



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, October 31, 1973

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MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEXT DECADE

Far-Reaching Implications Of Draft New 10-Year Plan

Four new hospitals on the Island, Kowloon and the New Territories are recommended by the Medical Development Advisory Committee to cope with the anticipated medical needs of a population expected to be more than five million in the next decade.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Albert Rodrigues, was set up on March 27 this year to consider and advise on the development and phased implementation of medical and health services between now and 1983.

Its report, a comprehensive document with vast implications, was tabled in the Legislative Council today, and at the same time published for public information and comment.

By early next year, after the recommendations have been carefully considered, a clear programme of development is expected to be laid before the Executive and Legislative Councils.

The four new hospitals, strategically located in areas of growing density, is one of a host of major recommendations embracing new training facilities for dentists and dental nurses, more training facilities for doctors, general and psychiatric nurses, more polyclinics and clinics, and regionalisation of the hospital and clinic services -- all costing million of dollars.

The proposed hospitals are a general hospital in East Kowloon, another general hospital at Shatin, a psychiatric hospital on Hong Kong Island, and a general hospital at Tuen Mun, near Castle Peak.

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The hospitals will together provide 3,900 beds. Capital outlay will be about \$316 million, and recurrent costs \$105 million a year -- at present prices.

The total number of new beds is, however, in the region of 8,000, which, added to those already in the pipeline in both government and assisted hospitals, will bring the figure to 27,500, or a ratio of 5.5 per 1,000 of the population.

The Committee divides hospital beds into two categories, acute and non-acute, and the report says more non-acute, or chronic beds, are required, not only for general cases, but also for psychiatric and geriatric cases -- the latter in view of an ageing population.

Provision of "day beds"

There is a provision for what the Committee describes as "day beds" to accommodate mainly geriatric, psychiatric and chronic cases requiring minimum medical and nursing care. These beds, to be provided in new clinics, will be used for convalescent cases, or will serve as "half-way houses" for patients not requiring hospitalisation, but who are unfit to be left at home all the time.

Four clinics will be under construction at Ngau Tau Kok, Lam Tin, Lei Muk Shue and Ma Kwai Chung, with facilities designed to meet the expected number of attendances. Future polyclinics will incorporate such special services as chest and psychiatric clinics, public health laboratories, physiotherapy and occupational therapy departments.

The regionalisation scheme is based on four regional hospitals, the Queen Mary, the Queen Elizabeth, the Princess Margaret in Lai Chi Kok, and the Kwong Wah, of the Tung Wah group.

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Regionalisation means that patients are referred from general clinics, first to specialist clinics or polyclinics, and then, depending on the nature of the illness, to a district or the regional hospital. The difference between district and regional lies mainly in the specialist service available, hence the flow of patients from one to the other can also be bi-directional.

In calculating the future requirements of doctors in government service to staff hospitals, clinics, polyclinics and administrative offices planned for the next decade, the Committee believes more than 1,300 will be required, or 100 new doctors a year between 1983 and 1992.

The Committee says since it cannot be expected that the Government will be able to recruit these Cantonese-speaking doctors from abroad, "a local source of supply" able to produce them by 1982 is needed.

Training of Nurses

Concerning nurses, the Committee believes that the gap between requirements and supply will also increase substantially in the years to come, and for this reason, it recommends that a third general nurses training school be built, with a minimum capacity of an annual intake of 150 to supplement existing government training schools at the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth hospitals.

As a first step towards giving dental care to school children, the Committee urges the construction of a dental nurses' school and a school dental clinic. Proposals for both have already been prepared by the Medical and Health Department.

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The Committee says it has considered the desirability of training dentists locally. While it has not attempted to fix a dentist-to-population ratio for the future, it agrees that plans should be made for a dental school, starting with a pre-clinical annual intake of at least 40, with an annual output of about 60 dentists from 1980 onwards. It estimates that there will be one dentist to 6,000 of the population by 1990.

Other Recommendations

The Committee's report also makes these recommendations:-

- * The accident services should be re-organised so that hospitals are given the roles of "accident centres" and "designated accident centres" within the regionalisation scheme. The Committee believes that with the rise of accidents as a result of rapid industrialisation, traffic congestion, fire hazards and natural disasters, only the successful application of preventive measures will reduce fatality and disablement.
- * The experiment in community nursing now being carried out by voluntary agencies should be studied to see whether such a scheme is feasible within the framework of other social services necessary to augment a district nursing service.
- * The results of the Medical and Health Department's pilot methadone maintenance scheme should be considered carefully to determine whether an out-patient service should be instituted for the treatment of drug addicts. Such an out-patient service would require more clinic space, staff, and so on.
- * With the Medical and Health Department's assumption of direct responsibility for family planning, this aspect of the department's work should proceed in conjunction with the expansion of its maternal and child health service.

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- * To make of the disabled better contributing members of society, rehabilitation work should be expanded by the provision of physiotherapy and occupational therapy departments in new polyclinics. More non-acute beds implies the recognition that some cases will require long-term hospitalisation, for example, paraplegic patients.
- * With the Tung Wah group of hospitals joining government and assisted hospitals in the regionalisation scheme, the policy of free beds in the group's hospitals should be revised so that the government fee of \$2 a day inclusive in general wards be applicable to all hospitals within the scheme. The remission of fees for those unable to pay will continue to apply. General ward fees should be raised from \$2 to \$3 a day, and then to \$5 a day within 18 months of the first raise, to take account of increasing costs. The infirmaries maintained by the Tung Wah group for chronic cases should continue to be free.

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Note to Editors: Sir Albert Rodrigues, Chairman of the Medical Development Advisory Committee, and Dr. G.H. Choa, Director of Medical and Health Services, and the Committee's vice-chairman, will meet members of the Press, radio and TV to answer questions on the report at 9 a.m. on Thursday, November 1, (tomorrow) in the theatre of the Information Services Department, 5th floor, Beaconsfield House.

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MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT
Proposals For 10-Year Stretch Laid Before Legislative Council

The Hon. Director of Medical and Health Services, Dr. G.H. Choa, today introduced the report of the Medical Development Advisory Committee when it was tabled in the Legislative Council.

He said the report advised on a programme of improvement and expansion in the medical and health fields between now and 1982.

It covered the provision of hospital beds, fuller use of government and assisted hospitals, and the numbers of doctors, dentists, and nurses that would be required -- identifying the constraints, in the way of staff shortages, that would affect the pace of expansion.

Dr. Choa told the Council that the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee, chaired by the Hon. Sir Albert Rodrigues, had not yet been accepted by the Government.

But they were being published so that the reactions of the community as a whole could be obtained and considered. He advised those wishing to express their views to do so before the end of December this year, and such comments would be "taken carefully into account by the Government before it announces its conclusions."

Dr. Choa explained that the report would be subject to an annual review "in the light of changes in circumstances, more refined data or statistics obtained, and any variation in priorities."

"In this way, we shall be able to keep well up to date on our plans and programmes," he said.

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Note to Editors: A summary of the Medical Development Advisory Committee's report is issued separately. Copies of the report, in English and Chinese, are being distributed in the Press boxes, Government Information Services, later this evening.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Provision Of Secondary School Places Over Next 10 Years

The Board of Education strongly recommends that the principal objective for the proposed expansion of secondary school education in Hong Kong over the next decade should be the provision of three-year places for 100 per cent of children in the 12-14 age group and five-year school places for 40 per cent of those in the 12-16 age group.

In a letter to the Governor on submission of the Board's Report, the Chairman, Mr. P.C. Woo said: "I believe this objective can be achieved by the end of 1984."

Mr. Woo added: "We have proposed in our Report that there should be an interim target, which would involve the provision by the end of 1981 of sufficient three-year places for 80 per cent of the 12-14 age group and sufficient five-year places for 36 per cent of the 12-16 age group."

The Board believes that both these targets can be achieved so long as the proposed rate of building of schools can be maintained, and teacher training facilities in the colleges of education and universities can be expanded.

The Board's Report, tabled in the Legislative Council this afternoon, recommends that "it is educationally unsound to introduce bi-sessional operation and rotation into the non-academic sector particularly at a time when the main thrust of development must be made in that sector."

It points out that the immediate advantages provided in terms of quantity are outweighed by the disadvantages of bi-sessional operation when it is viewed in a broader context.

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The Report emphasised that "quantitative targets involving the provision of increased places should not be achieved at the expense of the qualitative aims of Hong Kong's education system."

The Board also recommended that rotation was not considered acceptable because of the strains imposed upon staff of schools and the disruption of family life.

As regards "floating" classes, the Board said this arrangement already existed in standard Secondary Technical Schools. It was also used in existing Prevocational Schools.

On financing school buildings the Board noted that the Government's declared policy was that expansion of education, wherever possible, would be in the aided sector.

It therefore recommended that the Government's contribution to the capital costs of new building projects should be increased from 80 per cent to 90 per cent and exceptionally, to 100 per cent.

In the case of secondary technical and prevocational schools built in housing estates, the Board said financial assistance should also be given to the cost of furniture and equipping such schools.

The Board urged the Government to take practical steps to reduce the time taken to allocate sites for school projects.

On public examinations the Board recommended that every effort should be made to minimise the deleterious effects which these examinations had on pupils and their study programmes in Secondary Schools.

Efforts should also be made to generate among students, teachers and all concerned a better understanding of the functions of examining, and to improve methods of learning assessment.

/It stressed.....

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It stressed the need to minimise the undesirable effects of the Secondary School Entrance Examination on primary education and to widen the basis for selective allocation to secondary schools.

"It is clear that for the next decade the elimination of a centrally administered system of allocation of places will not be possible," the Board said. Other main recommendations of the Board include the following:

- * Chinese should become the usual medium of instruction in the lower forms of secondary schools; every effort should be made to develop good textbooks for all subjects written in Chinese, to train teachers capable of instructing through the medium of Chinese and to adopt improved techniques of language teaching for both Chinese and English.

The Board said: "We are nevertheless conscious of the need to maintain and improve standards in the teaching of English for those who will proceed beyond Form 3 level in preparation for continuing their education at the tertiary level."

- * In the present circumstances of Hong Kong there is no apparent justification for providing secondary education free of charge at Form 1-3 level since its introduction would result in public funds being used to provide free education for those of the community who can afford to pay fees, thus preventing such funds from being spent on other equally essential social needs of the community.

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- * No child should be denied a Government, aided or assisted place in a secondary school because of the inability of his parents to pay the school fees. The Board urged the Government to examine present procedures to ensure that policy regarding fee remissions be carried into effect.
- * The necessity for regular review of the position regarding free education in the light of changing circumstances, particularly when provision of three years of assisted post-primary education is achieved for all in the 12-14 age group.

"Teacher education holds the key to educational improvement in both quantitative and qualitative terms. We recognise that the supply of professionally trained teachers, including technical teachers, is a crucial factor in the development programme," the Board said.

- * A fourth College of Education should be established as soon as possible, in temporary accommodation in the first instance; it should also include facilities for the training of non-graduate technical teachers.
- * The two Universities should give serious consideration to a greater expansion of their graduate teacher education facilities.
- * A Technical Teacher Training Board should be established under the auspices of the Board of Education.
- * Suitably constituted machinery should be established under the Board of Education to study, and ~~make~~ recommendations on, all aspects of teacher education in Hong Kong.

/* There should

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- * There should be regular review of policy regarding teacher-class ratios, proportions of graduate to non-graduate teachers in secondary schools and professional training for graduate teachers.
- * An immediate review, and regular discussion, of present Government policy relating to the supply and professional training of teachers.

The reconstituted Board held 14 meetings and made their recommendations after it had considered a total of 48 representations from educational and industrial organisations, school teachers, students, university lecturers and members of the public.

At the Board's request, the Education Department prepared and submitted some 22 Papers on various topics for information and consideration. The Board also considered papers prepared by some of its members.

A foreword in the Board's Report invites members of the public to send their suggestions or views to G.P.O. Box 1899, Hong Kong.

Copies of the Report are being sent to everyone who made representations to the Board. They are also being distributed to schools, Colleges of Education, universities, educational and civic organisations, kaifong associations, members of Executive, Legislative and Urban Councils as well as the mass media.

After distribution a limited number of copies in English and Chinese will be available for members of the public. These copies can be obtained free of charge from City District Offices.

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CONCERN OVER RISING LIVING COSTS

Employers Urged To Keep Wages In Line With Prices

All employers, including the government, were today urged to do some "radical re-thinking" on the problem of rising living costs to keep wages and salaries in line with prices.

The appeal came from Mr. P.C. Woo, Senior Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council, while supporting a motion of thanks for the Governor's opening address.

He noted with concern the alarming rise of 26.5 per cent in the general consumer price index during the past nine months, and emphasised that for people in the lower income bracket -- below \$3,000 a month -- it was not sufficient to make wage awards after price increases had taken place.

He recommended an early extension of the system of cost of living allowances as a flexible mechanism for adjusting income to living cost as and when the prices of essential goods shoot quickly upwards.

"These allowances, which are already in existence in the lowest sectors, should vary on a monthly basis with the cost of living and need not immediately be incorporated into basic salary," he said.

An annual review would later form the basis of a decision on what portion of the increases awarded during the year should be permanently incorporated into basic salary, he added.

Mr. Woo pointed out that the community could not afford to underwrite the whole of the 26.5 per cent increase in living costs for all employees, but stressed that those in greatest need could wait no longer for immediate relief.

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This allowance system, he suggested, should take into account the needs of the individual -- so that the percentage awards might well be greater at the lowest levels, with a sliding scale for allowances for those in the higher brackets.

He attributed the recent alarming increase in living costs to "imported inflation" and "unjustified profiteering" and urged the government to take at least "minimum steps" to tackle the problem.

This should include a full explanation of what the situation was and what steps could be taken to deal with it; a constant review and control of prices for essential commodities to curb unjustified profiteering; and a search for new sources of supplies designed to bring down prices.

Earlier, Mr. Woo thanked the Governor for his opening address to the Legislative Council two weeks ago. Mr. Woo described it as "one of the finest speeches ever made to this Council" and certainly "the most ^{Commemorative} monumental".

He said there had never before been such vigorous leadership at top government level, and it had proven in many spheres that the unchangeable could be changed and the unachievable achieved.

"Here then is an unparalleled opportunity for a new start, a new civic consciousness, a new morality," he said.

He emphasised, however, that it was now up to the community at large to respond. "The key is corporate involvement," he said. "This can lead us towards a corporate philosophy and a corporate identity."

/He also

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He also suggested that "we should put our fellow citizens and the good of Hong Kong before our personal considerations. This will in turn create a sense of corporate endeavour and identity".

Mr. Woo went on to voice his support for the government's decision to legalise off-course betting in Jockey Club premises. "We are not introducing any new form of gambling here," he emphasised. "We merely aim if possible to replace an existing form of illegal gambling by a recognised form of legal gambling."

On the subject of secondary education, he agreed that the examination system should be changed and this could be tackled once the plan for additional secondary school places had been approved.

Referring to the work of the UMELCO Office, Mr. Woo reported that their involvement in public complaints and representations had continued to expand and that the Unofficials had made a greatly increased contribution to Legislative Council work last year.

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SPECIAL COMMITTEES PROPOSED TO STABILISE COST OF LIVING

Government Responsible For Controlling Inflation - Mr. Wong

The Hon. Wilfred Wong today called for the setting up of two separate committees to study and work out ways of stabilising the general cost of living, and to regulate increasing prices of such essential commodities as rice, vegetables and fish.

Speaking in the Legislative Council debate, Mr. Wong said: "It is to be noted that the rise in the prices of essential foodstuff accounts for almost half of the rise in the index of the cost of living."

He cited figures showing that the average price of middle grade rice and the cheapest vegetable and fish had conjunctively risen by 99 per cent in two years and were still rising.

To counter this, he suggested that an Essential Foodstuff Committee be set up with the following terms of reference:

- * To ensure the continuity of present sources of supply of essential commodities
- * To explore new sources of supply of essential foodstuffs, and
- * To study and recommend the practicability of price control as a means of eliminating speculation in essential foodstuffs.

"In making a maximum attempt of stabilising the costs of essential foodstuff, we would cover half of the battle against inflation," Mr. Wong said.

There were lessons to be learned, he went on, and one could envisage the economic and social consequences of the creation of such a committee by the government.

/"After all,

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"After all, it is the duty of the government to control inflation and to enter into the marketing activities of essential foodstuff so that at least the element of profiteering as against legitimate profit making can be eradicated." ^{checked}

As he saw it, the basic cause of the worldwide problem of inflation was "disequilibrium between demand and supply of commodities."

While inflation caused by the world price of the commodities could not be controlled, he said, inflation in the Hong Kong prices of essential foodstuff could be controlled to a considerable extent by "negotiations, planning, supply of facilities and bonuses or other methods of encouragement."

Mr. Wong repeated a proposal he made in 1968 concerning the creation of an Economic Advisory Committee.

The functions of this Committee would be to:

- * Study the structure of Hong Kong's gross domestic product with a view to exploring additional sources of revenue without dampening entrepreneurial incentives in commerce and industry.
- * Study ways and means of stabilising the cost of living particularly as it relates to labour costs, and with special reference to essential foodstuffs.
- * Study and recommend measures toward making the Hong Kong dollar an independent currency and managing it conscientiously in order to avoid a possible crisis in the future, and
- * To study and recommend economic policy for maintaining a high rate of growth of the Hong Kong economy.

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"This committee will rightly put economics in its proper place as the most important aspect of modern government," said Mr. Wong.

He emphasised that the proposed committee should cover not only the long-range plan for stabilising the cost of living "but also the short-term emergency plans for dealing with devaluation and revaluation of related currencies as it affects our economy and the most appropriate way of investing our reserves."

He added: "More specifically the Economic Advisory Committee should study and recommend measures to stabilise the costs of living in general and the prices of rice, vegetables and fish in particular.

"It does not serve any useful purpose to keep saying that prices of ^{essential commodity} staples have been stable," he stressed.

Mr. Wong went on to say that just as food was the most important item in the cost of living, so land was the most important item amongst the factors of production.

In his view, the future of overcrowded Hong Kong lay in Lantau. "The development of Lantau which is bigger than Hong Kong will solve the land shortage problem for good," he said.

Aside from residential and recreational areas, it would provide industrial land at prices compatible with the development of industries and put Hong Kong on par with those in Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea and Indonesia, he said.

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Referring to plans for building a bridge from Castle Peak to Lantau Island, Mr. Wong told Council he had information that "a very public spirited citizen is willing to make a substantial contribution toward the cost of that bridge."

On other issues, Mr. Wong wanted to know the government's decision on the question of extending the retirement age of civil servants to 60 years which the Council had endorsed in a motion nine months ago.

He also favoured raising the eligibility income limit for low cost housing from \$600 to \$700, in the light of present incomes.

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FOOD PRICES MUST BE CONTROLLED - MRS. SYMONS

People Worried Over Govt's Apparent Lack Of Concern

The Hon. Mrs. Joyce Symons joined her Unofficial colleagues in urging the government to impose some form of control, even if on a temporary basis, to arrest skyrocketing prices of basic commodities.

"The great majority of our citizens are worried that the government does not seem worried about the sharp increase of food prices," Mrs. Symons said.

"They are not confident that the government has done anything to ^{control} curb, not the prices at source which are beyond its jurisdiction, but the tremendous profits demanded by our importers and traders.

"They cannot understand that once again, in a vital area of their lives, the government appears to indulge in that wretched out-dated policy of laissez-faire," she said.

Mrs. Symons pointed out that the people were hopeful that the government would combat the scourge of rising prices following an appeal by a learned Professor of Economics and many practising economists to set up a "price stabilisation board" or an "essential commodity committee".

However nothing seemed to have been done.

"Quite soon, wages will spiral again, and the whole vicious circle is set in motion."

On youth activities, Mrs. Symons expressed the hope that something along the lines of the summer youth activities could be arranged for the youngsters in the winter.

/"There is

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"There is much opportunity in our glorious winter weather for our youthful population to enjoy were government able to organise a winter programme with the possible assistance of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club," she said.

She stressed that active planning could now be given to preparing school children for the correct use of such facilities, now that plans were going ahead to open up more picnic spots and areas undiscovered by the many.

She welcomed the promise of the government to pursue, undaunted, the massive programmes of expansion in housing, education, medical and other social services, and of new development of traffic and transport. She hoped to speak on some aspects of education in the next decade later.

Turning to the reorganisation of the government machinery, Mrs. Symons said: "The government now wants to be business-like and efficient, instead of ponderous and impassive."

The new Secretaries, she added, could open a new page in the history of Hong Kong, as they "re-organise the departments under their command."

Mrs. Symons went on: "At all levels, their work will be watched with interest. In time, there should be fewer bottlenecks in the chain of command and with the morass of waiting removed, and the red tape cut away, those who have to deal with government, and who doesn't, should find negotiations more readily handled and brought to a swift conclusion.

"In the past, when younger members of the community tried short-cuts to achieve their aims, the government chose to ignore them.

/"The many

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"The many avenues now open to the public should be further publicised. Young people remain unconvinced that there are channels open. The wind of change must blow more steadily here."

On the link between Hong Kong and Britain, Mrs. Symons said there existed "strange weaknesses".

She gave inability to bring back Godber and the reprieve of Tsoi as examples which she described as "an absolute gift to those who decry our existence and who wish to wreck our achievements."

Mrs. Symons congratulated the Governor on setting up a separate Anti-Corruption Commission.

She assured Sir Murray that the Commissioner, Mr. Jack Cater, would be given "our fullest co-operation."

On the ways of combatting corruption, she said: "At the lowest level, any public servant who deals with a member of the public should attempt daily to serve the person without delay or intimidation or a sense of superiority.

"At a higher level, the anxious businessman should not be encouraged to think that only 'tea-money' can fortify a public servant to act quickly.

"Given the determination, much could be improved overnight by the mere exercise of self-discipline and a change of heart, not a detailed government directive."

Mrs. Symons concluded that the situation was that Hong Kong was at the cross-roads.

/"If we

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"If we are sincere in our efforts that we want to clean Hong Kong of its vice, then we all have a part to play," she said.

Mrs. Symons was convinced that the goal could be achieved by the joint efforts of the government and the people.

"Let the world note that Hong Kong will try to conquer another adversary," she said.

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DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TERRITORIES

Mr. Szeto Urges Better Facilities For Rural Areas

A comprehensive development plan for the New Territories, making full provision for the essentials of community life, should be introduced as a matter of urgency, the Hon. Szeto Wai said today.

The development of the New Territories, he suggested, should not stop at the new towns but should be extended to other rural areas, and taken to the outlying islands.

"In all cases, infrastructures answering the essentials of a community life must be provided and in a suitable timescale hitherto out of step in the building of our new towns."

He emphasised, however, that the development of the rural areas in the form of new townships for housing, industrial expansion and commercial activities must be accompanied with the development of the region's natural environment to provide greater recreational outlets for a highly urbanised community.

"Much of our countryside has deteriorated due to long years of neglect, misuse and pollution. Such rural disasters must be eradicated and the countryside saved and preserved," he stressed.

Speaking in support of a motion of thanks for the Governor's address to the opening session of the Legislative Council, Mr. Szeto welcomed the recent establishment of a New Territories Development Department within the Public Works Department to deal with housing and associated development in the rural areas.

/Referring to

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Referring to "the pressing need for recreational facilities," he questioned whether there was any reason why the development of Ma Wan Island should not be accorded higher priority.

He noted that the island was zoned predominantly for recreational use and an approved zoning plan existed since 1969. As Ma Wan was literally a stepping stone from Tsing Yi to Lantau, its development appeared to him to be a prerequisite to that of Lantau.

Mr. Szeto referred to the many projects formulated by the two advisory committees for Recreation Development and Nature Conservation which should soon pass the planning stage to implementation, and expressed the hope that these projects would be given a high priority rating "as three years had elapsed since the committees were formed."

There was a danger, he added, that the plans might be interpreted by the public as another instance of "jam tomorrow."

In his view, the development of nearby islands for recreation purposes must be considered as a long-term plan -- Lantau, Lamma and Ma Wan.

Private enterprise, he went on, could play an important role in the development of the New Territories, and he called for more land to be made available in the new towns for better private housing development by pushing back the green belts adjoining them on hillsides.

Citing Sha Tin as an example, he felt the higher grounds on both sides of the valley were suitable for large scale private residential development of low density.

/Mr. Szeto

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Mr. Szeto welcomed the government's recent decision to allow large scale comprehensive private housing development on the Kowloon Foothills north of Lung Cheung Road. This was a departure from the "unsatisfactory established policy of piece-meal development," he said, and would produce far more satisfactory results in the context of integral planning.

He was disappointed, however, that only one tract of the land there would be available in the near future after considerable time and consultancy fees had been spent. He also questioned when and in what form this land sale would take place and why consultancy services were necessary when "professional expertise" was available within the Public Works Department.

Referring to the deep-rooted problem of corruption, Mr. Szeto said the decision to set up an independent Anti-Corruption Commission had been a popular one.

To stamp out this evil, the root of the problem must be tackled by changing the attitude of the population. "This can only be achieved in the long term through education and sustained publicity, perhaps most effectively by including the subject in our school curriculae."

Effective legislation, supported by vigorous investigations and relentless but just pursuance were also essential, he added.

In Mr. Szeto's view, the language gap was another factor which encouraged corruption because advantage was often taken of non-English-speaking people not conversant with the law and government procedures.

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"Corruption will reduce when greater use is made of Chinese in government business," he said.

On housing, Mr. Szeto stressed that the only way the target of housing 1.8 million people in 10 years could be achieved was "through a three-pronged attack on planning, administration and construction".

He felt there was considerable room for improvement in the local building industry -- particularly in the coming years when it would need greater capacity and efficiency to cope with the housing programme and the mass transit system. He also asked for a report on the result of the Secretary for Housing's recent visit to England in search of talents and improved methods of construction.

Commenting on conditions in early resettlement estates, he said many of them "have rapidly deteriorated into a new kind of slums breeding crimes and generating sociological problems."

He also pointed out that although the new standard of 35 sq.ft. per person being applied to all public housing was acknowledged by the public, it was doubtful whether this standard would still be adequate a decade from now in view of rising standards and expectations.

"Perhaps the new Housing Authority should now broaden its foresight and consider increasing the present standard to, say, 50 square feet," he suggested. This, he believed, would be in line with the Governor's directive -- "to build well".

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CALL FOR DIRECT HONG KONG REPRESENTATION IN U.K. PARLIAMENT

The Hon. Dr. S.Y. Chung today called on the government to consider nominating prominent local residents for appointment as life peers in the House of Lords to speak on Hong Kong's behalf.

"It is desirable that the Hong Kong case should be put directly and forcibly to the Ministers in H.M. Government for their consideration and that the people in Hong Kong should have direct access to the supreme bodies in H.M. Government to voice their approval or disapproval of H.M. Government's policy on Hong Kong," he said.

Speaking in the Legislative Council debate, Dr. Chung said he understood that there were no constitutional difficulties for Hong Kong's representation in the House of Lords, and he noted that the West Indies, before its independence, also had direct representation in the Upper House of Parliament.

Recently, he said, matters concerning Hong Kong had been debated in Parliament without any direct participation from Hong Kong and problems and issues about Hong Kong had been raised in both Houses "without someone from Hong Kong to put them into proper perspective."

Occasionally, he observed, there were cases of conflicting interest between the Hong Kong authorities and the British government.

Hong Kong was a Colony and government officials were basically members of the U.K. civil service and, strictly speaking, were under the directives of Whitehall, he added.

/"Despite

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"Despite all their good efforts, the voices of Hong Kong people are seldom heard within the U.K. Government," he said, citing the guarantee on Hong Kong's sterling reserves and the discrimination against Hong Kong in Britain's own generalised preference scheme as just two examples.

Dr. Chung also felt that the current programme for inviting Members of Parliament to visit Hong Kong should continue and be expanded.

Turning to inflation, Dr. Chung said he had not been able to come to a conclusion whether some form of price control similar to those in the United States and in Britain should be adopted or whether the present policy of minimum control and interference should be maintained.

Like his Unofficial colleagues, however, he did favour the formation of a committee of experts to look more deeply into anti-inflation measures.

"The important thing is to have sufficient expertise in the committee to devise some efficient and effective means for curbing the present rapid rate of inflation," he emphasised.

He hoped that the government would give urgent consideration to this in view of the alarming increase in the average general consumer price index which was 26.5 per cent up in September this year compared to the same month last year.

Based on comparative figures, he said, the average annual rate of inflation for the whole of this year would probably be about 20 per cent, compared with about six per cent last year, four per cent in 1971 and seven per cent in 1970.

/The high

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The high inflationary rate, Dr. Chung pointed out had created much concern particularly in export-oriented industries and among salary and wage earners.

Although the real wage index for September 1973 was yet to be published, he felt certain that it would show a reduction, for the first time, in real average wages for workers in manufacturing industries during the year.

Referring to the current labour dispute in the Cable and Wireless Limited, Dr. Chung said that disputes of this kind -- like those in other essential services such as electricity, telephone and public transport -- could paralyse Hong Kong and cause "grave damages to our economy."

In view of this, he felt that in such cases involving a 'dispute of interest' and which drag on without a settlement, there should be legislative power for the government to intervene and exercise "compulsory arbitration" as a matter of principle and for the sake of overall interests.

"The interests of the people in Hong Kong as a whole are much more important than those of the employees in a company and should be protected," he said.

While he appreciated that the conciliation section of the Labour Department was doing "a good job" in assisting and persuading disputing parties to iron out their differences, Dr. Chung felt that "there is a limit to the work of conciliation," if one or both disputing parties refused to be conciliated.

/ "Providing

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"Providing the dispute does not occur in any essential services, I do not propose that the government should interfere unless it is a 'dispute of right' and, in this case, we now have the Labour Tribunal which is empowered to handle and arbitrate disputes of right," he said.

Dr. Chung noted, however, that if the number of man-days lost through strikes and lockouts could be taken as a measure for assessing the harmony between employers and employees, then Hong Kong's industrial relations ranked "among the best in the world."

He also welcomed the impending introduction of new legislation to provide severance payments to redundant workers and observed that all workers would be gratified by this.

There were few companies which provided for redundancy payments for manual workers he said, and he fully supported proposals to offer legal job protection to workers who had served a particular employer for a number of years and who might lose their jobs through no fault of their own.

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CALL FOR TOUGHER ACTION AGAINST SMUT

Stricter Laws, Higher Penalties Needed - Mr. Lobo

Another "strong man" with full powers and facilities is needed to tackle the worsening problem of pornography, the Hon. R.H. Lobo suggested today.

"An alternative would be an independent committee with power to take restrictive and punitive action," he said.

Speaking in the Legislative Council debate, Mr. Lobo noted that many citizens were becoming more and more disturbed over the increasing immorality and indecency and there had been suggestions that the spread of pornography had influenced the increase in the crime rate.

"The existing law needs teeth to cope against obscenity and immorality," he stressed. "At present the law is neither clear nor effective and the penalties for immoral publications are not severe enough."

Mr. Lobo suggested that the Executive should have powers of confiscation and these powers should be widely used. Because of the lack of a single responsible body to deal with the problem and the lack of co-operation between government departments and welfare organisations, efforts to combat indecency had been "spasmodic, short-lived and limited in scope," he noted.

He emphasised that earnest and effective action was needed now unless Hong Kong was prepared to accept indecency as a way of life.

/Turning to

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Turning to the subject of information, Mr. Lobo welcomed the process of consultation in the form of green papers on major proposals before policies are settled.

"This procedure does ensure that the public will be given an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions before final decisions are taken," he said.

However, he felt that this procedure should be extended to cover controversial matters which affect the whole community, such as the recently announced Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill, so that public reaction could be gauged before and not after the announcement.

This would also minimise uncertainty and speculation among the public and dissatisfaction and resentment among the publicity media.

Mr. Lobo also suggested that certain "classified" papers could, at the appropriate time, be downgraded to information papers.

He asked for a review of the classification of official material so that more information on topics of public interest could be fed by departments to the publicity media.

This, he believed, would do a great deal for public awareness of local problems and boost community involvement in public affairs.

He also emphasised the importance of collecting and collating public opinion and feeding back these assessments to government departments. "In particular, the views and aspirations of grass roots sectors should be ascertained."

/On transport,

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On transport, Mr. Lobo said he hoped the forthcoming green paper would set out detailed plans for improving the services of the two bus companies, for eliminating over-charging and other malpractices among taxi drivers, and for ensuring a better observance of the traffic code by motorists and pedestrians alike.

He proposed that Hong Kong should follow the practice observed in many parts of the world, whereby pedestrians on pavements walk on the right and divide themselves into two streams moving in opposite directions.

Commenting on the number of abandoned vehicles on the streets, he suggested that it should be made compulsory to report unlicensed vehicles and to deliver them to a particular place set aside by the government, or to a private scrap heap.

Mr. Lobo expressed great interest in the ten-year housing programme and asked that a statement be made on progress in building up the new Housing Department.

He pointed out that it would be some years before the housing problem could be solved, and suggested certain interim measures to tackle the problem of homelessness facing people evicted from buildings due to be re-developed.

This would include the immediate provision of more resite areas and the improvement of living conditions in present resite areas. "We also need more transit camps where there are proper facilities for family life for those who are temporarily dispossessed," he added.

/On social

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On social welfare, Mr. Lobo urged the government to clear up certain doubts among some agencies which still lacked "a clear guidance on the role they should play and the amount of subsidy to be made available to them."

While Hong Kong had pioneered the first non-contributory allowance in the world for the infirm and the disabled, "the allowance requires urgent revision, in the light of rapidly mounting living costs," he said. "Levels of public assistance also need to be raised once again."

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MORE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Director of Education, Mr. J. Canning this afternoon introduced amending legislation in the Legislative Council seeking to provide increased powers for the Education Scholarships Committee in the management of scholarships and in particular with regard to the number and conditions of awards.

In moving the second reading of the Education Scholarships Fund (Amendment) Bill 1973, Mr. Canning said that he had consulted all donors now alive ascertained that they had no objection to the Ordinance being amended. Debate on the second reading of the Bill was adjourned.

When the Bill is passed into law, the Trustee of the Fund, who is the Director of Education, will be empowered to use more flexibility in the disposal of excess of income and reserve funds in respect of the scholarships.

As a result, more students will be awarded scholarships under the Fund, a spokesman for the Education Department said.

He pointed out that the number of scholarships was expected to reach 99 during the current academic year compared with 77 in 1970/71.

The spokesman said that in 1973/74 a total of 237 students would benefit from the scholarships compared with 196 in 1970/71.

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BRAVE ACT IN CRIME PREVENTION RECOGNISED

The government is to award \$6,500 to a member of the public who was injured while assisting in the prevention of a crime last year.

This was announced by the Attorney General, Mr. J.W.D. Hobley, at the Legislative Council this afternoon when he moved a resolution to grant an award of compensation to Mr. Chan Leung in recognition of his public spirited conduct.

Mr. Chan was attacked with a chopper in November last year when he went to the rescue of four ladies who were being molested by a man at a fruit stall, Mr. Hobley said. Mr. Chan was injured in the shoulder and now suffers from reduced mobility of his left arm. This has affected his earning capacity.

The award of \$6,500, Mr. Hobley said, was to show the Council's recognition of Mr. Chan's praiseworthy conduct and to compensate him for the financial loss he now suffers.

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IMPORT OF CERTAIN CARS MAY BE PROHIBITED

Amending legislation is to be introduced to prohibit the import into Hong Kong of petro-driven vehicles which do not comply with the standard adopted by Common Market countries.

The Secretary for the Environment, the Hon. J.J. Robson, told Legislative Council today that these regulations will eventually help in reducing the emission of gaseous pollutants, in particular, carbon monoxide and unburnt hydrocarbons, by motor vehicles.

The amendments to the Road Traffic (Construction and Use) Regulations are in an advanced stage of processing and the Motor Traders Association is being consulted on the drafts.

Mr. Robson was replying to a question by the Hon. Hilton Cheong-Leen who wanted to know whether the government would introduce more stringent legislation to minimise air pollution by motor vehicles.

Mr. Robson said he was hopeful that new regulations would be submitted to the Executive Council for consideration in the near future.

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MORE DETAILED ESTIMATES OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Expected To Be Ready Early In 1975

The Financial Secretary, the Hon. Philip Haddon-Cave, said today that more detailed estimates of Gross Domestic Product for a number of years, using the income approach, are now being made.

It was hoped, he added, that the estimates would be available early in 1975.

By then, the result of the forthcoming Industrial Production Census, covering manufacturing, mining and quarrying and electricity, gas and water, would also be available.

He added that this would enable the Census and Statistics Department to calculate estimates of net output or value added by each sector of the economy.

Mr. Haddon-Cave was replying to a question by Mr. Wilfred Wong at the Legislative Council this afternoon.

He recalled that at the end of February this year, preliminary estimates of Gross Domestic Product based on expenditure for the years 1966 to 1971 were published for the first time.

These, he said, were accompanied by a report by an experienced national income statistician from the United Kingdom showing his independently prepared estimates, using the income approach, for the years 1970 and 1971.

/The Financial

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The Financial Secretary said: "The construction of a comprehensive set of National Income accounts using the expenditure, income and product approaches is a continuing task and one which will proceed pari passu with the steady development of the Census and Statistics Department."

He emphasised that this development largely depended on whether "we can recruit qualified staff into the public service."

However, Mr. Haddon-Cave added that the Government had been successful in this thanks largely to the enthusiastic efforts of successive Commissioners.

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REGISTRY BUILDING UP PICTURE OF DRUG ADDICTS

A Central Registry of Drug Addicts set up in 1972 is helping to build up a clear picture of the type of people who abuse narcotics in Hong Kong.

According to the 1972-73 Hong Kong Narcotics Progress Report tabled in the Legislative Council today, data contained in 24,000 returns received from reporting agencies was fed into the registry during its first year in operation.

The report, compiled by the chairman of the Action Committee Against Narcotics, Sir Albert Rodrigues, says a preliminary tabulation based on 8,517 returns has produced characteristics which are probably broadly representative of the 80,000 to 100,000 addicts estimated to be in Hong Kong.

The tabulation, carried out in October, 1972, showed that the majority of addicts were males in the 20 to 29 and 40 to 49 years of age bracket.

About half of them were single, 40 per cent were married and 4.5 per cent were either divorced or separated.

More than half worked as craftsmen, production process workers and labourers.

Of those who had been convicted of non-drug offences, almost half were involved in offences against property.

/The main

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The main drug of addiction was heroin, smoked mainly by direct fume-inhaling or through cigarettes.

About half of the addicts had been addicted for less than 10 years, but 32 per cent had an addiction history stretching back 10 to 19 years.

About 70 per cent of the latter group had never received treatment, but 42 per cent of the former group had been treated once.

The report says arrangements are being made to feed all registry data into a computer so that annual tabulations can be produced quickly and accurately.

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RENT BILL WILL NOT LEAD TO RUSH FOR INCREASES

Tenants Urged To Seek Advice Before Paying Higher Rents

The new rent Bill strikes a balance between the expectations of landlords and the pockets of tenants and provides a mechanism for on-going revisions of rents, the Secretary for Housing, the Hon. I. Lightbody said in Legislative Council today.

By excluding newly built premises, it also provides the necessary encouragement for greater efforts by private developers, he added.

Explaining the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, Mr. Lightbody said its duration was fixed at three years because the **imbalance** between supply and demand -- which drove rents up -- was unlikely to be corrected any sooner, especially as there was a rising demand for more house-space.

He recognised however that the remedy lay in building more houses rather than rent-regulation. The Housing Authority will make a substantial contribution through its 10-year programme, but much will depend on the private developers' contribution.

This would require more positive action on providing larger land areas for private development he said, and this was underlined in the Governor's recent address to the Council.

Under the new Bill, about 60,000 post-war domestic tenancies which are not controlled by the 1970 legislation, together with those premises certified for occupation during the life of the "rent freeze" legislation introduced last June will now be brought under control.

/Mr. Lightbody

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Mr. Lightbody emphasized however that this gave no grounds for a distress call by landlords.

"The rents being paid for these previously exempt but currently frozen tenancies when they come under regulation will have been negotiated privately between landlord and tenant," he said.

He explained that premises with a rateable value of over \$150,000 -- numbering about 4,000 at present -- were now brought under control because their rents had "in many cases been pushed up to exorbitant levels, levels far beyond what any reasonable, or even unreasonable, landlord could expect.

"Excessively high rent levels are established which act as an irritant throughout the whole domestic housing sector," he added.

He said the landlords again should have no complaints because the flats would have come into the regulation system at more or less open market rents and they too could seek rent increases provided the present rents were below the fair market rent.

The new Bill also regulates existing tenancies which are the subject of fixed-term agreements because "we find the tenant, when the agreement expires, caught in a trap; he has been paying a market rent for his flat but is now exposed to demand for sudden and substantial increase," Mr. Lightbody said.

He recognised that it was a serious step to overrule such agreements which were a useful mechanism to enable landlords and tenants to agree on rents and tenure on their own.

/He added

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He added, however, that "there are overriding reasons of community interest which require this mechanism to be suspended for the three-year life of this Bill."

On the rents of currently controlled tenancies, Mr. Lightbody said that in some cases the rents were fixed when there was a plentiful supply of accommodation and they have been held back by previous rent control legislation.

The Bill would rectify this situation in a controlled way. The rate of increase, at one-fifth of the difference between the existing rent and the fair market rent at a two-yearly interval, would close the gap between regulated and fair market rent in about 10 years, if the proposed legislative control was extended beyond 1976, he said.

He noted that of the 160,000 tenancies controlled by the 1970 Ordinance, over 80 per cent of the landlords and tenants reached agreement on rent increases and did not inform or consult the Rating and Valuation Department.

"Clearly the great majority of tenants use such legislation as a bargaining weapon and prefer to reach their own settlement with their landlords, and this is to be welcomed provided such bargains are freely reached," he said.

He also noted that a new provision of the Bill was the requirement for landlords to issue a receipt for every rent payment; the maximum penalty for failure to do so being a fine of \$2,000.

/This was

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This was necessary because most of the tenancies were on month-to-month terms, and in most cases no document changes hands. This was unsatisfactory from the tenant's point of view.

Mr. Lightbody said he regarded the new provision as a first step which might later be reinforced by a requirement for the receipts to contain a simple statement of the tenant's right and obligations.

He made it clear that contrary to some suggestions, the Bill would not trigger off a spate of rent increases unless the tenants fail to use the protection provided by the Bill.

He advised those who are faced with demands for rent increases not supported by a certificate to seek advice from the Rating and Valuation Department before agreeing to pay higher rents.

He also pointed out that the proposed Bill would not be enacted if passed on December 1 as earlier envisaged, due to changes in the timetable of its passage through the Legislative Council. It would not now come into force before December 15.

Referring to another rent Bill -- the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill which affects pre-war premises, Mr. Lightbody said two types of tenancies would be excluded from legislative control.

These were those premises for which the tenant enters into an agreement to return the premises to the landlord, in exchange for some consideration; and those premises for which the tenant chooses to contract out of the provisions of the Ordinance by signing an agreement, approved by the Tenancy Tribunal, for a fixed term not exceeding five years.

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PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD OF EDUCATION'S REPORT INVITED

A Chinese leaflet containing a summary of the Board of Education's terms of reference and the Board's main recommendations has been prepared jointly by the Education Department and the Government Information Services. A total of 100,000 copies of the leaflet have been printed by the Government Printer so that the widest possible circulation can be achieved. It is hoped that this will encourage public discussion on the Board's proposals for the expansion of secondary school education in Hong Kong over the next decade.

Apart from being distributed to schools, copies of the leaflet will be sent to civic organisations, kaifong associations, government departments (including City District Offices and the New Territories Administration), industrial and non-industrial undertakings as well as educational organisations.

Copies are also being given to newspapers, radio and television stations.

Like the foreword in the full version of the "Green Paper", the leaflet invites members of the public to comment on the Board's Report.

Anyone who wishes to do so can send suggestions or views to the Public Affairs Office (Education), G.P.O. Box 1899, Hong Kong, before the end of December 1973.

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Note to Editors: Copies of the leaflet are distributed separately in the Press Boxes, Government Information Services, this evening.

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SECOND READING OF BILLS

Seven bills had their first and second readings at the Legislative Council today.

They were the Motor Vehicle Insurance (Third Party Risks) (Amendment) Bill 1973, the District Court (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973, the Telecommunication (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973, the Education Scholarships Fund (Amendment) Bill 1973, the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill 1973, the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973 and the Community Relief Trust Fund (Amendment) Bill 1973.

In addition, twenty sessional papers were tabled.

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SCHOOL SPORTS DAY

To mark the Festival of Hong Kong, the Sai Kung and Hang Hau District Branch of the New Territories Schools Sports Association will hold its annual Sports Day tomorrow (Thursday).

About 500 participants from 22 schools in the district will compete in various events which will take place in the Sai Kung Public Playground.

The Chairman of the Hang Hau Rural Committee, Mr. Yau Kei and the Principal Inspector of the Education Department, Mr. M.C. Caswell, will address the gathering before the first event starts.

Prizes will be given to the winners by Urban Councillor, Mr. K.C. Choi, and the Chairman of Sai Kung Rural Committee, Mr. Lee Yun-sau.

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Note to Editors: The Sports Day will be held in the Sai Kung Public Playground tomorrow (Thursday) from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You are invited to have the event covered.

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WATER CUT

Water supply to a number of premises in Kowloon Tong will be interrupted for five hours starting from 1 a.m. on Friday (November 2).

The stoppage will enable a leakage test to be carried out in the area.

The area affected is bounded by Renfrew Road, Hereford Road, York Road, Kowloon Canton Railway, Cornwall Street and Waterloo Road.

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NEW DRAFT AGREEMENT SOON FOR ESTATE SHOPS

The Housing Department is to work out a new draft tenancy agreement for shopkeepers in its estates.

When tenancy terms are reached which are acceptable to the Housing Authority and tenants, they will replace interim arrangements made, at the request of shopkeepers, since the dispute arose over the introduction of a long term agreement.

This was the result of a meeting yesterday (Wednesday) between representatives of Kaifongs, shopkeepers and Housing Department officers.

The draft agreement will form the basis for future negotiations between the two parties.

Yesterday's meeting follows a promise by the Secretary for Housing last month that the Housing Authority would take a new look at the long term agreement originally proposed and subsequently deferred.

Provisional arrangements agreed at an earlier meeting for outstanding shop assignment cases still stand. This means that until a new agreement has been worked out, some tenants may assign their shops by signing an agreement with the department based largely on the previous conditions. But, they must undertake to sign the new agreement when its terms have been finalised.

A spokesman for the Housing Department reiterated at yesterday's meeting that the intention behind the new shop tenancy agreement was simply to improve the general standard and management of the estates for the benefit of all living there.

/He assured

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He assured the representatives that the authority had at no time intended to deprive people of their tenancy or their livelihood, but on the contrary, it has always been the sincere wish of the authority that an agreement more beneficial to both sides should be worked out.

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Release time: 9.30 p.m.