



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

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HARD-SIZED

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

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MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY TO GO AHEAD

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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY THAT THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS ACCEPTED THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY TO PROCEED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM, SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF DETAILED FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION.

IN MAKING THEIR RECOMMENDATION, THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY HAD REGARD TO THREE FACTORS : FIRST, THE RESULTS OF TENDERS RECENTLY RECEIVED FOR FOUR REPRESENTATIVE CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTS. THESE TENDERS, TOGETHER WITH OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY RELATING TO COSTS GENERALLY, INDICATE THAT THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM CAN BE CONSTRUCTED FOR LESS THAN \$5,000 MILLION. THE TOTAL COST OF THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING LAND AND ALL OTHER COSTS, WILL BE OF THE ORDER OF \$5,800 MILLION.

SECONDLY, THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY OBTAINED PROPOSALS FOR EXPORT CREDIT FINANCE AND FINANCE FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL SOURCES. THE DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON WHICH THESE CREDITS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ARE NOW BEING FINALISED WITH THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS CONCERNED.

AND, THIRDLY, THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY UNDERTOOK FURTHER RESEARCH INTO HONG KONG'S FUTURE TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO CONFIRM THEIR EARLIER REVENUE FORECASTS.

A MOTION WILL SHORTLY BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO SEEK AUTHORITY TO GRANT GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES FOR THE NECESSARY LOANS.

IT IS ALSO EXPECTED THAT THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION ORDINANCE WILL SHORTLY BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR. THIS WILL ESTABLISH A MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION, WHICH WILL TAKE OVER FROM THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROJECT.

THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM WILL RUN SOME 15.6 KILOMETRES FROM KWUN TONG, AROUND NORTH KOWLOON, DOWN THE NATHAN ROAD CORRIDOR AND ACROSS THE HARBOUR TO CENTRAL DISTRICT ON HONG KONG ISLAND. IT WILL TAKE ABOUT 4-1/2 YEARS TO CONSTRUCT AND SHOULD BE IN FULL OPERATION IN EARLY 1980. THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN DESIGNED SO THAT IT CAN BE PROGRESSIVELY EXTENDED IN LATER YEARS.

THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT, UNLESS THE PRESENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM WAS AUGMENTED, SEVERELY CONGESTED TRAFFIC CONDITIONS WOULD BE EXPERIENCED IN THE 1980'S. THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH CONGESTION WOULD BE VERY DAMAGING FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

/+AN UNDERGROUND

+AN UNDERGROUND RAILWAY IS BY FAR THE MOST EFFICIENT MEANS OF MEETING A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE DEMAND FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE NEXT DECADE AND BEYOND,+ THE SPOKESMAN CONTINUED.

SINCE JANUARY 1975 THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY AND ITS ADVISERS HAVE RE-EXAMINED THE FACTORS DETERMINING THE WHOLE VIABILITY OF THE RAILWAY. THEY FORECAST THAT THE REVENUE FROM THE RAILWAY WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO COVER ALL EXPENDITURE, INCLUDING INTEREST ON LOANS, AND LEAVE A SUFFICIENT SURPLUS TO REPAY ALL DEBTS OVER A PERIOD OF ELEVEN TO TWELVE YEARS AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATION.

THE SPOKESMAN EMPHASISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION WAS LIMITED TO \$800 MILLION, AS IT ALWAYS HAD BEEN. THIS SUM HAD ALREADY BEEN SET ASIDE IN THE MASS TRANSIT FUND. +EXPORT CREDITS AND LOANS OBTAINED FROM COMMERCIAL SOURCES HAVE BEEN OFFERED BECAUSE OF THE SELF-LIQUIDATING NATURE OF THE RAILWAY,+ HE SAID. +SUCH CREDITS AND LOANS WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR ANY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL PROGRAMMES. THE RATE AT WHICH THESE PROGRAMMES PROCEED WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE RAILWAY.+

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT ADDITIONAL FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO COMPENSATE FOR THE COMPARATIVELY SMALL CLAIMS WHICH CLEARANCES FOR THE RAILWAY WILL MAKE ON ITS RESOURCES.

+MANY COUNTRIES,+ THE SPOKESMAN WENT ON, +ARE PRESENTLY ENCOURAGING ATTRACTIVE EXPORT CREDIT TERMS FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS OVERSEAS IN ORDER TO STIMULATE THEIR OWN ECONOMIES. THIS FACT, COUPLED WITH THE PRESENT IMPROVED STATE OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL MARKETS, HAS CREATED FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE BUILDING OF THE RAILWAY WHICH ARE UNLIKELY TO CONTINUE.+

THE CORPORATION WILL DEVELOP PROPERTY OVER CERTAIN RAILWAY SITES. ALREADY FIRM PLANS ARE IN HAND FOR KOWLOON BAY DEPOT. DEVELOPMENT HERE WILL INCLUDE A HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL ESTATE OVER THE DEPOT AREA WHICH WILL PROVIDE MEDIUM COST HOMES FOR 22,000 PEOPLE, TOGETHER WITH SCHOOLS, SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, SWIMMING POOLS AND A SUPERMARKET.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL GRANT SITES TO THE CORPORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT ON A PRIVATE TREATY BASIS, BUT AT FULL MARKET VALUE.

OVER THE YEARS AND GOVERNMENT HAS, OF COURSE, CAREFULLY WEIGHED AND EXAMINED ALL OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY. IN THE 1980'S THE TRAFFIC ALONG THE NATHAN ROAD/KWUN TONG ROAD CORRIDOR WILL INCREASE CONSIDERABLY. THE ROADS AND OTHER ENGINEERING WORKS WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY TO CARRY THE EXTRA TRAFFIC ON THE SURFACE WOULD INVOLVE DEMOLITION OF PROPERTY AND DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE ON A SCALE WHICH COULD NOT BE CONTEMPLATED= AND, BEYOND THIS, VERY CONSIDERABLE EXPENDITURE WOULD HAVE TO BE INCURRED AS A CHARGE TO GENERAL REVENUE.

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EVEN WHERE DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED, FURTHER FLYOVERS AND DOUBLE-DECKED HIGHWAYS WOULD INEVITABLY ADD TO AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION AND WOULD PERMANENTLY IMPAIR THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE PEOPLE HAVE TO LIVE.

BY CONTRAST, THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM WILL PROVIDE A QUICK AND EFFICIENT MEANS OF MOVEMENT FOR WELL OVER A MILLION PASSENGERS A DAY BY THE MID-1980'S. THIS MOVEMENT WILL BE UNDERGROUND SO THE ROAD SYSTEM WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO COPE WITH THE INEVITABLE INCREASE IN OTHER FORMS OF TRANSPORT.

CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE RAILWAY WILL ALSO CREATE MORE JOBS AT A TIME THEY ARE BADLY NEEDED AND WILL DEMONSTRATE HONG KONG'S CONFIDENCE IN ITS FUTURE.

THE SPOKESMAN CONCLUDED: +THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY WILL AUGMENT EXISTING FORMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE 1980'S. IT PASSES BENEATH THE GREATEST CONCENTRATION OF POPULATION IN THE WORLD, AND WILL CONSEQUENTLY BE THE MOST HEAVILY UTILISED URBAN RAILWAY FOR ITS SIZE IN THE WORLD. THE GOVERNMENT IS CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL BE COMMERCIALY VIABLE.+

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+MEET THE MEDIA+
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NOTE TO EDITORS:

A +MEET THE MEDIA+ SESSION WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY (SEPTEMBER 11) AT 4 P.M. IN THE G.I.S. THEATRE, ON THE FIFTH FLOOR OF BEACONSFIELD HOUSE.

ATTENDING THE MEETING WILL BE THE NEW DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR. F.M. WATSON.

YOU ARE INVITED TO HAVE THE MEETING COVERED. TELEVISION CREWS ARE ADVISED TO ARRIVE EARLY SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE AMPLE TIME TO SET UP THEIR EQUIPMENT.

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KOWLOON TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

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MOTORISTS ARE ADVISED THAT A NUMBER OF TRAFFIC CHANGES WILL BE INTRODUCED ON FRIDAY (SEPTEMBER 12) IN TSIM SHA TSUI AND KWUN TONG TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE TWO DISTRICTS.

IN TSIM SHA TSUI, THE CHANGES WILL INVOLVE REROUTING OF SEVERAL ROAD SECTIONS. THESE ARE THE SECTION OF BRISTOL AVENUE BETWEEN CARNARVON ROAD AND MODY ROAD WHICH WILL BECOME ONE-WAY FOR SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC= THE SECTION OF HART AVENUE BETWEEN MODY ROAD AND PRAT AVENUE WHICH WILL BE REROUTED TO ONE-WAY TRAFFIC IN AN ANTI-CLOCKWISE DIRECTION, AND THE SECTION OF HART AVENUE BETWEEN CARNARVON ROAD AND PRAT AVENUE WHICH WILL BE REROUTED FOR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC.

IN KWUN TONG, A PUBLIC LIGHT BUS CLEARWAY WILL BE INTRODUCED ALONG THE SECTION OF HIP WO STREET FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH MUT WAH STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 310 FEET TO THE SOUTH WHERE IT JOINS AN EXISTING PLB STAND.

NO PUBLIC LIGHT BUS WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP ON THE CLEARWAY TO PICK UP OR SET DOWN PASSENGERS DURING THE CLEARWAY HOURS 7 A.M. TO 12 MIDNIGHT DAILY.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE EXISTING CLEARWAY IN HIP WO STREET, WHICH STRETCHES ABOUT 300 FEET TO THE NORTH FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH KWUN TONG ROAD, WILL BE EXTENDED FOR ABOUT 80 FEET NORTHWARDS TO END AT THE SOUTHERN END OF AN EXISTING PLB STAND.

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NEW POST OFFICE GUIDE

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A NEW EDITION OF THE POST OFFICE GUIDE, GIVING UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ABOUT POSTAL SERVICES, WILL GO ON SALE NEXT WEEK AT \$8.50 PER COPY.

THE NEW EDITION CONTAINS 376 PAGES AND GIVES UPDATED INFORMATION ABOUT POST OFFICE SERVICES, POSTAGE RATES AND THE CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR ALL CATEGORIES OF MAIL.

IT WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM ALL POST OFFICES FROM MONDAY (SEPTEMBER 15).

ACCORDING TO A POST OFFICE SPOKESMAN THE GUIDE IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO FIRMS AND ORGANISATIONS WHICH MAKE FREQUENT USE OF POST OFFICE SERVICES.

FOR AN ADDITIONAL FEE OF \$2, HE SAID, SUBSCRIBERS COULD BE SENT REGULAR AMENDMENT LISTS UPDATING THE INFORMATION IN THE GUIDE.

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JAPANESE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HONG KONG STUDENTS

TWO SCHOLARSHIPS ARE BEING OFFERED BY THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO HONG KONG STUDENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES UNDER THE MOMBUSHO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME FOR THE 1976 ACADEMIC YEAR.

ONE OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS WILL MAJOR IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE AT THE TOKYO UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN STUDIES AND THE OTHER IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES AT A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

APPLICANTS MUST BE OVER 18 AND UNDER 22 YEARS OF AGE ON APRIL 1, 1976. THEY MUST BE WILLING TO RECEIVE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE.

STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED FORM LOWER SIX ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30, 1975 OR POSSESS HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY.

APPLICATION FORMS AND FURTHER PARTICULARS REGARDING THESE SCHOLARSHIPS AND UNIVERSITY COURSES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE OVERSEAS STUDENTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS SECTION, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BRANCH OFFICE, BONAVENTURE HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, 91 LEIGHTON ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY, HONG KONG.

ALL COMPLETED FORMS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SECTION BY SEPTEMBER 22.

THE DIRECTOR OF THE JAPAN INFORMATION AND CULTURAL OFFICE, CONSULATE-GENERAL OF JAPAN WILL CONSIDER APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.

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