



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Saturday, March 23, 1974

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Release time: 2.30 p.m.

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MORE HOLIDAY-CUM-STUDY TRIPS

For Local Officers

More local officers will have an opportunity to go overseas at the government's expense as a result of an expansion of the merit trip scheme.

The number of awards for the 1974/75 financial year has been more than doubled from 12 to 30, and this will be reviewed again in the following year.

Under the scheme, which was first introduced in 1956, a number of selected local officers are each year provided with passages to the United Kingdom and allowances to enable them to spend their vacation overseas and at the same time undertake some training relevant to their work in Hong Kong.

A government spokesman explained that the trips are normally based in Britain because it offers better and more appropriate training facilities.

"It is also easier to organise, through the Hong Kong Government Office in London, visits to places of educational, cultural and historical interest and to arrange suitable short courses or attachments," he added.

So far, a total of 123 local officers have benefited from the trips which now last between 45 and 60 days.

Another advantage of the scheme, the spokesman noted, is that it enables local officers to gain a deeper insight into different customs and helps them to broaden their outlook on life.

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"With their training and new experience, they thus get a better perspective and understanding of conditions in Hong Kong from which both the public service and the community benefit."

The main criteria for selection are that officers should normally be in the 40-50 age group with a substantial period of public service and a very good record. Community service is also taken into account.

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FIVE-FOLD INCREASE IN GRASS FIRES

The long dry spell from September last year to the end of February resulted in five times as many grass fires as for the same period in 1972/73, according to figures released today by the Fire Services Department.

The total number of grass fires was 2,504, compared with 527 in 1972/73. They represented close to 50 per cent of all fire calls answered.

The worst month was December when a total of 900 grass fires were dealt with out of a total of 1,485 fires.

A Fire Services spokesman said the most common cause of grass and other fires continued to be careless disposal of lighted cigarette ends and matches.

"Even now," he said, "despite the wet weather, the fire risk is there and we appeal to the public to stub out their cigarette ends and blow out their matches before throwing them away."

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THIRD SEMINAR ON FURTHER STUDIES

Some 400 senior secondary students from Tai Hang Tung area will be participating in a seminar on further studies tomorrow (Sunday).

The seminar will be held at the Tai Hang Tung Community Centre in Tong Yam Street, Kowloon, beginning at 10 a.m.

This is the third seminar on further studies organised by the West Kowloon Children and Youth Guidance Council and the Community Centre.

The intention is to provide students with some insight into the prospects of pursuing further studies either locally or abroad.

Tomorrow's seminar will deal with educational opportunities in Britain, the United States and Canada.

Representatives from the Chinese University, Wai Kiu College, Chan Shu Kui Memorial School and the Hang Seng Bank have been invited to speak.

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Note to Editors: You are welcome to cover the seminar tomorrow. It will last about two hours from 10 a.m.

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TRAFFIC RE-ROUTINGS AT SAI WAN HO

New traffic arrangements are being introduced to improve traffic circulation at Sai Wan Ho Ferry Pier on the Island.

As from 10 a.m. on Monday (March 25) only northbound traffic will be allowed along the section of Holy Cross Path between Shaukiwan Road and the new ferry pier. The corresponding section of Hoi Ning Street will be re-routed for one-way southbound traffic.

At the same time, Hing Man Street will be re-routed one-way westbound while the section of Hoi An Street between Shaukiwan Road and Hing Man Street will be re-routed for one-way northbound traffic only.

Public light buses will not be allowed to pick up or set down passengers between the hours of 7 a.m. and midnight on the section of Hoi Ning and Hoi An Streets north of Shaukiwan Road.

They will also be prohibited from entering the new ferry concourse and the section of Holy Cross Path between Shaukiwan Road and the new ferry pier.

However, a new public light bus stand will be set up on the southern side of Hing Man Street.

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BUFFET LUNCH FOR SEVERELY DISABLED

A group of 35 severely disabled people will be feted at a buffet lunch on March 29 as guests of the Hongkong Hilton Hotel.

The hotel has arranged to entertain the group in support of Rehabilitation Week which is being held from March 25 to 31.

The handicapped people are some of those living and working in the Settlement for the Severely Disabled run by the Social Welfare Department in Block 10 of the Kwun Tong Public Housing Estate.

The Settlement for the Severely Disabled is a workshop providing employment for 105 people whose disabilities do not permit them to obtain employment outside. Their ages range from 16 and over. They include 50 who are mentally-retarded and 30 physical disabilities. Apart from this workshop there is also a hostel for 30 male workers.

Miss Stella Leung, Officer-in-Charge of the Blind and Physically Disabled Welfare Unit in the Social Welfare Department, said the offer to entertain these handicapped people was a very nice gesture on the part of the hotel and it would be a new and happy experience for those who would be attending.

Rehabilitation Week is a seven-day period in which there will be exhibitions, variety shows, talks on careers in helping the handicapped and tours of rehabilitation centres run by 22 organisations including the Social Welfare Department

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The Week is being organised by the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled of Hong Kong Council of Social Service in order to promote a better understanding of disabled people, their capabilities and what is being done to help them.

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Note to Editors: Reporters and cameramen are welcome to cover the buffet lunch party on Friday, March 29. It will be held from 12.00 noon to 2.00 p.m. at the India Room of the Hongkong Hilton.

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SUNDAY D.I.B.

Note to Editors: There will be an issue of the Daily Information Bulletin tomorrow (Sunday). Copies will be available for collection at 2.30 p.m. that day from the G.I.S. Press room on the 6th floor of Beaconsfield House.

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