



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1978

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CHINESE LANGUAGE ENFORCEMENT UNIT FORMED
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THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AUTHORITY HAS SET UP AN ENFORCEMENT UNIT TO SPEED UP IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CHINESE LANGUAGE POLICY.

THE NEW UNIT, HEADED BY A CHIEF CHINESE LANGUAGE OFFICER AND ASSISTED BY SEVERAL SENIOR OFFICERS, WILL SUPERVISE ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY AND HELP IMPROVE DEPARTMENTAL TRANSLATION SERVICES.

+THE MAIN ROLE OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AUTHORITY,+ EXPLAINED HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MRS. KATHERINE FOK, +IS TO ENSURE ALL DOCUMENTS AND NOTICES ISSUED TO THE PUBLIC SHOULD HAVE A CHINESE VERSION WHEN NECESSARY.+

SHE SAID CHINESE LANGUAGE OFFICERS WERE DEPLOYED IN 31 DEPARTMENTS PROVIDING A BILINGUAL SERVICE BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY. THEY ALSO UNDERTOOK INTERPRETATION WORK.

MRS. FOK NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS ON THE USE OF CHINESE AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE WAS MADE DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS. +THE SHARP INCREASE IN CHINESE COMMUNICATION IS MOST ENCOURAGING,+ SHE ADDED.

STRESSING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PROMOTE THE WIDEST POSSIBLE USE OF CHINESE IN OFFICIAL BUSINESS, SHE SAID THIS SERVICE HAD BEEN FURTHER SUPPLEMENTED BY THE PROVISION OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION.

+SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION IS NOW AVAILABLE IN ALL IMPORTANT MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS, SUCH AS THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, URBAN COUNCIL AND DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS, PRESS CONFERENCES AND SO ON,+ SHE SAID.

THE SECONDMENT OF CLOS TO THE FREE LEGAL ADVICE SCHEME, INTRODUCED LAST MONTH (NOVEMBER), ALSO PROVIDES A HELPFUL SERVICE TO NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE WHO NEED LEGAL ADVICE, MRS. FOK POINTED OUT.

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PORT OF HONG KONG LESS POLLUTED

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THE PORT OF HONG KONG IS NOW LESS POLLUTED — THANKS TO THE INCREASED VIGILANCE OF THE POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT OF THE MARINE DEPARTMENT AND THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF HEAVY FINES IMPOSED BY THE COURTS TO MAKE SHIPPING AGENTS AWARE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM.

THIS ENCOURAGING TREND IS REFLECTED BY A DROP IN THE NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS TAKEN OUT BY THE MARINE DEPARTMENT IN RESPECT OF OIL POLLUTION AND SMOKE EMISSION BY VESSELS.

MR. REGINALD KENT, THE MARINE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE PROSECUTION UNIT OF THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, SAID TODAY (SUNDAY) THAT SO FAR THIS YEAR ONLY ONE SHIPPING AGENT HAD BEEN PROSECUTED FOR POLLUTING THE HARBOUR WITH OIL SPILLAGE COMPARED WITH SEVEN CASES IN THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

IN THE SOLE CASE, THE SHIPPING AGENT WAS FINED \$15,000 FOR ALLOWING ITS VESSEL TO POLLUTE THE HARBOUR WITH OIL SLUDGE.

A TOTAL OF \$81,000 IN FINES FOR OIL POLLUTION OFFENCES WAS IMPOSED IN THE SEVEN CASES LAST YEAR. OF THESE THE DEFENDANTS OF TWO CASES WERE GIVEN THE MAXIMUM FINE OF \$20,000 EACH.

ONE OF LAST YEAR'S CASES IN WHICH THE HEAVIEST FINE WAS IMPOSED CONCERNED A SERIOUS OIL POLLUTION INCIDENT IN RECENT YEARS. IT OCCURRED ON FEBRUARY 11 LAST YEAR WHEN A LARGE AMOUNT OF OIL SLUDGE WAS DISCHARGED FROM A VESSEL, CAUSING AN AREA OF ABOUT 17 MILLION SQ. FEET IN THE SEA BEING POLLUTED.

THE PROBLEM OF SMOKE EMISSION BY VESSELS, ANOTHER MAJOR CAUSE OF HARBOUR POLLUTION, HAS ALSO IMPROVED.

ONLY ONE PROSECUTION AGAINST SMOKE EMISSION HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT SO FAR THIS YEAR AS AGAINST THREE IN THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

+BOTH OIL SPILLAGE AND EMISSION OF BLACK SMOKE ARE TOO OFTEN CAUSED BY HUMAN FACTORS SUCH AS NEGLIGENCE AND CARELESSNESS ON THE PART OF THE CREW ON BOARD. THEY CAN ALL BE AVOIDED THROUGH TIGHTER PRECAUTIONS,+ MR. KENT SAID.

HE ALSO CAUTIONED THAT SHIPPING AGENTS AND OWNERS OF VESSELS BEING CAUGHT FOR OIL SPILLAGE MAY BE LIABLE TO A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF \$20,000 FINE AND/OR SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT AND \$5,000 FOR EXCESSIVE EMISSION OF SMOKE.

THE PENALTY MAY BECOME HEAVIER IN FUTURE AS LEGISLATION IS BEING PROPOSED TO RAISE THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR OIL POLLUTION IN HONG KONG WATERS FROM \$20,000 TO \$200,000, MR. KENT SAID.

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83 BUILDING PLANS APPROVED LAST MONTH
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A TOTAL OF 83 NEW BUILDING PLANS WERE APPROVED LAST MONTH (NOVEMBER) BY THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, COMPARED WITH 55 IN THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

OF THESE, 32 WERE FOR BUILDINGS ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 13 FOR KOWLOON AND 38 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THEY INCLUDED PLANS FOR A NUMBER OF HOLIDAY FLATS AT DISCOVERY BAY, LANTAU ISLAND, A PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE IN TSUEN WAN, A MULTI-PURPOSE AUDITORIUM AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY, A TEMPLE AT TAI AU MUN AND ABOUT 30 APARTMENT/COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS.

THE TOTAL DECLARED COST OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED DURING THE MONTH WAS \$322 MILLION, COMPARED WITH \$370 MILLION LAST YEAR.

THE TOTAL USABLE FLOOR AREA OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED LAST MONTH AMOUNTED TO 243,231 SQUARE METRES, COMPRISING 165,742 SQUARE METRES OF NON-DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA AND 77,489 SQUARE METRES OF DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA.

DURING THE MONTH, THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE GAVE CONSENT FOR WORK TO START ON 55 NEW PROJECTS, INCLUDING A TELEPHONE EXCHANGE EXTENSION AT CHAI WAN, A PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL AT SAU MAU PING, A COLD STORAGE BUILDING IN SHA TIN, AND AN ELECTRIC SUB-STATION IN TAI LAM CHUNG.

A TOTAL OF 53 NEWLY COMPLETED BUILDINGS WERE CERTIFIED FOR OCCUPATION DURING THE MONTH, INCLUDING A COMMERCIAL CENTRE AT BRAEMAR HILL ROAD, A PIER AND CONTROL ROOM AT TAI KOK TSUI, AN EXTENSION TO HEALTH CENTRE AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY AND A NUMBER OF FACTORY BUILDINGS.

THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE ALSO ASSENTED TO THE DEMOLITION OF 131 BUILDINGS.

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