



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, March 22, 1973

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WARNING ON ILLEGAL ALTERATIONS TO FLATS

Removal Is In Residents' Interests

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Firm action will be taken against tenants who build illegal alterations to their flats, a Government spokesman warned today (Thursday).

Referring to extensive unauthorised works and alterations to five buildings at Nos. 1026-1048 King's Road, the spokesman said the Government was determined to have the buildings restored to their approved status as soon as possible.

Notices to this effect have already been sent to the tenants by the Director of Fire Services, and parallel statutory action has been taken by the Building Authority.

The spokesman pointed out that removal of the illegal alterations was in the interests of the residents themselves, as the structures constituted a fire hazard.

"These particular buildings were erected to the absolute minimum standards specified by law to ensure the occupants a reasonable chance of escape should fire break out," he commented.

"Since their completion, alterations have been carried out to a degree which reduces those standards still further. So much so that the buildings are now in a condition which puts at risk the lives of all who live there."

/He noted .....

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He noted that these unauthorised alterations included the installation of security gates to the entrance doors of many of the apartments. In many cases these obstructed the access corridors, which were already as narrow as minimum safety standards permitted.

By doing so, they could well hinder a large body of people attempting to escape in the event of an emergency of any kind - fire, of course, being the most obvious example.

Most dangerous were the hinged gates which swung outwards so that, when fully open, they completely blocked the corridor. The removal of these is an urgent priority for the safety of all occupants.

#### Sliding Gates

Another form was the sliding variety fitted outside the doorway so that it effectively narrowed the width of the corridor. This still posed a fire hazard, but to a lesser degree.

"The Director of Fire Services is aware that tenants are concerned for the security of their property," said the spokesman. "Because of this he is prepared, for the time being, to tolerate the existence of this less dangerous form of sliding gate.

"Owners of this type of gate have been informed of this decision in a letter delivered today by staff of the Fire Services Department.

"All contacts with tenants in these buildings have been on this door-to-door, personal basis, because no form of management association exists there with which we can deal direct.

"This is a very regrettable state of affairs in buildings whose condition poses such serious implications for all of the occupants," said the spokesman.

/He added .....

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He added that, while informing them of the temporary concession, the letters delivered today urged that owners should take action themselves to remove the sliding gates, in their own interests and in the interests of their neighbours.

"We consider that the best form of security is a stout wooden door, padlocked, bolted and fitted with safety chains," he said. "If tenants nevertheless require additional security they can obtain it by replacing the sliding gates with a less objectionable form of gate such as the metal lattice folding type which does not protrude into the corridor.

"Accordingly the Director of Fire Services has advised them in his letters to make this change, and has invited them to seek information on this from the Fire Prevention Bureau."

Meanwhile, the Buildings Ordinance Office will continue posting orders on the premises requiring removal of all other unauthorised alterations.

The owners must commence work on this by April 2 and complete it by May 2. If this is not done, it is the intention of the Building Authority to employ a government contractor to carry out the work on behalf of the owners, who will be charged with the cost of the work.

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H.K. PRAISED FOR HIGH STANDARDS IN DISASTER PREVENTION

U.N. Experts Make Recommendations To H.K. Government

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Hong Kong, with its very high standards in disaster preparedness programme and operations, should provide aid to Typhoon Committee member countries in which the system is less advanced.

This can be done either by the provision of training courses in Hong Kong or by sending experts to other countries.

This is one of the recommendations made to the Hong Kong Government by a United Nations team of experts at the end of a week-long visit to Hong Kong from March 15 to 22.

The team comprises representatives from the League of Red Cross Societies, the World Meteorological Organisation and ECAFE.

The purpose of their visit is to explain to the Government and disaster relief agencies how they can contribute to the protection of human life and property, and to explore together ways and means of achieving an integrated pre-disaster system.

The team also recommended:

- \* the setting up of a 24-hour radio-meteorological station to cope with the large number of inquiries during emergency periods such as typhoons and heavy rainstorms.
- \* studies of the topographical conditions, geological structure and the soil mechanics as well as of the degree of resistance to flash floods and land-slides for all new development sites before construction begins to prevent possible natural disasters.

/\* examination .....

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- \* examination of the staffing of all relevant Government departments to see to what extent further strengthening of the staffing at the professional level is needed to meet the additional requirements during or after natural disasters.
- \* investigation as to how voluntary agencies can play a broader role in the disaster preparedness system.

The team noted that a most successful campaign of public education had been carried out by the Government and that the level of awareness of the dangers of typhoons and the action to be taken by the public was unusually high.

However, it reiterated that complacency had no place in any system of disaster preparedness.

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#### SECOND PHASE OF ANTI-POLIO CAMPAIGN

Nearly 19,000 Doses Of Vaccine Administered So Far

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A total of 18,903 doses of the anti-poliomyelitis vaccine has been administered since the second phase of the annual campaign began on February 26.

This phase will end on March 31, a spokesman for the Medical and Health Department said today.

During the week ending on March 17, a total of 6,923 children was immunised against the disease -- 1,139 on the Island, 3,575 in Kowloon, and 2,209 in the New Territories.

Anti-poliomyelitis vaccine is available free at all Medical and Health Department inoculation and maternity and child health centres throughout the year.

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ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT COMMUNITY CENTRE

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The Tai Hang Tung Community Centre will celebrate its seventh anniversary tomorrow (Friday).

More than 400 members will attend a Members' Evening at the Centre to participate in games and performances.

Mr. Kwok Ka-chi, Principal Social Welfare Officer, will officiate at the ceremony and present prizes to winners of the Lunar New Year Picture Colouring Competition sponsored by the Centre.

Opened in March 1966, the Centre is run by the Group and Community Work Division of the Social Welfare Department to serve residents in Tai Hang Tung, Tai Hang Sai, Shek Kip Mei, Pak Tin and Yau Yat Chuen.

The Centre provides a variety of community and welfare services to local residents.

It runs a deaf club to give proper guidance to deaf children and a nursery catering for about 200 children.

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Note to Editors: You are welcome to have the Member's Evening covered. It will be held at 8 p.m. tomorrow at the Centre at Tong Yan Street in the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate.

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THIRD "MEET THE MEDIA" SESSION

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The next session in the "Meet the Media" series will be held tomorrow (Friday) at 12 noon at the Government Information Services, Beaconsfield House.

Attending the meeting will be the Commissioner of Police, Mr. C.P. Sutcliffe; the Director of Criminal Investigation, Mr. J.B. Lees; and Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mr. E.P. Grace.

The "Meet the Media" sessions are arranged by the Government Information Services to enable newsmen to meet senior Government officers and question them directly about the work of their department.

The meetings are on the record and T.V. and radio coverage facilities are provided.

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Note to Editors: You are cordially invited to send a reporter and/or photographer to cover tomorrow's session. It will be held in the G.I.S. 35 mm theatre on the 5th floor of Beaconsfield House.

Television stations covering this meeting are requested to be there early so that they will have ample time to set up their equipment.

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3,000 EXPECTED AT MEDICAL DEPARTMENT FETE

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More than 3,000 children of staff members of the Medical and Health Department are to be entertained at a party in the Indian Recreation Club, Soo Kun Poo, on Sunday (March 25).

The three-hour fete is to begin at noon, and will be the second of such annual events organised by the department's staff society.

A colourful programme has been arranged, including Chinese traditional dances, Chinese boxing, a magic show, a parade by the band of trainees at Cape Collinson, and a parade and concert by the band of the Auxiliary Medical Service.

The Mistress of Ceremonies will be Miss Helina Chan, singing star of HK-TV.

As an added attraction, games stalls and a merry-go-round will be set up in the grounds.

Dr. G.H. Choa, Director of Medical and Health Services, will present souvenirs to guest performers at the end of the party.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to have the party covered.  
It will be held from noon on Sunday (March 25) at  
the Indian Recreation Club, Soo Kun Poo, Causeway Bay.

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WATERWORKS DEPOT TO BE EXPANDED

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The Argyle Street Depot of the Waterworks Office will be expanded to improve services to consumers in Kowloon and the New Territories.

A six-storey annex will be constructed adjacent to the main depot building to provide additional office facilities.

The ground-floor car port and storage space of the main building will also be converted into offices.

Office accommodation totalling 15,500 square feet will be provided.

The additional office space will provide for the expansion of the Consumer Service Section and the maintenance division of the Waterworks Office.

Work is expected to begin next month, and will take about 14 months to complete.

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PASSING-OUT PARADE OF PRISONS OFFICERS

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The Commissioner of Prisons, Mr. T.G. Garner will inspect a passing-out parade of prisons officers on Saturday (March 31).

The parade will consist of 10 Prisons Officers and 90 Assistant Officers Class II. They include 13 women officers.

Music for the parade will be provided by the band of the Cape Collinson Training Centre.

The ceremony will be held at 11.30 a.m. in the Prisons Department Staff Training Institute in Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley.

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Note to Editors: You are cordially invited to send a reporter and/or photographer to cover the parade. A reception will be held in the gymnasium of the Institute after the ceremony.

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NEW POST OFFICE IN HO MAN TIN

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A new post office will start business in Block Seven of the Ho Man Tin Low Cost Housing Estate on Saturday (March 24) to serve residents of the area.

The full range of post office business will be transacted at the new office, with the exception of the acceptance of insured letters and boxes.

The hours of business will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.15 p.m. to 5 p.m. on week days and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

A stamp vending machine has been installed so that residents can obtain 10-cent stamps at any hour of the day.

With the opening of the Ho Man Tin Post Office, the total number of post offices will be brought to 65, including a mobile post office operating in the New Territories.

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APPEAL TO TENANTS OF RESETTLEMENT ESTATES

To Boycott Pedlar Hawkers

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The Resettlement Department has called on the tenants of Sau Mau Ping and Yau Tong estates to boycott pedlar hawkers operating outside the modular markets.

A circulation letter to this effect has recently been sent to all tenants of the two estates..

A spokesman for the Department said that these hawkers posed a serious management problem and greatly affected the living environment of the estates.

"In addition," he added, "they are depriving the rights of the hawkers in the modular markets who obtained their stalls either by tendering or balloting."

There are 18 modular markets comprising 457 stalls at Sau Mau Ping Estate, and two markets comprising 98 stalls at Yau Tong Estate.

Nearly all kinds of daily necessities, including groceries, meat, poultry and sundry goods are available at these markets.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.