



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

MONDAY, JULY 28, 1975

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DEMAND FOR TELEPHONE LINES SLOWS DOWN
LAST YEAR'S WAITING LIST REDUCED BY MORE THAN 50 PER CENT

THE PERCENTAGE GROWTH RATE OF THE TELEPHONE NETWORK DURING 1974 DECLINED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS AS A RESULT OF THE WORLD ECONOMIC RECESSION WHICH AFFECTED HONG KONG.

THIS IS ONE OF THE OBSERVATIONS MADE IN THE 17TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TELEPHONE SERVICES WHICH WAS SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL LAST WEEK.

THE REPORT SAID THAT ALTHOUGH EXPANSION BY THE TELEPHONE COMPANY CONTINUED IN 1974, THE GROWTH RATE FOR WORKING DIRECT EXCHANGE LINES WAS 7.6 PER CENT - JUST OVER HALF THAT OF 1973.

IN OVERALL FIGURES THIS MEANS THAT WORKING LINES INCREASED FROM 746,653 TO 803,144, ALTHOUGH IT REPRESENTED A DROP IN DEMAND FOR TELEPHONE SERVICES OF SOME 36 PER CENT AS COMPARED WITH 1973.

THE REPORT NOTES THAT WITH THE CHANGE IN POLICY IN MID-1974, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY MADE GREATER EFFORTS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO VILLAGES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND ON OUTLYING ISLANDS. IN FACT, ANOTHER 16 VILLAGES WERE BROUGHT INTO THE NETWORK.

OVERALL PENETRATION OF TELEPHONE SERVICES INCREASED FROM 21.7 TELEPHONES (INCLUDING EXTENSIONS) PER 100 OF THE POPULATION IN 1973 TO 22.8 PER 100 IN 1974.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENDED THE TELEPHONE COMPANY FOR ITS SPECIAL EFFORTS IN MEETING DEMAND AND SAID THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS ON THE WAITING LIST HAD DECREASED IN 1974 BY 54 PER CENT. AT THE END OF THE YEAR THE CUMULATIVE WAITING LIST STOOD AT 13,411.

+IT IS ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF A SMALL NUMBER OF REMOTE AREAS, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY EXPECT TO BE ABLE IN 1975 TO CLEAR ALL OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS REGISTERED TO THE END OF 1974,+ THE REPORT SAYS.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO NOTED THAT THE COMPANY HAS BEEN PROVIDING +GENERALLY A SATISFACTORY TELEPHONE SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC+. THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY THE ACTS IN 1974 DECREASED BY 38 PER CENT OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR WITH THE COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE ACTS DEALING WITH A TOTAL OF 34 COMPLAINTS COMPARED WITH 55 IN 1973:

/THE REPORT

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THE REPORT ALSO MENTIONED +WITH PLEASURE+ THE PROGRESS WITH THE TELEPHONE COMPANY'S EXPERIMENTAL USE OF A COMPUTER FOR THE +108+ ENQUIRY SERVICE. THE OPERATORS, WHO HAVE VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS WHICH ARE SIMILAR TO SMALL TELEVISION SCREENS WITH TYPEWRITER KEY-BOARDS, ONLY NEED TO TYPE THE NAME AND ADDRESS GIVEN BY THE ENQUIRER AND THE TELEPHONE NUMBER AUTOMATICALLY APPEARS ON THE SCREEN IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.

THE COMMITTEE SAID IT WAS HOPED THE EXPERIMENT WOULD PROVIDE A MUCH MORE EFFICIENT ENQUIRY SERVICE TO SUBSCRIBERS +AND COULD HELP TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF ISSUE OF TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES WHICH BECOME GREATER IN VOLUME EVERY YEAR AS THE TELEPHONE NETWORK GROWS+.

THE REPORT SHOWS THAT THE ACTS AND ITS FIVE SUB-COMMITTEES HAD A VERY ACTIVE YEAR, HAVING MET ON 23 OCCASIONS. IN PARTICULAR, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS INVITED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT A FULL EXAMINATION OF THE TELEPHONE COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR AN INCREASE IN BASIC TELEPHONE CHARGES BY ABOUT 70 PER CENT. THE ACTS SUBMITTED ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT IN JANUARY THIS YEAR AND +WELCOMES+ THE SETTING UP OF THE +COMMISSION OF INQUIRY+.

IN SUMMING UP, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TELEPHONE SERVICES REASSERTED ITS VIEW THAT THE ULTIMATE AIM IN THE PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICES SHOULD BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE TELEPHONE NETWORK COVERING THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG WITH A STANDARD CHARGE FOR BOTH URBAN AND RURAL SUBSCRIBERS.

IT CONSIDERED THAT THE COMPANY SHOULD ALSO PROVIDE DETAILED PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELEPHONE SERVICES WHICH COULD BE REVIEWED REGULARLY.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

COPIES OF THE REPORT ARE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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LEGCO PREVIEW

DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED COMMODITY EXCHANGE, WHICH WAS ADJOURNED TO GIVE BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MORE TIME TO REFLECT ON THE ISSUE, WILL RESUME AT THE COUNCIL'S NEXT SITTING ON WEDNESDAY.

SEVERAL UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS WILL SPEAK ON THE MOTION, INCLUDING THE HON. JOHN BREMIDGE AND THE HON. JAMES WU.

THE MOTION, WHICH SEEKS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE FOR SETTING UP A COMMODITY EXCHANGE IN HONG KONG, WAS MOVED IN COUNCIL BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, ON MAY 21.

UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS SPOKE ON THE PROPOSAL ON JUNE 18 WITH MOST OF THEM OPPOSED TO IT ON GROUNDS THAT THERE WAS NO PROVEN NEED FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE AND THAT THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS IT MIGHT BRING WERE FAR OUTWEIGHTED BY THE COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. SIR DENYS ROBERTS, THEN MOVED FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE DISCUSSION FOR FURTHER REFLECTION.

WEDNESDAY'S MEETING PROMISED TO BE A HECTIC ONE FOR MEMBERS, WITH DEBATE ALSO RESUMING ON THE OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS BILL, THE PUBLIC ONMIBUS SERVICES BILL, THE LOANS (GOVERNMENT BONDS) BILL, AND THE BETTING DUTY BILL, AMONG OTHERS.

ALSO ON THE ORDER PAPER IS A QUESTION TO BE ASKED BY DR. THE HON. CHUNG SZE-YUEN ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INDUSTRIAL ACTION TAKEN BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT CLERICAL STAFF ASSOCIATION.

QUESTIONS WILL ALSO BE RAISED ON POLICE STOP-AND-SEARCH OPERATIONS, MEASURES TO STOP THE IMPORTATION OF TOY PISTOLS WHICH CAN EASILY BE CONVERTED INTO LETHAL WEAPONS, THE TRAINING OF NURSES, AND THE PROVISION OF TRAINED TEACHERS.

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TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDS SYSTEM FOR
ALLOCATING EEC QUOTAS

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD, CHAIRED BY MR. FRANCIS TIEN, MET THIS AFTERNOON FOR SEVERAL HOURS TO CONSIDER THE DETAILED SYSTEMS BY WHICH QUOTAS FOR TEXTILES TO BE SHIPPED TO THE EEC UNDER THE NEW HK-EEC AGREEMENT WILL BE CALCULATED.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE D.C AND I SAID AFTER THE MEETING THAT THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING SUCH CALCULATIONS HAD FIRST TO BE DECIDED, AND THAT THIS TOOK TIME.

HE SAID THAT WHEREAS SOME OF THESE PRINCIPLES WERE MORE OR LESS STANDARD, OTHERS HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED AGAINST A RATHER DIFFERENT BACKGROUND TO ANYTHING THE DEPARTMENT HAD TO CONSIDER BEFORE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS SITUATION HAD ARISEN BECAUSE THE UNILATERALLY-APPLIED QUOTAS IN FORCE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 1975 WERE NOW BEING REPLACED WITH NEW QUOTAS VALID FROM THE JULY 18 UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 1975, AND THAT THESE WOULD ALSO FORM THE BASIS OF THE 1976 AND 1977 QUOTAS.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE AGREED ON A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS ENGAGED IN THE TRADE AND TO ENSURE EQUITABLE PROCEDURES FOR CALCULATION AND UTILISATION OF THE NEW QUOTAS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES RECOMMENDED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND WOULD NOW BE USED IN THE ASSESSMENT WORK PRIOR TO THE ISSUE OF THE EEC QUOTAS.

+WE DO NOT EXPECT DIFFICULTY IN SHIPMENTS OF MOST OF THE GOODS CAUGHT WITHIN THE QUOTA CONTROLS,+ HE SAID,+ BUT WE SHALL HAVE PROBLEMS IN THE SHORT TERM WITH TWO OR THREE CATEGORIES WHERE THE QUANTITIES WE CAN MAKE AVAILABLE FOR SHIPMENT DURING THE REMAINDER OF THIS YEAR WILL PROBABLY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE FULL DEMAND. THIS IS INEVITABLE GIVEN THE RAPID INCREASE IN EXPORTS IN THE CATEGORIES CONCERNED DURING THE PERIOD THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE GOING ON.

+WE HAVE DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE ENOUGH QUOTAS AVAILABLE TO MAINTAIN REASONABLE EXPORTS DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

+THE TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD HAS BEEN FULLY CONSULTED ON THIS AND ALL THE OTHER ISSUES INVOLVED,+ HE ADDED.

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MORE FARMERS TURN TO MECHANICAL AIDS

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FARMERS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE ADVANTAGES IN MECHANICAL AIDS TO IMPROVE CULTIVATION EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE PRODUCTION COSTS.

WITH THE HELP OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, MORE FARMERS ARE TURNING TO MECHANICAL LABOUR-SAVING DEVICES, WITH MORE THAN 1,000 OF THEM BUYING A SMALL ROTARY CULTIVATOR WHICH IS IDEALLY SUITED FOR SMALL HOLDINGS UNDER INTENSIVE FARMING.

THE CULTIVATOR IS IMPORTED BY THE FEDERATION OF VEGETABLE MARKETING CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES LTD. -- A NON-PROFIT-MAKING ORGANISATION -- AND SOLD TO FARMERS AT COMPETITIVE PRICES.

SINCE 1967, LOANS AMOUNTING TO \$444,740 HAVE BEEN GRANTED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TO 280 FARMERS TO HELP THEM BUY THE CULTIVATOR. THE DEPARTMENT ALSO OFFERS TECHNICAL ADVICE TO FARMERS INTERESTED IN THE DEVICE.

THE CULTIVATOR IS WELL DESIGNED, LIGHT, COMPACT AND STURDY AND WAS SELECTED FROM SEVERAL TYPES TESTED ON GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

TO MARK THE RECENT SALE OF THE 1,000TH CULTIVATOR, PRIZES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE 20 FARMERS WHO BOUGHT THE 991ST AND THE 1,010TH CULTIVATOR.

PRIZES WILL BE DRAWN BY MR. E.H. NICHOLS, DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, ON WEDNESDAY (JULY 30) AT THE CHEUNG SHA WAN WHOLESALE VEGETABLE MARKET.

NOTE TO EDITORS: YOU ARE INVITED TO HAVE THE OCCASION COVERED. THE DRAW WILL TAKE PLACE AT 3:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE CHEUNG SHA WAN WHOLESALE VEGETABLE MARKET.

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JUNE BANKING STATISTICS

THE NUMBER OF BANKS AS AT THE END OF JUNE THIS YEAR WAS 74 WITH TOTAL DEPOSITS OF \$34,135 MILLION, COMPRISING \$9,070 MILLION IN DEMAND DEPOSITS, \$13,396 MILLION IN TIME DEPOSITS AND \$11,669 MILLION IN SAVINGS DEPOSITS.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE GIVES THE BREAKDOWN FIGURES:

<u>LIABILITIES</u>	<u>MONTH ENDED JUNE 30, 1975</u>	
	\$MILLION	
1. DEPOSITS		34,135
2. AMOUNT DUE TO BANKS ABROAD		18,243
3. OTHER LIABILITIES		7,255
	<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u>	<u>59,633</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
1. CASH		600
2. AMOUNT DUE FROM BANKS ABROAD:		
(I) DEMAND AND SHORT TERM CLAIMS	17,475	
(II) TIME DEPOSITS	<u>1,914</u>	19,389
3. LOANS AND ADVANCES:		
(I) HONG KONG	24,309	
(II) ABROAD	<u>8,257</u>	32,566
4. INVESTMENTS:		
(I) HONG KONG	2,512	
(II) ABROAD	<u>52</u>	2,564
5. OTHER ASSETS:		
(I) HONG KONG	3,275	
(II) ABROAD	<u>1,239</u>	4,514
	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>59,633</u>
AVERAGE LIQUIDITY DURING MONTH		48.26%
		\$MILLION
DEMAND		9,070
TIME		13,396
SAVINGS		11,669
		<u>34,135</u>

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KWUN TONG PLB STAND ISSUE SETTLED

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT TODAY (MONDAY) AMICABLY SETTLED WITH PUBLIC LIGHT BUS REPRESENTATIVES THE QUESTION OF PLB'S STANDING BY BEHIND A PLB STAND IN HIP WO STREET, KWUN TONG.

FOUR PLB REPRESENTATIVES THIS MORNING WENT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND REQUESTED THAT A NUMBER OF PLB'S BE ALLOWED TO STAND BY BEYOND THE REAR END OF THE PLB STAND SO THAT THEY COULD MOVE INTO THE STAND ONCE THE PLB'S IN FRONT DROVE AWAY. FOLLOWING LIAISON WITH THE POLICE, THE DEPARTMENT AGREED, AND THE REPRESENTATIVES ACCEPTED, THAT FOUR PLB'S, WITH DRIVERS ON BOARD, WOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO SO DURING NON-PEAK HOURS, THAT IS, OUTSIDE THE PERIOD OF 7 A.M. TO 10 A.M. AND 4 P.M. TO 7 P.M.

THE PLB REPRESENTATIVES TOLD THE MEETING THAT SUCH STANDBY ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY DURING PEAK HOURS WHEN MOST PLB'S WOULD BE RUNNING ON THE ROADS.

THEY ALSO GAVE ASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD ARRANGE TO HAVE THEIR OWN REGULATORS TO ENSURE STRICT OBSERVATIONS OF THE STANDBY ARRANGEMENTS AS WELL AS ROAD DISCIPLINE.

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SECOND ANTI-MEASLES CAMPAIGN TO START
NEXT MONTH
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THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT WILL LAUNCH ANOTHER ANTI-MEASLES CAMPAIGN ON AUGUST 1 TO REMIND THE PUBLIC TO TAKE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AGAINST THE DISEASE.

IT WILL BE THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF THREE ANTI-MEASLES CAMPAIGN FOR THIS YEAR, AND WILL LAST UNTIL SEPTEMBER 15.

ABOUT 20,000 CHILDREN WERE IMMUNISED DURING THE FIRST CAMPAIGN WHICH WAS HELD IN APRIL AND MAY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS STILL A LARGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO REMAINED SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE DISEASE.

FREE VACCINE IS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AT ALL THE DEPARTMENT'S MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CENTRES.

THE DEPARTMENT HAD EARLIER WARNED THE PUBLIC OF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OUTBREAK OF MEASLES EPIDEMIC LATER THIS YEAR OR IN EARLY 1976.

PAST EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THE DISEASE DISPLAYS A DISTINCT BIENNIAL PATTERN, OCCURRING IN AN EPIDEMIC FORM EVERY ALTERNATE WINTER/SPRING:

THE LAST OUTBREAK OF MEASLES WAS IN LATE 1973 AND EARLY 1974 WHEN 53 CHILDREN DIED OF THE DISEASE.

THE SPOKESMAN STRESSED THAT TO PREVENT THE OUTBREAK OF MEASLES EPIDEMICS, PARENTS MUST ENSURE THAT THEIR CHILDREN, PARTICULARLY THOSE BETWEEN NINE MONTHS AND FIVE YEARS, HAVE BEEN IMMUNISED.

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RESERVOIRS 97.8 PER CENT FULL

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A TOTAL OF 65,841 MILLION GALLONS OF WATER WERE IN STORE IN ALL RESERVOIRS AS AT 9 A.M. THIS (MONDAY) MORNING, REPRESENTING 97.8 PER CENT OF THE FULL STORAGE CAPACITY OF 67,300 MILLION GALLONS.

ON THE SAME DAY LAST YEAR THE TOTAL STORAGE WAS ONLY 41,892 MILLION GALLONS.

PLOVER COVE, HONG KONG'S BIGGEST RESERVOIR, HELD 49,892 MILLION GALLONS, REPRESENTING 98.8 PER CENT OF ITS FULL STORAGE CAPACITY. AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR, IT HELD 32,084 MILLION GALLONS.

TOTAL RAINFALL SO FAR THIS YEAR STANDS AT 1,941.5 MM (76.44 IN). THE MEAN AVERAGE RAINFALL THIS YEAR IS 1,300.4 MM (51.2 IN).

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WATER CUTS

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WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN TSUEN WAN, CENTRAL DISTRICT AND KWUN TONG WILL BE INTERRUPTED FOR A FEW HOURS ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY TO ENABLE LEAKAGE TESTS TO BE CARRIED OUT.

IN TSUEN WAN, PREMISES BOUNDED BY CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TAI HO ROAD, SHA TSUI ROAD AND HEUNG CHI STREET, WILL BE WITHOUT WATER FROM 1 A.M. TO 6 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY (JULY 30).

ON THURSDAY, WATER SUPPLY WILL BE CUT OFF FOR PREMISES ALONG QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL FROM GARDEN ROAD TO POTTINGER STREET AND SOUTH SIDE OF DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL TO ICE HOUSE STREET FROM 1 A.M. TO 6 A.M.

ALSO AFFECTED BY TEMPORARY WATER STOPPAGE DURING THE SAME PERIOD ARE PREMISES BOUNDED BY NGAU TAU KOK ROAD, JORDAN VALLEY NORTH ROAD, INCLUDING AMOY CANNING CORPORATION (H.K.) LTD. AND JORDAN VALLEY ESTATE BLOCKS 10-16.

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