



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Saturday, January 20, 1973

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SLIGHT INCREASE IN POPULATION

Estimated 4.1 Million At End Of Last Year

The estimated population at the end of December 1972 was 4,103,500, the Commissioner for Census and Statistics said today.

This is an increase of 39,100 over the estimated figure for December 1971.

The relatively small increase in population is attributable to a negative balance of migration of 19,100 over the period.

The number of births during 1972 was 80,344, slightly greater than in 1971 (79,684). The crude birth rate for 1972 was 19.7 per thousand, the same as in 1971.

The total number of deaths in 1972 was 22,135 compared to 20,286 in 1971, and the crude death rate is thus slightly higher at 5.4 per thousand.

The rate of natural increase of the population for 1972 (the excess of birth over deaths in 1972 expressed as a percentage of the 1971 end-year population) was 1.43 percent.

These figures are based upon events occurring rather than upon registrations made and therefore differ slightly from those released by the Registrar-General.

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GRANTHAM MAINTENANCE GRANTS FOR NEEDY STUDENTS

Applications Should Be Sent In Before February 28

A limited number of Grantham Maintenance Grants for the second-half of the 1972-73 academic year, to be awarded by the Grantham Scholarships Fund Committee are now available to students.

Applications are invited from those pursuing courses in secondary schools, the technical college or technical institute, the Baptist College and the two Universities.

The overriding criterion for awards of the grants will be financial needs.

They are intended for those who did not initially qualify for either a Grantham Scholarship or a Grantham Bursary because they were financially less needy, but who now require cash assistance due to an adverse change in the financial circumstances of their family.

Intending applicants should note that these awards will normally not be made to a student holding a scholarship or receiving any form of financial assistance other than interest-free loan or the remission of fees.

Students who have applied for Grantham Scholarships/Bursaries need not re-apply.

Application forms will be obtainable from the Secretariat for Home Affairs on the ninth floor of International Building, No 141 Des Voeux Road Central, Hong Kong from January 29, 1973.

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Completed forms, together with a sworn and stamped statutory declaration of family circumstances signed by the parent or guardian, should be returned through the head of the applicant's school to the Secretariat on or before February 28, 1973. Late applications will not be accepted.

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ROAD CLOSURE FOR YUEN LONG NEW YEAR FAIR

The section of On Ning Road between Ma Miu Road and Tai Kiu Road, Yuen Long, will be closed to vehicular traffic for the Lunar New Year Fair to be held there, the Transport Department said today.

The closure will last from Wednesday, January 24, to Sunday, February 4.

Kik Yeung Tsuen Road which crosses into On Ning Road will also be restricted to through-traffic.

Appropriate traffic signs will be posted to guide motorists.

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DUMP AREA IN SAI KUNG TO BE ENLARGED

The area of the spoil dump at Pak Tam Chung, Sai Kung, is to be extended from 4.7 acres, as originally planned, to 7.2 acres.

The spoil dump is used for depositing surplus material arising from tunnelling operations connected with the High Island Water Scheme.

Apart from providing sites for recreational or institutional uses, the reclaimed land will be used for a pipeline crossing associated with the main tunnel system as well as a vehicular access road to a tunnel portal.

The construction cost of the 25-mile tunnel system, which ranges from six feet to 13 feet in diameter, is \$3 million.

A notification under the Public Reclamations and Works Ordinance in the Government Gazette today fully describes the boundaries of the proposed spoil dump.

It stipulates that all persons having any objection to the proposed reclamation or any claims of private right in the matter should submit such objections or claims in writing to the Director of Public Works within two months of the date of Notification.

The Notification, both in English and Chinese, can also be seen on Notice Board posted near the site.

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NEW IMMIGRATION BRANCH OFFICE IN WESTERN

The Immigration Department will open a new branch office in Kennedy Town this summer for the convenience of residents of the Western District.

The Kennedy Town branch office, the first to be set up in the district, is located on the ground floor of Luen Gay Apartments in Davis Street.

With a total area of about 2,000 sq. ft., it will house a public waiting area, working counters, a general office, rooms for the staff and lavatories. The office area will be fully air-conditioned in all seasons.

Like all other Immigration Department branch offices, it will handle applications for travel documents such as re-entry permits, certificates of identity and passports.

The fitting out of the office will begin in the middle of March and will take about three months to complete.

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LAST YEAR'S WEATHER MUCH WETTER THAN USUAL

Widespread Damage Caused By June Rainstorm

Hong Kong, like many countries in Asia, suffered from widespread flooding and landslides in 1972 as a result of heavy rain.

"The heavy rainstorm in June, which caused disastrous landslides and the collapse of multi-storey buildings, will probably be long remembered," the Royal Observatory says in its review of the year's weather.

During these tragic incidents, over 100 people were killed and thousands were left homeless.

It all started on June 14 when a very active trough of low pressure moved slowly southwards across south China and the weather in Hong Kong deteriorated rapidly on the day of the Dragon Boat Festival, June 15.

During the next three days, continuous heavy rain with frequent thunderstorms, reminiscent of the rainstorms of June 1966, were experienced and the maximum hourly rainfall of 98.7 mm. recorded on June 18 was close to the record value of 108.2 mm set in 1966.

It was the first time in the recorded history of the Royal Observatory that rainfall in excess of 200 mm. fell in three consecutive days.

Thunderstorms and heavy rain warnings were issued and renewed almost continuously from June 15 to 18.

During this period, widespread flooding and serious traffic disruption were reported in nearly all parts of Hong Kong and the excessive rainfall resulted in the disastrous landslides at Sau Mau Ping and the collapse of buildings at Kotewall Road and Po Shan Road on June 18.

/The year

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The year as a whole was slightly warmer, less cloudy but much wetter than usual.

It was the 4th wettest year since 1884, and the annual rainfall was more than 30 percent higher than normal.

Five tropical cyclones affected Hong Kong during the year, but only one, Typhoon "Pamela", came sufficiently close to cause gales.

Apart from being slightly sunnier than usual, the weather during January was fairly normal. Although there was measurable rain on only three days, the total rainfall during the month was about 50 percent above average.

A very intense cold front passed through Hong Kong on February 4, and caused the air temperature to fall during the following five days. The minimum temperature recorded at the Royal Observatory on February 9 was 3.8 degrees Celsius, which was the third lowest temperature ever recorded in February.

March was exceptionally fine and dry and several new records were established.

The mean cloudiness of 49 percent and the mean relative humidity of 73 percent were the lowest while the total sunshine of 188.6 hours was the highest ever recorded for the month. The monthly rainfall was also the second lowest on record for March.

April was a cloudy month with fog reported on several occasions. However, the foggy spells during the month were generally short-lived and did not seriously interrupt the air and sea traffic.

/The rainy

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The rainy season started in early May when a trough of low pressure in the South China Sea brought moist air to Hong Kong.

Rain was recorded on 27 days of the month with the total rainfall amounting to more than twice the normal value.

In July, strong winds were experienced in Hong Kong during the passage of Typhoon "Susan".

Since records began in 1884, "Susan" was the first tropical cyclone which has remained within 200 miles of Hong Kong for more than 5 days.

August was wet with rainfall about 50 percent above normal.

September was warm and the mean monthly pressure of 1011.3 mb was the highest on record for the month.

October was much drier than usual and the total rainfall for the month was 63 percent below normal.

A Yellow Fire Warning was issued on October 21, when the relative humidity dropped below 65 percent. This was the first warning issued since the introduction of the new Fire Warning System on October 9.

In November, Typhoon "Pamela" became the sixth tropical cyclone to affect Hong Kong since records began in 1884.

Cloudy conditions with periods of rain persisted through the middle of November. Fire danger warnings were issued on six occasions.

December was slightly cloudier than usual. There were several outbreaks of cold dry northerly air during the month, alternating with periods of warm and relatively humid weather.

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PARCEL DELIVERY OFFICE MOVES TO NEW PREMISES

The Post Office's Parcel Delivery Office presently housed on the Central Reclamation adjacent to the Star Ferry Pier will be closed from today (Saturday) after business hours.

Beginning on Monday (January 22), the delivery office will operate in new premises located on Connaught Road Central opposite the G.P.O.

The new office, together with two others completed early last year, forms a parcel complex.

It is designed to concentrate all parcel handling works in the one area and to further improve the parcel counter services to the public until the new G.P.O. is completed.

A Post Office spokesman said any inconvenience to the public caused by the removal was regretted.

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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 in the G.I.S. Press room after 3 p.m.

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Release time: 2.30 p.m.