

**HONG KONG
GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
SERVICES**

**DAILY
INFORMATION
BULLETIN**

Friday, August 11, 1972

NEW POWERS TO BRING LITTER OFFENDERS TO COURT

New powers requiring the prompt appearance of litter offenders in court are contained in an amending bill which will be introduced in the Legislative Council shortly.

The Magistrates (Amendment) Bill 1972 proposes to replace the normal summons process with the service of an "on-the-spot" notice requiring litter offenders to appear before the courts.

A government spokesman said that during the "Keep Hong Kong Clean" campaign it was anticipated that large numbers of people may be brought before the courts to answer for offences against the anti-litter laws.

At present, under the Magistrates Ordinance, an offender's appearance in court is secured by serving on him a summons issued by a magistrate.

Under this procedure, a great deal of time is often taken up in effecting notice of the summons, and frequently there is a considerable gap between the commission of the offence, and the offender's appearance in court.

"It is considered that this procedure is unsatisfactory and that a quicker means of bringing an offender before the court is desirable if the campaign is to be successful," the spokesman said.

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"This amending bill seeks to dispense with the necessity for a summons and to enable certain public officers to hand to an offender, at the time of the offence, a notice which requires him to appear before a court at a time and place specified in the notice."

If a person served with such a notice fails to comply with it, the magistrate will be able to issue a warrant for his arrest. If he is subsequently brought before the magistrate, the magistrate can, unless there are special circumstances, order the person to pay costs of between \$20 and \$400, irrespective of whether or not he is convicted of the alleged offence.

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MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER HAWKERS

Another major step was taken today towards making hawkers carry on their business in a more orderly way.

An amending bill, published in today's Gazette, contains more effective measures to control the activities of hawkers.

If passed into law, the Public Health and Urban Services (Amendment) (No. 4) Bill will pave the way for revised hawker by-laws and regulations to be enacted in time for the "Clean Hong Kong" campaign.

Commenting on the bill, the Assistant Director of Urban Services, Mr. Gus Chui, said that under it, legitimate hawkers would be able to continue to ply their trade in an orderly manner, free from interference and unfair competition from illegal pedlars.

"The bill," he said, "acts only against irresponsible hawking and legitimate hawkers will enjoy greater security as a result."

Referring to the "Clean Hong Kong" campaign, Mr. Chui said: "To clean Hong Kong, you have to clean up the hawker areas and it is impossible to do this until the stalls are organised in an orderly way and hawkers obey the law."

"We will still mainly rely on co-operation and education, but inevitably we need new legislation to act against the selfish few," he added.

The bill seeks to give further effect to the Urban Council's revised hawker policy.

The ultimate aim of this policy is to provide proper off-street bazaars for all hawkers. This will take some time to achieve and in the meantime hawkers will continue to be allocated sites in streets set aside for hawking and in off-street bazaars.

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The success of this policy depends on maintaining control over licensed hawkers and on stronger measures to reduce the number of unlicensed ones.

One of the main objects of the bill is to extend the powers of the authorities to make new regulations for the control of hawkers.

A new provision empowers magistrates to recommend to the authorities that the licence of a hawker be cancelled or suspended if he is convicted of an offence against the regulations.

Under the bill, the Commissioner for Transport can set aside certain public streets for hawking.

If necessary, he can limit vehicular traffic on them and the authorities can then allocate pitches in these streets to hawkers.

Mandatory Forfeiture

"In view of the shortage of suitable sites for hawker bazaars, we will have to continue to accept, for the time being, on-street hawking -- but in a controlled and orderly manner," Mr. Chui said.

The bill provides for the mandatory forfeiture of hawker goods and equipment in certain circumstances.

Mandatory forfeiture, Mr. Chui said, would now be limited to the four most serious types of hawker offences:

- a) hawking without a licence;
- b) hawking in an area where hawking is not permitted;
- c) hawking at a fixed pitch without a fixed pitch licence and
- d) hawking outside the boundary of a designated pitch.

Commenting on this provision, Mr. Chui said that the Government had for a long time been concerned about the ineffectiveness of control measures based on current hawker legislation.

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He said that efforts by staff of the Urban Services Department and the Police to maintain satisfactory order in hawker areas had been largely frustrated by the persistence of illegal hawkers.

"While it is appreciated that mandatory forfeiture is a strong penalty, experience over many years has shown that it is the only effective method to deal with the problem," he said.

The bill also provides for the disposal of seized goods and equipment, but a hawker acquitted of an offense can get back his goods or their value.

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WATER BILLS TO COME EVERY FOUR MONTHS

Residents will be able to settle their water bills and meter rent once in every four months instead of every three as at present, if a new bill to be introduced into the Legislative Council is passed.

The Waterworks (Amendment) Bill, 1972, seeks to remove the quarterly time limit for payment of water charges and meter rent and requires consumers, in future, to undertake to pay the charges at intervals to be determined by the Water Authority.

Commenting on the change, a spokesman for the Water Authority said today the intention is that in future water bills will be issued every four months based on the amount of water consumed over that period, instead of the 3 months period now in operation.

One reason for changing the system is to reduce the number of bills issued each year to a more manageable level and enable the Water Authority to cope with the increasing number of consumers.

"The number of water meters installed in buildings throughout Hong Kong has been increasing very rapidly over the past few years and it is estimated that by the end of this year about 500,000 meters will be in service, representing an increase of 150 per cent since 1958," he pointed out.

The spokesman said that the introduction of the new billing system does not involve a revision of water charges. However, as a result of the reduced frequency, individual bills will generally be higher since the period of consumption to which they relate will be one month longer.

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Following the amendment to the principal ordinance, the Waterworks Regulations will also be amended to allow domestic consumers to receive the same amount of free water supply as before.

Under the new four-monthly billing system, this allowance will be equal to \$8 for each bill issued which amounts to a total of \$24 a year, the same as at present.

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SAFER PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS FOR YAU MA TEI

Two pedestrian subways will soon be built to smooth cargo handling operations along the waterfront in the Yau Ma Tei area.

The subways will link Dundas Street and Tung Kun Street with the sea-front godowns which will be built on land now being reclaimed from the Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter.

To improve drainage in the area, some 1,750 feet of stormwater drains and two box culverts will be built at the same time.

All these works are part of the Tong Mi Road Extension Scheme which, when completed, will form a major road artery joining south Kowloon with Tsuen Wan in the New Territories.

The subway project is expected to begin next month and take 14 months to complete.

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NIGHT WORK FOR AIRPORT TUNNEL ROAD

A significant proportion of the work on the \$115 million airport tunnel road will have to be carried out at night.

This will enable the work across the runway to be completed at the earliest possible date so that the fully extended runway can be brought into use.

It will also enable the road tunnel itself to be completed earlier.

A government spokesman said today that transportation of various materials during the night would be necessary to support the night work.

Work on the tunnel started early last month and is expected to be completed in early 1975.

It forms an essential part of the North-East Kowloon Road Network. When completed, it will relieve traffic congestion in the Kowloon City area and also serve as a major access route to the rapidly developing industrial centre of Kwun Tong.

During the whole period of construction, certain areas connected with the project will be exempted from the provisions of section 13 of the Summary Offences Ordinance, which forbids making noise at night.

Notification of the exemption was published in the Gazette today.

The spokesman said every effort will be made to keep the noise level to a minimum and the contractors will be required to plan their operations to this effect.

They will also be required to use sound-reducing equipment.

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TEN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS FOR 1973 URBAN COUNCIL ELECTION

Hong Kong has been divided into 10 electoral districts, each with a designated polling station, for next year's Urban Council election - the same as in the previous election.

Registered voters must cast their vote at the designated polling station in the electoral district within which they live.

But anyone who considers he has special grounds for voting at a polling station other than the one where he is registered, may apply for a change.

He may complete and return a form of notice by pre-paid ordinary post on or before August 31, 1972 to the Registration Officer, Mr. J.V.G. Mitchell. The forms can be obtained free at his office at the Causeway Bay Magistracy Building.

There will be four electoral districts on Hong Kong Island. They are (their polling station in brackets): Western (King's College), Central (City Hall), Wan Chai (Hennessy Road Government Primary School) and Eastern (North Point Government Primary School).

The other six are all in Kowloon. They are: Yau Ma Tei (Kowloon Public Pier), Mong Kok (Queen Elizabeth School), Sham Shui Po (Kowloon Technical School), Kowloon City (Perth Street Government Primary School), Wong Tai Sin (San Po Kong Government Primary School) and Kwun Tong (Kwun Tong Government Primary School).

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Details of the boundaries of each electoral district, the polling stations and a provisional register of electors are published in today's Government Gazette and will be advertised in the newspapers tomorrow (Saturday).

The provisional register will be available for inspection free at the Registration Officer's office during business hours from next Wednesday (August 16) until the end of the month.

Anyone whose name does not appear on the provisional register and who considers himself entitled to be registered as an elector, may apply in person only, to the Registration Officer for inclusion in the final register on or before August 31.

A person who considers anyone whose name appears on the provisional register or who has given notice of application for inclusion in the final register, is not entitled to be registered as an elector, may object to the Registration Officer by filling in the appropriate forms.

These forms should be completed signed and lodged with the Registration Officer's office on or before August 31, in the case of the provisional register, or on or before September 11, in the case of the final register.

Notices of application for inclusion in the final register and notices of objection to the inclusion of any name in the final register, will be available for inspection during office hours at the Registration Officer's office up to September 11.

At present, the total number of electors registered to vote in the 10 electoral districts is 31,252. The election will be held on March 7, 1973.

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Note to Editors: Copies of two maps showing the location of the polling stations and the electoral districts on each side of the Harbour are distributed separately in the G.I.S. Press Boxes this evening.

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BUILDINGS IN DES VOEUX ROAD WEST DECLARED DANGEROUS

Two buildings at 76 and 78 Des Voeux Road West were declared dangerous today and the Building Authority has ordered their demolition.

The Principal Government Building Surveyor said that these two four-storey pre-war buildings had been under observation for two years following the closure and demolition under order of buildings in Ko Shing Street at the rear.

Recent inspections revealed signs of a fresh movement of fractures in the brickwork of the rear main wall and in the load-bearing party wall between the two buildings.

The flank wall of the kitchen block of No. 76 is badly bulged and out of vertical at the top.

Although all of No. 78 and the kitchen block of No. 76 is extensively shored there is a danger of collapse of the rear and party walls where they join.

Notices of intention to apply for Closure Orders in Victoria District Court at 9.30 a.m. on September 22 were posted today.

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INDOOR STADIUM TENDERS

Tenders are being invited for the construction of foundations for the indoor stadium on the Hung Hom Reclamation.

Work will involve the construction of piling, caissons and caps for a large podium slab which will support the indoor stadium, and some foundations for minor buildings in the complex.

The construction work is expected to start in October this year and should be completed by November, 1973.

The project has been designed, and construction will be supervised, by the Public Works Department.

The indoor stadium together with the surrounding podium, forms Stage III Phase 3 of the multi-million dollar Hung Hom Development Scheme.

When completed, the stadium will have seating accommodation for 15,000, and will be used as a venue for sporting and public events.

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Release Time: 7.00 p.m.