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HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, September 29, 1972

MORE TAXIS FOR HONG KONG

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Another 350 taxi licences are to be issued by the Government for operation on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon. This will bring the total number of taxis on the roads to 3,756.

Tenders for the new licences are being called in today's Gazette.

Commenting on the decision to issue more licences, the Acting Commissioner for Transport, Mr. R. Butler, said there are clear indications that the number of taxis on the roads are not enough to meet the current demand.

"Surveys conducted to assess the waiting time for taxis at the more popular taxi stands at peak periods show that this can at times be unduly protracted," he said.

It is hoped that the situation could be improved with the issue of the new taxi licences.

An applicant can tender for one or more taxis but he has to deposit with the Accountant General a sum of $2,500 for each of the taxis included in the tender. The deposits will be returned to unsuccessful tenderers.

/Tenderers .....

Issued by Government Information Services, Beaconsfield House, Hong Kong. Tel: 5-233191

Tenderers will be required to indicate whether the taxis for which they are applying are intended for use on Hong Kong Island or in Kowloon. The exact numbers of taxis allocated for each side of the harbour will depend on the analysis of the tenders received.

Applicants should send in their tender forms in duplicate and in sealed envelopes to the Secretary of the Tender Board.

Further tenders for taxi licences may be invited early next year, if the effects of the opening of the cross-harbour tunnel show this to be necessary.

"Thereafter taxi licences may be issued on a different basis," Mr. Butler added.

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TIME LIMIT FOR APPROVAL OF BUILDING PLANS TO BE EXTENDED

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Legislation is to be introduced shortly to extend the time limit for the approval of building plans from the present 28 days to 60 days.

The measures are being introduced to protect the public, as building plans are now so complicated that they require very detailed consideration.

The Principal Government Building Surveyor, Mr. J.G. Stean, said today there is no practical or safe way to simplify the checking of submissions.

"This is particularly true in the structural field, where checking is already restricted to points of principle and spot checks of calculations," he said.

To enable the proposed legislation to be brought in, the Governor in Council has made regulations extending for another three months the operation of the Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 1972.

The effect of these regulations is to continue in force the legislation introduced last July which suspended the statutory time limits for occupation permits, consents to commence work and approval of plans which are contained in the Buildings Ordinance.

This was done when staff of the Building Ordinance Office was diverted to emergency duties connected with the June rainstorms.

Although most of the staff have returned to normal duties, there is an accumulated backlog of applications for approval of plans which cannot be dealt with in the period of 28 days stated in the Ordinance.

/However, ...

However, Mr. Stean, gave an assurance that all applications for occupation permits will be processed within 14 days -- the period stipulated in the Ordinance.

"At the same time", he said, "priority will be given to applications for consent to commence work and these should be cleared within the 28-day period."

The requirement that the Building Authority process applications for occupation permits within 14 days will be re-established when the bill, which also incorporates further amendments to the Buildings Ordinance, is introduced.

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MOBILE POST OFFICE IN CLEARWATER BAY TO BE CLOSED

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A temporary mobile post office which has been serving residents in the Clearwater Bay area will be withdrawn as from tomorrow (Saturday).

Announcing this today, the Postmaster General explained that a three month trial period for the service had shown a very limited need for the facilities with "few customers each day".

The main business transacted was the sale of postage stamps which are already available from licensed stamp vendors in the area.

These vendors are at Taipo Tsai, Sheung Yeung, Ho Chung, Hang Hau, Pak Sha Wan and Tai Chung Hau Village.

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NEW QUARRY DEVELOPMENT AT CHA KWO LING

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Two quarries at Cha Kwo Ling in Kowloon will be combined to enable efficient production using the most modern application of safe working methods.

Situated behind Cha Kwo Ling Village near the eastern approaches to the harbour, these two quarries have a total area of 83 acres.

The present contracts under which they operate will expire on June 30, 1974. After this, the new contract will take in the whole area and the quarry will be operated as a single unit.

This combination is in line with the government's policy of providing large-scale, modern quarries with proper control over working conditions.

The new contract will enable the successful contractor to continue working until all reserves of granite in the hill have been removed to the agreed boundaries of quarry working for the area. It also provides for the landscaping of the area as extraction of stone is completed.

It is estimated that over one million cubic yards of stone can be quarried each year, and the whole operation is expected to take at least 10 years to complete.

However, the operation period may be reduced if there is a large increase in the demand for building material.

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EXTENSIONS TO CAPE COLLINSON CREMATORIUM

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A two-storey columbarium providing 3,970 niches and a pavilion will soon be built in the Cape Collinson crematorium to meet the growing demand for columbarium spaces.

The design of the new structure will follow the character of the original columbarium which contains a cloister-type wall into which niches are set. It will be connected to the east end of the crematorium complex by the pavilion.

The new columbarium will be built over a bank in the Garden of Remembrance overlooking the Lei Yue Mun Channel.

When the Cape Collinson crematorium was completed in 1962, there was provision for 450 niches.

With the growth in the use of the crematorium, an additional 800 niches were provided in an extension to the columbarium in 1965, and a further 2,600 in 1968.

In view of the still growing demand for columbarium spaces, this third stage of the expansion was planned.

Construction of the new columbarium will commence in December, and take about one year to complete.

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CROWN LAND ORDINANCE 1972 BECOMES EFFECTIVE ON SUNDAY

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The Crown Land Ordinance 1972 will come into effect on Sunday (October 1).

Under the legislation, the authorities will be empowered to serve notices requiring unlawful occupation of Crown land to cease within a specified period.

If the notice is not complied with, the authorities may remove trespassers from the land and take possession of any property on it.

Failure to comply with such a notice will be an offence and on conviction, a person is liable to a fine of $10,000 and to six months' imprisonment.

The ordinance also deals with the control of excavations in unleased Crown land and the revesting of certain private streets in the Crown.

One important change from the old law is that mere unlawful occupation of Crown land will no longer be a criminal offence.

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COFFEE QUOTA ARRANGEMENT

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The International Coffee Council has announced that imports of coffee by member countries of the International Coffee Agreement from non-member countries will continue to be subject to quota control in the "coffee year" commencing on Sunday (October 1).

A spokesman of the Commerce and Industry Department said today that Hong Kong's quota for imports of non-member coffee has been fixed at approximately 1.6 million pounds.

The Department is now prepared to consider applications to import coffee from non-member countries for local consumption.

Applications will be considered on production of evidence of intended purchase until the entire quota is committed. Coffe imported for local consumption may not subsequently be re-exported. Applications to import non-member coffee for re-export will not at present be considered, the spokesman said.

In respect of coffee imported from member countries, import licences will continue to be issued on the production of Certificates of Origin with Coffee Export Stamps affixed to them or Certificates of Re-export.

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Release Time: 7.00 p.m.