



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, January 2, 1973

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MASSIVE RURAL LOW-COST HOUSING SCHEME

10,000 People In Outlying Island To Be Housed First

About 80,000 squatters and fishermen in the New Territories are expected to be offered public housing when Government launches its rural low-cost housing scheme this year.

More than 10,000 people living in shanty fishing villages in Cheung Chau, Peng Chau and Tai O will be involved in the initial phase of the housing project.

Five rural low-cost housing estates are to be built on the three islands -- three in different locations in Cheung Chau and one each in Peng Chau and Tai O.

The Cheung Chau estates will accommodate about 5,000 people. The estates in Peng Chau and Tai O will house some 2,000 and 3,000 people respectively.

To suit the geographical features of the islands, two-storey buildings will be built in the estates which will share a similar pattern of construction.

The flats, designed to be self-contained, will seek to fulfil the present standards adhered to in government low-cost housing estates of providing a living space of 35 square feet per head.

The capacities of the flats will range from four-person to eight-person units.

The District Officer, Islands, Mr. Mayer Ng, said today that a nucleus of supporting services would be provided in the estates.

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"We have considered providing in the estates such facilities as clinics, schools, welfare centres, children's playgrounds, markets, cafes and workshops, providing employment to the residents," Mr. Ng said.

He pointed out that the estates would be constructed in stages and several sites for these estates had been earmarked.

He disclosed that housing project was expected to start in March this year when the first 30 living units would be built in Peng Chau.

"Boat squatters and others," Mr. Ng went on, "will be moved from the existing shanty fishing villages to the estates in stages."

He said that the rural housing scheme would be implemented in such places as Tai Po, Yuen Long and Sai Kung in the New Territories in due course.

"This series of projects," he said, "reflects the Government's determination to improve the living conditions of the rural population, apart from bringing about a face-lift in the New Territories and the various outlying islands."

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NEW YEAR'S EVE FIRE VICTIMS OFFERED HOUSING

Choice Of Three Estates Given

More than 400 people whose homes were affected by the fire on New Year's Eve will be offered public housing.

The fire gutted six pre-war tenement buildings at Nos. 79-89 Queen's Road West.

A spokesman for the Resettlement Department said today that the homeless will be given a choice of three estates.

Those who wish to remain on Hong Kong Island will be offered public housing in the Wong Chuk Hang Government Low Cost Housing Estate. However, they will have to wait until early March as new units are not immediately available.

Temporary accommodation will be available at the Department's transit centres.

The spokesman added that for those who wish to go to Kowloon, immediate accommodation is available in Kwai Chung Government Low Cost Housing Estate and Lam Tin Resettlement Estate.

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KENNEDY TOWN YOUTH CENTRE TO BE EXPANDED

With Grant From Lotteries Fund

A grant of \$91,578 from the Lotteries Fund has been made to the Young Women's Christian Association to provide more space for its youth centre in Kennedy Town.

The centre, located on the roof of Kwun Lun Lau, Lung Wah Street, is operated by the Y.W.C.A. in conjunction with the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group to provide activities for children, young men and women.

The two organisations plan to make use of the adjoining roof-top to provide additional space for the Centre for its various activities and study rooms.

A child-care service will be operated with the assistance of the Kwun Lun Lau Residents Association.

The cost of equipping and fitting out the new centre is estimated at \$111,678.

The Hong Kong Housing Society will contribute \$20,000 for renovation purposes.

The project is expected to be completed by mid-1973.

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1973 POLIO IMMUNISATION CAMPAIGN

First Phase To Be Carried Out This Month

The first phase of the 1973 polio immunisation campaign organized by the Medical and Health Department will be carried out during the month of January while the second phase will take place in March.

Polio immunisation has been available since 1963 and has virtually eliminated poliomyelitis from Hong Kong.

In 1962 before the introduction of polio vaccine, 363 cases with 52 deaths were recorded while in 1972 only five cases with no deaths were notified.

Despite the greatly improved situation, polio can still pose a threat to the community and any child who has not yet been immunised should take this opportunity to receive the vaccine.

Polio vaccine, which is free of charge, is available at all Maternity and Child Health Centres, Inoculation Ports and Out-Patients Departments.

It must be emphasised that two doses of vaccine are required with a two-month interval between each dose. One dose of polio vaccine produces no immunity.

Polio vaccine is very easy to take. For infants drops of the vaccine are put into the mouth, while with older children the vaccine is given on a lump of sugar.

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CHUK YUEN CHILDREN'S RECEPTION CENTRE

SWD's Role In Providing Succour For Abandoned And Wandering

Abandoned, wandering, and other children under eight in need of care and protection are received at the Social Welfare Department's Chuk Yuen Reception Centre, where appropriate arrangements are made for their future.

At the end of November, 1972, there were 101 children in residence at the Centre. Care is offered on a temporary basis, normally not exceeding six months.

Eight of these children were under six months, nine under one year, 13 under two, 35 between two and four, 21 between four and six, 13 between six and eight, and two just over eight years.

Commenting on these figures, Mrs. Chen Liu Mu-lan, Senior Principal Social Welfare Officer and head of the Family Services Division, says there were more children at the Centre than usual at the end of last year because admission "is not refused for urgent cases, but the total is not indicative of any trend." In her view, the inflow is matched by normal discharges constantly going on.

The Centre performs a useful service because children with backgrounds are given a shelter there. The police refer abandoned and wandering children directly to it, while other cases are referred by other departments, and voluntary agencies.

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Then professional social workers try by various means to study the social circumstances of all cases to enable plans to be made for their future.

"The happiest solution for most is reunion with their families after they have had to part with them temporarily as a result of the latter's hospitalisation, imprisonment, or for some other reason," says Mrs. Chen.

For the finally abandoned, the Centre provides help through the activities of adoption workers who do their best to get them placed, either locally or overseas.

Transfer

For those for whom adoption is not readily available and who require long-term care, arrangements are made for their transfer to a children's home. Where it is considered beneficial, there is further family care for some.

A medical officer from the Medical and Health Department visits the Centre two mornings a week to examine new arrivals and treat the sick. The paediatric specialist of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital calls once a month for advice on special cases. Necessary immunisations are provided.

The Centre was completed in January 1964 with funds donated by the United States Government as a contribution to mark the World Refugee Year.

"The Social Welfare Department provides full welfare services offering possible solutions to problems faced by families or individuals with unwanted children," says Mrs. Chen.

"I urge them to approach our district offices or family services centres to discuss their problems before taking action they might later regret."

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C.D.O. GROUP TO VISIT SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA

A group of ten officers from the Secretariat for Home Affairs, including three women, will leave Hong Kong for Singapore and Malaysia on January 4, 1973 on a two-week study tour.

During their trip the party will visit various government departments and will meet representatives of local organisations.

The visiting party will comprise the following: City District Commissioner (Kowloon), Mr. James So; City District Officer (Western), Mr. Rafael Hui; two Assistant City District Officers, Messrs. Dicken Yang and Y.K. Wong and six Executive Officers, Mr. K. Leung, Mr. K.M. Li, Mr. Davie Au-yeung, Miss Betty Chan, Mrs. Winnie Wong and Mrs. Angeline Chiu.

The party will return to Hong Kong on January 19.

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HEALTH REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

Drop In Incidence Of Typhoid Fever

Notifications on the incidence of typhoid fever dropped from 38 cases in October last year to 22 in November, according to the health report for the latter month released by the Medical and Health Department today.

On the other hand, the incidence of bacillary dysentery rose from 28 to 47.

A total of 734 cases of infectious diseases was notified during November, and deaths from these diseases amounted to 109 -- one from poliomyelitis, and 108 from tuberculosis.

There were no cases of cerebrospinal meningitis or diphtheria, and no appreciable variation in the incidence of other notifiable infectious diseases.

During November, Hong Kong remained free from cholera and other quarantinable diseases.

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SHEUNG SHUI TANNERY OPERATORS FORM CONSORTIUM

Deadlines And Conditions Set For Temporary Stay

The tannery operators in the Sheung Shui area who had not previously deposited land exchange entitlements in the designated offensive trades zone in Kwai Chung have now all done so as a consortium.

A Government spokesman said today that these tannery operators will be permitted to continue operating in their present locations provided they satisfy a series of deadlines for the planning, construction and completion of their new factory in Kwai Chung and for the demolition of their existing tanneries.

He recalled that the original deadline for the depositing of land exchange entitlements had been extended by Government to allow these tannery operators sufficient time to form a consortium and obtain the necessary financial backing.

"It would be unduly harsh now to force them to close down and go out of business with the consequent loss of a number of jobs," he said.

All tannery operators who are now being allowed to remain temporarily in the Sheung Shui area will be subject to four conditions designed to minimise the problems of pollution. The conditions are:-

1. All waste matter and refuse have to be stored in proper containers to prevent the emission of noxious or injurious effluents pending disposal;

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2. the occupier must satisfy the Director of Urban Services in regard to how and where all solid trade waste are disposed;
3. any part of the premises fronting a stream or watercourse must be set back a reasonable distance; and
4. the entire premises must be satisfactorily fenced in.

The land on which the new factories in Kwai Chung are to be built will become available from April or May next and the factories should be completed within two years.

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BUILDINGS INVOLVED IN FIRE DECLARED DANGEROUS

The Building Authority today declared Nos. 79-89 Queen's Road West, Nos. 1-5 Tsung Sau Lane West, and No. 2 Tsung Sau Lane East to be in a dangerous condition.

No. 91 Queen's Road West, No. 7 Tsung Sau Lane West, and No. 4 Tsung Sau Lane East were declared liable to become dangerous.

In a statement issued to-day, the Principal Government Building Surveyor said that these 3 and 4 storey pre-war buildings were inspected subsequent to a fire which resulted in the collapse of Nos. 81-87 Queen's Road West and such damage to the remaining buildings that there is a risk of further collapses occurring.

Most of these buildings require immediate demolition but some reassessment will be made in due course although it is expected that the remainder are unlikely to be capable of retention.

Emergency Closure Orders were granted at Victoria District Court at 2.30 p.m. today.

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Release time: 6.30 p.m.