



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Saturday, December 29, 1973

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Release time: 2.30 p.m.

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NEW HOMES FOR CHRISTMAS DAY FIRE VICTIMS

Staff of the Housing Department will work through the weekend to speed up the intake process of the Kowloon Tsai squatter fire victims into public housing or resite accommodation.

Occupants of surveyed structures in Man Heung Yuen and Sai Man Lane which have been earmarked for clearance, and those structure in Man San Lane which were covered by the 1964 general squatter survey will be offered public housing.

All other genuine fire victims who occupied un-surveyed structures will be offered sites at Cheung Sha Wan Licensed Area on which they may erect new homes.

People who registered as victims of the Christmas Day fire were called to the Tai Hang Tung Community Centre today (Saturday) for further processing.

Those persons who had been living within the screened area of the fire site were processed at the Tai Hang Tung Community Centre. Those who lived within the unscreened area of the fire site were called to identify the actual site of their structures. The object of the exercise was to weed out impostors and those who may have overclaimed.

Pre-letting interviews started this morning for those who are known to be eligible for public housing and intake into Kwai Fong and Lam Tin Estates will begin on Wednesday. For the remainder who are considered eligible for public housing the intake will take place on January 7.

/Registration

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Registration of those eligible for licensed area sites will take place tomorrow (Sunday) at Homantin Licensing Office and sites at Cheung Sha Wan will be offered as soon as possible.

Mr. Brian Coak, Administrative Officer, Squatter Control, of the Housing Department said that everything possible has been done to speed up the intake process into public housing or licensed area accommodation.

"We have mobilised all available staff to cope with the work. These officers worked throughout the X'mas holidays and will work again throughout the weekend and New Year's Day until the operation is completed," he said.

In the squatter fire more than 350 structures in Man Heung Yuen, Man San Lane and Sai Man Lane in the Kowloon Tsai area were destroyed leaving a total of more than 2,500 people from 620 families homeless.

Most of the victims are staying with relatives or friends and about 300 are taking shelter at the eight temporary accommodation centres opened by the Housing Department.

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25 PER CENT INCREASE IN ALLOWANCE FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

The re-provisioning allowance from the Social Welfare Department's Emergency Relief Fund for victims of disasters such as the Christmas Day fire in Tai Hang Tung is to be increased by 25 per cent with immediate effect.

The increase from \$80 to \$100 per person was made by the Emergency Relief Fund Committee at the request of the Housing Department.

The money is for victims who are given accommodation in government housing to carry out minor work such as whitewashing before moving in.

This increase follows a similar increase last month in the re-accommodation branch for victims who are not entitled to public housing but who are given sites in licensed areas by the Housing Department to rebuild their homes.

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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 p.m. from the Press room of the Government Information Services, 6th floor, Beaconsfield House.

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NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION SET UP

A high-powered Committee has been formed to advise on the increasing problem of environmental pollution.

Called the Advisory Committee on Environmental Pollution, the Committee has been created by the amalgamation of the former Advisory Committee on Air Pollution and the Advisory Committee on Environmental Pollution on Land and Water.

It will come into effect on January 1 and will advise on all forms of pollution control on land, sea, water and air and also on noise pollution.

The Committee's terms of reference are to keep under constant review the state of the environment and pollution and to advise the Secretary for the Environment on appropriate measures which might be taken to combat pollution of all kinds.

The Chairman is Mr. J.L. Marden, until recently Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Air Pollution.

Other unofficial members are appointed from industry, the universities and other organisations. They include Miss Pauline Chan, Mr. Chan Pak Yip, Mr. Hilton Cheong-Leen, Dr. L.K. Ding, Mr. W.M. Donald, Mr. H.M.G. Forsgate, Dr. Norman Ko, Mr. Henry Litton, Dr. Daniel Ng, Professor D.S. Payne, Mr. W.M. Sulke, Professor L.B. Thrower, and Mr. Geoffrey Yeh.

Official representation will be provided from the New Territories Administration, Commerce & Industry Department, Public Works Department, Agriculture & Fisheries Department, Royal Observatory, Labour Department, Medical & Health Department, Civil Aviation Department, Urban Services Department, Marine Department, and the Transport Department.

/The Deputy

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The Deputy Secretary for Environment is also a member and the administrative and secretarial services will be provided by the Environment Branch of the Colonial Secretariat.

Announcing the formation of the new Committee, a government spokesman said: "The formation of the Committee demonstrates the government's determination to combat environmental pollution and to improve the quality of life for the people of Hong Kong.

"It is highly appropriate that this new Committee should be formed at a time when public concern has been expressed at the need for tougher control measures to cope with possible pollution problems arising from the establishment of special industries, such as the polystyrene plant at Tsing Yi and the proposed oil refinery and the proposed petrochemical plant at Lamma Island", he added.

It is expected that the Committee, whose first meeting is scheduled for January 17 will organise itself into three sub-committees on land and sea, air, and noise pollution. Mr. J.J. Robson, Secretary for the Environment has accepted an invitation to address the Committee at its first meeting.

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EDUCATION DIRECTOR'S YEAR-END MESSAGE

The Director of Education, Mr. J. Canning, says the initial steps taken this year in the planning for the expansion of technical education, teacher training, special education, adult education and youth recreation will be continued with vigour in 1974.

Mr. Canning made this statement in a year-end message today.

The following is the full text of the Director's message:

"1973, which is now drawing to its close, has been a year of consolidation in all fields of education and one of planning for the future. The number of students in all types of educational institutions and schools reached a new record level at almost 1.3 million which represents nearly one-third of the total population. Good progress was maintained towards achieving educational goals set in the past; goals which were not set merely in quantitative terms but also in terms designed to improve the quality of education.

"At the same time, 1973 was a year of intense planning for the future. The Board of Education produced a report containing far-reaching proposals for the expansion of secondary education over the next decade. This report has been published by the government as a Green Paper in order to afford the general public the opportunity to comment upon the proposals before a White Paper containing the government's policy on the subject is finalised.

/"Planning

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"Planning for the expansion of technical education, teacher training, special education, adult education and youth recreation was also undertaken and initial steps have been taken in all these fields. All this work will be continued with vigour in 1974, which promises to be a year of solid achievement and progress towards the educational aim of making our children good, responsible and industrious citizens of the future."

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DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME REMINDER

Daylight Saving Time comes into effect at 3.30 a.m. tomorrow (Sunday) and residents are reminded to advance their clocks and watches by one hour before going to bed tonight.

The switch back to summer time is being introduced earlier than usual as part of a concerted effort to save fuel.

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ONE-SECOND TIME ADJUSTMENT IN HONG KONG TIME

The usual six-pip time signals from the Royal Observatory will not be broadcast at 9 a.m. on Tuesday (January 1) but will be resumed at 9.15 a.m. that day, a Royal Observatory spokesman said today.

This is to enable a correction to be applied which will result in an apparent delay of one second to the resumed time service signals, he explained.

The need to set the clocks back by one second arises because world-wide time standards are now based on the atomic time scale.

"This provides a more precise and uniform second than that derived from the rate of rotation of the earth measured by astronomical means," the spokesman said.

Hong Kong's time service has been maintained by reference to the atomic time scale since January 1, 1972.

The spokesman said that one day on the astronomical time scale is, on the average, three-thousandths of a second longer than the day on the atomic time scale.

"However, it has been internationally agreed that the two times should never differ significantly and that periodic adjustments of the whole second would be made to the time shown by those clocks using or being maintained by reference to the atomic time scale. By the end of December, the difference will be almost four-tenths of a second."

The correction of one second, called a leap-second, is analogous to February 29 in a leap year with which everyone is familiar.

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FOUR KILLED ON WORK SITES LAST MONTH

Four workers were killed and 401 injured last month in accidents on construction sites, according to statistics released today by the Labour Department.

The department's Industrial Safety Training Officer, Mr. A.H. Carter said that despite repeated appeals to industry to take utmost precautions to cut back the soaring accident rate, the number of accidents at work so far this year had not shown any improvement over the 1972 figure.

Mr. Carter said many accidents on construction sites were due to poor housekeeping. One would not be surprised to find hand tools lying about the sites and other materials blocking passageways.

"In fact it is as easy to keep a site tidy as it is to develop it into a jungle of industrial waste," he said. "Good housekeeping will not only increase productivity, but also lower accident rate and reduce fire risks."

Mr. Carter stressed that accidents could be prevented. And the most effective method was for management to train supervisory staff to be safety conscious. He said the Industrial Safety Training Centre currently ran a wide-range of courses free of charge for personnel in industry. The courses included accident prevention in building construction and civil engineering industries, manual lifting and handling, fire prevention, electrical safety, and work in confined spaces.

"A visit to the industrial safety exhibition at the CMA fair site will also help industrialists, supervisors and workers to see what can be done to promote industrial safety," he added.

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NEW SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT FOR SHATIN

A temporary sewage treatment plant will soon be built in Shatin New Town to provide facilities for about 33,000 people in the first phase development of the town.

The scheme incorporates a complete sewage purification works consisting of preliminary units for the removal of large floating and organic solids and detritus material, biological tanks consisting of package plants for the removal of organic pollutants and a decanter centrifuge for the dewatering of the sludge.

The clarified effluent will be discharged into Tolo Harbour while the dewatered sludge will be disposed off in land fill or taken out into the sea for dumping.

The plant, to be built on the seaward side of Tai Po Road at the 12 Milestone and opposite the Jardines Dyeing and Finishing Factory, is designed to produce effluent which will not deteriorate the quality of water in Tolo Harbour.

The engineering works comprises mainly the construction of four large circular tanks, a pumping station, channels, sewers and three single storey structures for plant equipment and administration offices.

The work is expected to start in February next year and will take about 22 months to complete.

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