



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Television Amendment Bill is passed into law following a number of amendments	1
The Government is considering conducting surveys on the handicapped	4
Grants totalling more than \$4 million have been allocated from the Lotteries Fund	6
The Waterworks Office is to have more staff to deal with complaints and enquiries	7
The question of recurrent financial aid to Baptist College has been under discussion between the Education Department and the College	8
Site formation for the cattle quarantine station On Tsing Yi Island is nearing completion	9
Noise nuisance caused by a stone-crushing plant in Chai Wan is to be curbed	10
Nine bills become law in today's Legco meeting	11
There will be no mail delivery on Sunday and next Tuesday ..	12
Concerts, operas and variety shows have been arranged by the Urban Council for February	13
A major announcement on social security is to be made tomorrow	13
The Urban Council Bill is introduced into Legco	14

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 1 -

UNOFFICIALS SUPPORT TELEVISION BILL

Proper Control Of TV Media Called For

The Hon. Wilson Wang told the Legislative Council today it was necessary to impose restraints on Hong Kong's television media to ensure that it made the best use of its facilities to serve the public.

Speaking during the resumed debate on the Television (Amendment) Bill 1973, Mr. Wang warned that television, if allowed a completely free rein, could be both a public menace and a nuisance which could seduce, corrupt and interfere.

"On the other hand, with a proper degree of control and with enlightened handling," he added, "it can be a cultural asset, virtually second to none."

He felt it was therefore important that the Government be given the power and machinery to impose whatever controls might be necessary, and to encourage the television stations to produce programmes that would "enrich, educate and entertain without undermining the very fabric of the community."

In his opinion, the Bill enabled the introduction and maintenance of an increased number of television channels "on a fair and competitive basis so that through healthy competition and cooperation the standard of production and the quality of programmes may be improved."

The Bill introduced a number of changes to the Television Ordinance, particularly in respect of the composition of licensee companies and share holdings, the composition of the Television Advisory Board, the amount of permitted advertising time and rate of royalty.

/It passed

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 2 -

It passed its third and final reading in the Council with a number of amendments.

The Hon. P.C. Woo, who also spoke on the Bill, said that some of the amendments stemmed from submissions received by the UMELCO Office.

He indicated that some further amendments would be introduced at a later stage.

Mr. Woo stressed that the Bill, as amended, would definitely serve the public interest as well as ensure that the obligations to be borne by those commercial concerns which succeeded in obtaining a licence would be both "reasonable and equitable."

Amendments

In reply, the Attorney General, the Hon. D.T.E. Roberts, explained that the amendments to the Bill were designed to clarify the law and to modify some provisions which seemed impracticable and others which might bear "somewhat unfairly" on one or other of the licensees.

He agreed that the prime object of legislation dealing with television should be to ensure that "the public interest is best served by a highly influential medium of communication."

But, he added, at the same time -- within the limits necessarily imposed by the public interest, "the legislation should, so far as possible, preserve a fair balance between the various licensees operating television services."

Mr. Roberts told Council that the Government was prepared to introduce suitable amendments to several clauses which had caused some concern to Unofficial Members.

/One of these

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 3 -

One of these concerned the provision enabling the Governor-in-Council, when renewing a licence, to alter the terms under which the licensee was operating.

The Attorney General said it had been argued that the Ordinance made no provision for notice to be given to the licensee of proposed changes and that these might substantially prejudice the operations and interests of the licensee company.

The Government was prepared however to put forward, in due course, an amending bill to provide for an appropriate period of notice to be given to a licensee when his licence was being considered for renewal.

He added that these amendments would not apply to the first renewal of TVB's licence, which was expected to take place during the next few months.

Another amendment the Government was prepared to make, he said, would provide for an adequate period of notice to be given to any licensee affected by a change of frequency required by the Telecommunications Authority.

The amendment would also enable the licensee to make representations to the Authority and give him the right to appeal to the Governor-in-Council against the decision of the Authority.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/4

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 4 -

SURVEYS ON HANDICAPPED BEING CONSIDERED

The Government is considering two new surveys to obtain more information about the physically and mentally handicapped to assist in the forward planning of their welfare and medical facilities.

This was disclosed by the Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, at the Legislative Council today in reply to a question from Mr. R.H. Lobo.

The first survey is to draw up a register of the disabled to provide full information about each handicapped person. "The second is to undertake a series of sample surveys to identify all handicapped persons and to describe their disabilities in detail," he said.

Mr. Haddon-Cave said that the first survey, now being considered by the Census and Statistics and Social Welfare Departments, could be compiled over a period of time and should become fairly accurate in due course.

The second one, he continued, would be a "large and complicated operation" requiring "very sophisticated sampling techniques" and "medically trained enumerators" adequately to describe the disabilities of all handicapped persons.

The Commissioner for Census and Statistics had been in consultation with the Director of Medical and Health Services on the possibility of conducting a pilot survey along these lines next year, he said.

/The Financial

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 5 -

The Financial Secretary added that a population census was not the best means of obtaining a complete enumeration of the handicapped.

"An attempt was made during the 1971 Census to obtain information, on a voluntary basis, on the physically and mentally handicapped," he said.

Information was obtained on 14,588 handicapped persons but this had not covered "more than a proportion of all the handicapped, although the balance between the sexes, age groups and types of handicap was probably about right," he added.

- - - 0 - - - -

/ 6

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 6 -

GRANTS FROM LOTTERIES FUND TOTAL \$4 MILLION

Fifteen grants totalling nearly \$4.4 million have been allocated from the Lotteries Fund to various social welfare organisations and voluntary agencies.

This was announced in the Legislative Council today by the Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, when he moved a resolution to seek approval of the allocation.

He said that these grants had been recommended by the Social Welfare Advisory Committee.

Of the sum total, over \$2 million will contribute towards the construction of a second residential centre of the Society of Boys' Centres.

Six organisations will be carrying out experimental projects with the grants, including home help services and a training centre for mentally retarded children.

Other grants will be used in the purchase of equipment and renovation work.

The Financial Secretary said that with the allocation of these grants, the uncommitted balance in the Lotteries Fund would be brought to almost \$1.7 million.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 7

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 7 -

MORE STAFF FOR WATERWORKS OFFICE
To Deal With Complaints And Enquiries

More posts have been created in the Waterworks Office to cope with the increase in water complaints and enquiries from the public.

Replying to a question from the Hon. P.G. Williams in the Legislative Council today, the Director of Public Works said that more than 6,000 letters of complaints or enquiries were outstanding at the Waterworks Office at the end of 1972.

In 1971, about 48,000 enquiries or complaints were made and last year the figure increased to 71,000.

Mr. Robson said that additional posts in the Waterworks Consumer Accounting Division and Consumer Service, and a Public Relations Officer's post had been created.

However, due to recruiting difficulties, the posts had not yet been filled. But Mr. Robson promised that "improvements will be made as soon as the staff situation improves."

At present, special arrangements to deal with the backlog of enquiries are being discussed by the Director of Water Supplies and the Colonial Secretariat.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 8

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 8 -

FINANCIAL AID TO BAPTIST COLLEGE

The Education Department has been discussing the possibility of recurrent financial assistance with the Hong Kong Baptist College in order to strengthen the college's role in post-secondary education.

This was stated by the Director of Education, the Hon. J. Canning, in Legislative Council today in reply to a question from the Hon. Wilfred Wong.

Mr. Canning said that the question of assistance to the Baptist College had been under consideration for some time.

"However there are many aspects which need to be examined in more detail before definite proposals can be formulated.

"These include the need for expansion at the post-secondary level, the extent of Government support warranted having regard to our commitment in other fields of education and the most appropriate form of financial assistance," he said.

Mr. Canning said that the present site of the college had been granted free by Government in 1958 and an interest free loan had been made available in 1970 to assist the college towards the construction of the assembly hall.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 9

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 9 -

CATTLE LAIRAGES ON TSING YI ISLAND

Site formation for the cattle quarantine station on Tsing Yi Island is 90 per cent completed.

The Director of Public Works, the Hon. J.J. Robson, said in the Legislative Council today that cattle lairages would be provided as part of the station.

He was replying to the Hon. Wilson Wang who had asked about the progress being made for the provision of cattle lairages on Tsing Yi Island.

Work had also started on the construction of a road linking the station to the new Tsing Yi Bridge.

Mr. Robson said: "It is hoped that the road and the bridge will be completed around the same time."

The sketch plans of the station also allow for marine access by way of a sea wall and a T-shaped jetty. But the plans had yet to be finalised pending a decision on the provision of quarters for the cattle traders staff, the Director said.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 10

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 10 -

NOISE NUISANCE IN CHAI WAN TO BE CURBED

The contractor operating the stone-crushing plant at Sui Man Road in Chai Wan will look into the possibility of providing sound barriers and other means of reducing noise nuisances to nearby residents.

This was stated by the Director of Public Works, the Hon. J.J. Robson, in Legislative Council today in reply to a question by the Hon. Wilfred Wong.

The plant is operated under a P.W.D. contract for the construction of the Hing Wah Resettlement Estate.

Mr. Robson said the main complaint seemed to be against the noise generated when loads of rock were dumped into the crushing plant, which is about 50 yards from the nearest building.

"The contractor will be directed to consider means of reducing this noise," he said.

But he added that it might be difficult to achieve "any significant improvement" because of the open nature and topography of the site.

On the question of dust nuisances, Mr. Robson said that the contractor had already arranged for continuous watering by means of a sprinkler system and erected screens.

"These will be maintained for the duration of the crushing operations," he added.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 11

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 11 -

NINE BILLS BECOME LAW

Nine bills passed their committee stage and third readings in Legislative Council this afternoon and became law.

They were the Copyright Bill 1973; the Evidence (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Television (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Inland Revenue (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Merchant Shipping (Recruiting of Seamen) (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Rating Bill 1973; the Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973; and the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Bill 1973.

Six bills had their first and second readings.

They were the Urban Council Bill 1973; the Juvenile Offenders (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Census (Amendment) Bill 1973; and the Public Health and Urban Services (Amendment) Bill 1973. Debate on them was adjourned.

Debate on the second readings of six other bills was resumed. They were the Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 1973; the Evidence (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Television (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Merchant Shipping (Recruiting of Seamen) (Amendment) Bill 1973; and the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Bill 1973.

Four sessional papers were tabled in the Council this afternoon.

They were the 1971-72 Departmental Reports by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Commissioner of Police, and the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation.

The Hong Kong Narcotics Progress Report for 1971-72 was also tabled.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 12

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 12 -

LUNAR NEW YEAR POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS

There will be one postal delivery on Sunday (February 4), the day after Lunar New Year's Day, and Tuesday (February 6).

All post offices will be closed during the holiday period from February 3 to February 5.

However, normal counter facilities will be available on February 6 at 31 post offices throughout Hong Kong. These include the Central Post Office, the Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office and the Kowloon Central Post Office.

They will be open between 9 a.m. and 12 noon.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LEGCO PROCEEDINGS RECORDED

Note to Editors: The proceedings in today's Legislative Council meeting have been recorded. You are welcome to consult the tapes in the Press Room, Government Information Services.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 13

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 13 -

FREE SHOWS FOR FEBRUARY

The Urban Council and the Urban Services Department have prepared a programme of free entertainment for next month.

The programme will include Cantonese band concerts, operas, variety shows and film shows. These will be held in various playgrounds throughout Hong Kong.

Each of the variety shows will begin with a lion dance and at the end of the performances, a lucky draw will be held.

Members of the public are welcome to attend.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Note to Editors: The Director of Social Welfare, Mr. F.K. Li, and the Assistant Director (General), Mr. T.S. Heppell, will hold a press conference in the 35 mm theatre of the Information Services Department, 5th floor, Beaconsfield House, at 11 a.m. on Thursday (February 1, 1973).

They will announce details of a major development in social security in Hong Kong, and will answer questions from the media.

Members of the press, radio and television, are invited to attend the press conference.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/ 14

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 14 -

URBAN COUNCIL BILL INTRODUCED

Gives Substantial Financial Autonomy To Council

The Urban Council Bill 1973 gives effect to one of the main recommendations in the White Paper on the Council that it should enjoy a "substantial degree of financial autonomy," The Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Norman-Walker said today.

He was speaking in the Legislative Council this afternoon when he moved the second reading of the bill.

The bill, he said, enables the Council to make its own financial by-laws, which will among other things specify the degree of financial authority delegated by the council to its committees and public officers.

"The Government has agreed to assist the Urban Council in drafting the by-laws and we hope to use as a guide the authority delegated to the Financial Secretary and the Deputy Financial Secretary," he said.

The Colonial Secretary referred to a clause in the Bill which provides that the Governor shall consult the Urban Council before appointing its Secretary.

It also provides that the Governor should consult the Urban Council about the appointment of the most senior Directorate staff of the Urban Services Department.

Sir Hugh said that the Governor had agreed to write to the Chairman of the Urban Council confirming the Government's acceptance of this policy as contained in the White Paper.

/Sir Hugh

Wednesday, January 31, 1973

- 15 -

Sir Hugh expressed the hope that an amendment could soon be made to the law to provide for Urban Council members who speak only Chinese.

At present, candidates must be able to speak and read the English language before they can be elected to the Urban Council.

Sir Hugh said that this requirement must, for the time being, be retained since "the necessary staff is not yet available to provide simultaneous interpretation at meetings of Urban Council Select Committees.

"Nor do we yet have the translators who would be needed to translate Urban Council papers for the use of members who do not read English." he added.

- - - - 0 - - - -

Release time: 7.30 p.m.