISTRY, HE SAID, IS THE ANALYSIS OF REPORTING HISTORY OF ADDICTS SUBSEQUENT TO A REPORT FROM SPECIFIC AGENCIES. THUS, IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO FIND OUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PARTICULAR TREATMENT PROGRAMME BY MEASURING, FOR EXAMPLE, HOW MANY DISCHARGED ADDICTS ARE SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN RE-ARRESTED BY THE POLICE AFTER RELAPSE TO ILLICIT DRUGS.

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TWO MORE INDUSTRIAL SITES FOR SALE AT SHA TIN

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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO SELL BY TENDER TWO MORE SITES IN THE EXPANDING INDUSTRIAL AREA IN SHA TIN TO HOLDERS OF LAND EXCHANGE ENTITLEMENTS ISSUED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

THE SENIOR ESTATE SURVEYOR OF THE SHA TIN DISTRICT OFFICE, MR. ROGER THOMPSON, TODAY SAID: +THESE ARE VERY GOOD SITES SITUATED AT TAI WAI AND ARE CLOSE TO THE BUS AND RAILWAY EXCHANGE IN THE AREA.

+THE LOTS HAVE GOOD ROAD ACCESS TO KOWLOON BY WAY OF THE SHA TIN TRUNK ROAD, AND ARE CONVENIENTLY LOCATED NEAR A NUMBER OF PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES, GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND A VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.+

HE ADDED THAT THE SITES SEEMED TO BE ATTRACTIVE TO ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY.

MR. THOMPSON SAID THAT AN ADJACENT INDUSTRIAL SITE MEASURING 3,782 SQUARE METRES HAD FETCHED A RECORD PRICE OF \$20 MILLION FOR THE AREA AT A GOVERNMENT AUCTION IN JUNE THIS YEAR.

THE FIRST SITE FOR TENDER HAS AN AREA OF 2,643 SQUARE METRES AND CARRIES A BUILDING COVENANT OF \$2,850,000 TO BE FULFILLED WITHIN 30 MONTHS FROM JANUARY 1 NEXT YEAR.

THE SECOND SITE HAS AN AREA OF 2,273 SQUARE METRES AND CARRIES A BUILDING COVENANT OF \$2,450,000 TO BE FULFILLED IN THE SAME PERIOD.

THE TWO SITES ARE BASICALLY RESTRICTED TO SIX OR SEVEN STOREY BUILDINGS.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE TWO LOTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES BY NOON ON OCTOBER 6 THIS YEAR, AND SHOULD BE PLACED IN THE APPLICATION BOX IN THE RECEPTION LOBBY OF THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, 5TH FLOOR, HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING, KOWLOON.

APPLICATION FORMS, ALONG WITH NOTICE AND CONDITIONS OF GRANT MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND THE PLAN INSPECTED AT THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION OR THE SEVEN DISTRICT OFFICES.

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GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE

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THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1978 SHOW A DEFICIT OF \$77.4 MILLION COMPARED WITH A DEFICIT OF \$179.2 MILLION IN JUNE LAST YEAR. THIS HAS BROUGHT THE ACCUMULATED SURPLUS TO \$370.7 MILLION FOR THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, COMPARED WITH AN ACCUMULATED SURPLUS OF \$24.7 MILLION FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE, AT \$794.6 MILLION, WAS \$171.2 MILLION MORE THAN IN JUNE, 1977.

TOTAL REVENUE AND RECEIPTS, AT \$717.2 MILLION, WERE \$273 MILLION MORE THAN FOR THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

FURTHER STUDY OF PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM

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AN AGREEMENT FOR A FURTHER STUDY OF A PROPOSAL FOR A LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM ALONG HONG KONG ISLAND'S COASTAL STRIP WILL BE SIGNED TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT 10 A.M. IN THE G.I.S. THEATRE, FIFTH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL.

SIGNING ON BEHALF OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WILL BE MR. NICKY CHAN, ACTING DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT, AND ON BEHALF OF THE CONSULTANTS, MARTIN AND VOORHEES ASSOCIATES, MR. BRIAN MARTIN.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THE CEREMONY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

HONG KONG YOUTH CULTURAL AND ARTS COMPETITIONS

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THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THE HONG KONG YOUTH CULTURAL AND ARTS COMPETITIONS WILL ANNOUNCE THE DETAILS OF THIS YEAR'S COMPETITIONS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 3 P.M. TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT THE HONG KONG ROOM OF THE HILTON HOTEL.

THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF HOME AFFAIRS, MR. MICHAEL LEUNG MAN-KIN= THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOME AFFAIRS, MRS. KATHERINE FOK, ALONG WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THE COMPETITIONS, MR. SHUM CHOI-SANG WILL CHAIR THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THE EVENT.

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HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENT FOR MARINE DEPARTMENT

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THE MARINE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THE PORT COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE, THE SMALL CRAFT LICENSING OFFICE AND THE OFFICE FOR THE MACAU FERRY WHARF UNIT WILL REMAIN OPEN ON MONDAY (SEPTEMBER 18), WHICH IS A PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

ON THAT DAY THE SMALL CRAFT LICENSING OFFICE WILL OPERATE FROM 9 A.M. TO 11 A.M., AND THE MACAU FEERY WHARF UNIT FROM 7.30 A.M. TO 1.30 A.M. THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE PORT COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE WILL OPERATE ROUND THE CLOCK.

THE FOUR PUBLIC CARGO WORKING AREAS ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN WAN CHAI, YAU MA TEI, KWUN TONG AND TSUEN WAN WILL ALSO REMAIN OPEN ON THAT DAY.

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TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURE

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE SECTION OF NAM CHEONG STREET BETWEEN CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD AND FUK WA STREET HAS BEEN CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM 4 P.M. TODAY (THURSDAY) TO FACILITATE EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO THE UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC CABLES.

DURING THE CLOSURE PERIOD, WHICH WILL LAST FOR ABOUT ONE WEEK, BUS ROUTE NOS. 2E AND 204 NORTHBOUND ARE RE-ROUTED FROM NAM CHEONG STREET JUNCTION OF CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD TO OPERATE VIA CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD, WONG CHUK STREET, TAI PO ROAD TO REJOIN NAM CHEONG STREET.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS HAVE BEEN SET UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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