



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Comprehensive development plans formulated by Board of Education to cater for educational and social needs of secondary students	1
Extensions to Shatin Treatment Works nearing completion	5
Report on action of nursing allied grades shows that some members of the public were inconvenienced	7
Fifth charity auction of "lucky" car numbers to be held on Saturday	9
Seven buildings in Central have been declared dangerous	10
Two Senior Education Officers retiring after 39 years' service	12
Entertainment for residents of Sau Mau Ping	14

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 1 -

LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Board of Education is making progress in formulating comprehensive proposals for the development policy of secondary education, Mr. Charles Lowe, acting Director of Education said today.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony of the Pui Ching Middle School, he said McKinsey and Company had given invaluable advice on the way in which such a programme should be prepared.

"In fact, the department has been working extremely hard both to keep the existing system functioning as smoothly as possible and to plan for the future, not only to provide places in concrete buildings on scarce sites, but also to work out what should actually happen in classrooms, special rooms and laboratories," Mr. Lowe said.

He emphasised that this was a far greater problem than building the schools.

The Director added that 54,000 Form I places in government aided and assisted schools would be available in September this year for a 12-year-old age group of some 110,400. This means accommodating 49 per cent of the age group.

In mentioning some educational achievements, Mr. Lowe referred to the new Unified Code of Aid for secondary schools which embodied a much more enlightened view of the role of the school and realised that a secondary school could no longer be aided by a code originally designed to suit the needs of primary schools.

/"Provision

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 2 -

"Provision is made for teachers' courses, more generous assistance for furniture and equipment and for libraries, while the new staffing structure greatly increases the number of promotion posts for both graduate and non-graduate teachers in these schools.

"The second five-year development programme for Special Education has been approved and is making rapid progress," Mr. Lowe said.

A new secondary school standard plan for three or five-year course schools has been worked out and will be built into the new estates and new towns.

He said: "It is a good design in no way sub-standard and will be of great benefit in enabling secondary provision to be built into estates from the very beginning as primary is now."

The Director expressed the hope that when secondary target figures were agreed, it would be possible to aid private schools such as Pui Ching and bring under subsidy the good quality private schools that had, as he put it "laboured long, hard and successfully in the hot noon-day sun".

Everyone was aware that the present secondary system was too academic and too much geared to the needs of the minority elite who wanted a good Certificate of Education with Matriculation to follow.

Mr. Lowe pointed out: "What we already require and will require on a much greater scale when the expansion plans are in full swing is a more practical secondary course geared to life and the needs of the pupils rather than to the Certificate of Education."

It was vital for Hong Kong to get its future secondary education right - "suitable to the needs -- educational and above all, social -- of the pupils, not only for the sake of future generations but for the future development of Hong Kong".

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Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 3 -

It was also essential to devise school courses that met the aspirations of pupils and parents because if government did not do this, the private schools could and would do it, he said.

Mr. Lowe called for the fullest possible confidence, co-operation and understanding between the public, principally teachers and educationists, and the Education Department on the one hand and the Education Department and the central government on the other. Without these three requirements, Mr. Lowe warned, progress could not be made.

"This has to be struggled for; it will not come about because of speeches. The press has an important responsibility here but it is all too easy for everybody in matters of education to blame everybody else (this is often the case in England) and that way disaster lies."

The Director said he was convinced that if the types of change he mentioned were to be introduced, much more use must be made of Chinese in secondary teaching.

He asked: "Why should junior forms have to study science, mathematics, history, geography, etc. in English? Why must virtually all subjects at the 5th form level be taught in English?"

Answering his own questions, Mr. Lowe said: "We all know why, but it is damaging educationally and I very much hope the combined Certificate of Education will encourage the greater use of Chinese. We are after all in a Chinese city.

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Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 4 -

"Could not English be taught at a more senior level, by specialist teachers really confident in English, to those pupils who clearly need it, rather than spend endless hours on it all through primary and secondary school to achieve a standard that not surprisingly is not particularly high in such a very Chinese environment and is probably low in terms of cost effectiveness?"

Mr. Lowe said he was delighted to hear of the tremendous range of activities at Pui Ching -- clubs, societies, sports and games teams, participation in the anti-litter and anti-crime campaigns.

Schools, he said, should join to the full in such campaigns because they give indirectly some of the social education to which he had referred.

"It is therefore the duty of each and every school to introduce social attitudes and discourage anti-social attitudes," the Director said.

Paying tribute to the late Bishop Hsu, Mr. Lowe said his death was a grievous and tragic blow particularly for education.

The Bishop had the ability and the judgment to see Hong Kong's educational problems from a unique standpoint, intellectually, humanely and morally.

He added: "Many educational problems lie ahead on which Bishop Hsu if he had been spared could have given invaluable advice. The department and indeed the Board of Education, is very receptive to the ideas and suggestions for the improvement of education and the solving of the many problems that beset education in Hong Kong."

"Criticism is indeed a good thing but must be accompanied by realistic, workable, concrete proposals for improvement."

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Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of Mr. Lowe's speech are boxed this evening.

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/5

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 5 -

MORE WATER FROM SHATIN

Major extensions to the Sha Tin Treatment Works, a focal point of Hong Kong's water supplies, are almost completed.

A spokesman for the P.W.D.'s Waterworks Office said today that the project, which is part of the Plover Cove Extension Scheme and which is costing about \$60 million, is about to become operational. Part of the works, the settlement tanks, came into operation in May. The other section, the pumps and filters, will be contributing to the increased yield during this month.

With this stage completed, Sha Tin will be one of the world's largest treatment and filtration plants, with an output capacity of at least 175 million gallons a day with provision for a further extension to 240 million gallons a day when the High Island Water Scheme comes into operation.

The increased capacity represents about 90 per cent of the average daily consumption of mains water in Hong Kong as it stood last year - 195.5 million gallons a day. The present average daily consumption is about 230 million gallons a day.

The extensions comprise new settlement tanks and filters, a new filtered water tank and an additional pumping station.

Extra handling and storage facilities for the chemicals needed for water treatment have also been provided, the spokesman added.

/At present,

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 6 -

At present, water for the Sha Tin Treatment Works is drawn mainly from the Plover Cove Scheme and China, but the treatment works will also handle water from the High Island Scheme when that comes into operation.

In addition to the new plant, the extensions include modifications and improvements to the existing installations.

At the same time more than 2,000 feet of twin 60-inch main water pipe lines will be laid to improve the delivery of water from the Sha Tin Treatment Works Extension to urban areas to meet the ever increasing demand for treated water.

The extensions are being carried out under the supervision of the Water Authority's joint consulting engineers, Binnie and Partners and Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick, and Partners.

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Note to Editors: Photographs of the Shatin Treatment Works including the extensions, are boxed this evening.

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/7

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 7 -

REPORT ON ACTION OF ALLIED NURSING GRADES

The Director of Medical and Health Services, Dr. G.H. Choa, this evening stressed that all allied nursing grades disputing the pay issue should think carefully before taking further action that could affect the health and welfare of the public.

In a statement on developments yesterday after studying reports received from all government maternity clinics, chest and social hygiene clinics, and port health offices, Dr. Choa said:

"In the New Territories, in some clinics the midwives carried out their threat not to wash babies brought in, and dressing material was not prepared. But work was normal in most rural clinics.

"In all urban maternity clinics in Kowloon and the Island, where mothers do not normally bring their babies in for washing after discharge, midwives did not prepare dressing material, but other work went on as usual.

"Inoculations were administered as usual in all port health offices. There was some delay, but no one needing an inoculation for international travel was unduly inconvenienced.

"Health auxiliaries' case work was reduced in some clinics. As a result of the weather, there was not much field work, and the average number of case tracings was maintained.

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Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 8 -

"I would like to end this statement with a word of caution to government midwives, inoculators and health auxiliaries. The full results of their action yesterday show that some members of the public did experience some inconvenience. In view of this, I urge them to think twice before either resorting to similar action, or accelerating it, because innocent people should not be involved.

"The Government has gone to great lengths to consider carefully all the proposals which the nursing allied grades have made. They have received an overall average increase of 30 per cent.

"In negotiations of this sort, clearly there must come a time when further increases would be unfair to other grades. As I have said many times, if there is any information to show that the private sector offers better salaries and benefits than the Government, then such information will be considered, and the door is still open for further negotiations."

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/9

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 9 -

"LUCKY" NUMBER PLATES PROVE POPULAR

More than \$800,000 has so far been raised for charity through the sale of "lucky" car numbers.

And it is hoped that the \$1 million mark will be reached on Saturday (July 14) when another 30 of the special licensing plates will be offered for sale.

The auction -- the fifth in the series -- will be held in the City Hall theatre at 11.15 a.m. and successful bidders will be required to pay in cash or by cheque immediately after the bidding.

Potential bidders are reminded that the vehicle registration mark will be assigned only to a vehicle registered in the name of the successful bidder within 12 months from the date of the auction.

The numbers that will be put up for sale are:

119	127	136	176	177
AV 1	AV 2	AV 3	AV 8	AV 22
AV 23	AV 38	AV 88	AV 333	AV 666
AV 700	AV 777	AV 909	AV1000	AV1234
AV1771	AV2002	AV2323	AV6789	AV6868
AV7878	AV8000	AV8888	AV9339	AV9999

/10

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 10 -

DANGEROUS BUILDINGS IN CENTRAL

Five three-storey pre-war buildings in Wellington Street, Central have been declared dangerous or liable to become dangerous by the Building Authority. They are numbers 170 to 178 Wellington Street.

The Principal Government Building Surveyor said today that the buildings were inspected following a partial collapse of the roof of No. 172, which resulted in the partial closure of the top floor of this building.

"Fractures and weaknesses in the party walls and rear main walls of Nos. 172 and 176, together with extensive decay in the structural timbers have given rise to a risk of further collapse," he said.

Because of similar structural weaknesses and timber decay in 170, 174 and 178 Wellington Street there is a risk of collapse of these buildings during or after the demolition of 172 and 176.

In another statement today, the Building Authority declared 36 Lower Lascar Row and 35 Upper Lascar Row liable to become dangerous.

These four-storey pre-war buildings, together with adjoining ones, have been under investigation for a considerable time.

The adjoining buildings 38/40 Lower Lascar Row and 35/37 Upper Lascar Row are vacant pending demolition for urban renewal purposes and are heavily shored due to movement in the walls. This movement is continuing and a recent inspection revealed that part of the main roof had collapsed.

Further progressive collapse could occur with a risk of involving the adjoining buildings.

/Notices

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 11 -

Notices of intention to apply for closure orders for these buildings in Victoria District Court at 9.30 a.m. on July 24 were posted today. For the Wellington Street buildings notices of intention were posted today for 170, and 174 to 178, while that for the lower floors of No. 172 were posted on July 6. The application will be made at 9.30 a.m. on August 7.

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/12

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 12 -

RETIREMENT OF TWO SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICERS

Two Senior Education Officers with a combined service of 39 years will be going on pre-retirement leave shortly.

They are Mr. J. Kirkwood and Mr. D.E. Parker, who will each be presented with a gift from their colleagues. The presentations will be made by the acting Director of Education, Mr. Charles Lowe tomorrow (Wednesday).

Mr. Kirkwood took up his first appointment as an Education Officer in May 1952 and was posted to the Northcote College of Education as lecturer in physical education.

He was transferred to the Physical Education Section of the Inspectorate in September 1953 where he served until January 1962.

Mr. Kirkwood was promoted to Senior Education Officer in 1964 and has been engaged in administrative duties in the department's headquarters ever since.

During the past few years Mr. Kirkwood has made a significant contribution to the introduction of the Code of Aid.

Mr. Parker joined the department as an Education Officer in December 1955 and was posted to Queen Elizabeth School as a music teacher.

He was transferred to the Music Section of the Inspectorate in January 1958 and was promoted to Senior Education Officer in September 1967.

During his 18 years' service, Mr. Parker has played an important role in the promotion of music in schools.

/He has also

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 13 -

He has also been actively associated with the Hong Kong Schools Music and Speech Association as Secretary and for the past seven years as Chairman.

He was largely responsible for developing the annual schools music and speech festival into one of the largest of its kind in the world, which enjoys an international reputation for organisation and high standards.

Mr. Parker is now acting Deputy Chief Inspector of Schools.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to have the presentation ceremony covered. The ceremony will be held at 11.30 a.m. on July 11 in the Education Department's Conference Room, Lee Gardens, 3rd floor, Hysan Avenue, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

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/14

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 14 -

ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTS FOR SAU MAU PING RESIDENTS

Two evenings of free entertainment have been arranged for people living in the Sau Mau Ping Estate in north east Kowloon.

The first, a "movie evening" will be held tomorrow night (Wednesday) when films will be shown at three open air sites -- the football pitches of Sau Mau Ping estates, south and west and at the car park of the Sau Mau Ping Central Estate Welfare Building beginning at 8 p.m.

Different films will be shown and it is expected that at least 4,000 people will attend.

The following evening, Thursday variety shows will be held in the halls of the estate welfare buildings also beginning at 8 p.m. The entertainment has been arranged by the Social Welfare Department's community work offices in the estate welfare buildings in conjunction with other welfare agencies, schools and government departments.

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Release Time: 8.00 p.m.



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUPPLEMENT

TUESDAY, July 10, 1973

STATEMENT BY FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Commenting on the state of the foreign exchange market in Hong Kong today, the Financial Secretary, Mr. C.P. Haddon-Cave, said that the volume of business done was less than yesterday.

The rate at which U.S. dollars were bought by the banks was virtually unchanged from yesterday at HK\$4.97125, and any comment which suggested that the Hong Kong dollar was under pressure to float or be revalued was quite unjustified.

Mr. Haddon-Cave said he was surprised that the R.M.B. had been revalued by 5 per cent in relation to the Hong Kong dollar at a time when the Hong Kong dollar was strengthening against the U.S. dollar and Sterling.

He pointed out that this latest move followed upward adjustments of the R.M.B. rate in relation to the Hong Kong dollar of one per cent on June 21 and 1½ per cent on June 1.

These adjustments, together with the decision announced today by the Bank of China, mean that the rate for the R.M.B. in terms of Hong Kong dollars is now about 7½ per cent higher than at the time of the revaluation of the Hong Kong dollar in relation to the U.S. dollar of 11 per cent on February 14 last.

Commenting on the likely effect of these exchange rate adjustments on the cost of living, the Financial Secretary said: "If importers pass on the full cost to retailers, the cost of living index will rise by about 1½ per cent." He pointed out, however, that in the longer term the

Tuesday, July 10, 1973

- 2 -

prices of foodstuffs and basic raw materials are determined by supply and demand factors rather than purely exchange rate adjustments.

Asked whether the Hong Kong Government was considering revaluing the Hong Kong dollar as a result of the revaluation of the R.M.B., Mr. Haddon-Cave said that there was no evidence to suggest that the present central rate with the U.S. dollar needed to be changed.

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Release Time: 8.30 p.m.