



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1974.

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
BIGGER LOANS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT	1
HEALTHIER BABIES AND FEWER INFANT MORTALITIES IN RECENT YEARS	2
SMOKERS URGED TO BE MORE CAREFUL WITH THEIR CIGARETTE ENDS	4

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1974

- 1 -

BIGGER LOANS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

* * * * *

BIGGER LOANS TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG CAN NOW BE OBTAINED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S LOAN SCHEME FOR SMALL INDUSTRIES.

THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THE UPPER LOAN LIMIT HAS BEEN RAISED TO \$500,000 -- DOUBLE THE PREVIOUS CEILING OF \$250,000.

THE SCHEME HAS ALSO BEEN MODIFIED TO ENABLE A WIDER RANGE OF INDUSTRIAL FIRMS TO PARTICIPATE BY INCREASING THE UPPER LIMIT ON PROPRIETORS' FUNDS FROM \$1 MILLION TO \$2 MILLION.

+WE HOPE THESE MINOR MODIFICATIONS WILL STIMULATE A GREATER DEMANDS FOR LOANS,+ SAID A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT.

HE STRESSED THAT THE SCHEME WAS NOT DESIGNED TO PROVIDE WORKING CAPITAL, BUT WAS INTENDED TO FOSTER INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BY MAKING LOANS AVAILABLE FOR BUYING NEW MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT.

+THE OBJECT IS TO PROVIDE AN INCENTIVE TO INDUSTRIAL CONCERNS TO SEEK FUNDS FOR MODERNISING THEIR FACTORIES, INCREASING THEIR EFFICIENCY AND BOOSTING THEIR PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR INDUSTRIAL FIRMS TO UP-DATE THEIR MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUES IN ORDER TO STAY AHEAD OF THEIR COMPETITORS IN WORLD MARKETS.

ACTION TO MODIFY THE SCHEME HAS BEEN TAKEN ON THE ADVICE OF THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD AND THE NEW TERMS COME INTO IMMEDIATE EFFECT.

THE +LOANS FOR SMALL INDUSTRY+ SCHEME IS A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMERCIAL BANKING SECTOR. IT CAME INTO OPERATION IN JULY, 1972, FOR A TRIAL PERIOD OF THREE YEARS AND SUBJECT TO A TOTAL LOAN COMMITMENT OF \$30 MILLION.

SINCE THE SCHEME WAS STARTED LOANS TOTALLING \$1,441,000 HAVE BEEN MADE.

BEFORE A LOAN IS MADE, THE APPLICANT FACTORY IS EXAMINED BY THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE WHICH SUBMITS A DETAILED REPORT TO THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ON THE VIABILITY AND LIKELY EFFECT OF THE PROPOSED NEW MACHINERY ON THE FACTORY'S PRODUCTION, PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITS.

REPAYMENT OF THE LOAN IS OVER A PERIOD OF UP TO FIVE YEARS AT THE PRIME INTEREST RATE PLUS TWO PER CENT TO COVER THE PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE'S COSTS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S RISK IN UNDERWRITING 50 PER CENT OF THE LOAN AMOUNT AGAINST FAILURE TO PAY.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1974

- 2 -

HEALTHIER BABIES AND FEWER INFANT MORTALITIES
CREDIT TO FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE

* * * * *

HEALTHIER BABIES ARE BORN AND FEWER BABIES DIE UNNECESSARILY BECAUSE OF COMMON INFECTIOUS DISEASES SUCH AS MEASLES.

MUCH OF THE CREDIT FOR THE BIRTH OF HEALTHY BABIES AND THE LOW INFANT MORTALITY RATE IN RECENT YEARS GOES TO THE FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

THESE CLINICS ARE ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROVISION OF A WIDE RANGE OF VALUABLE SERVICES FOR BOTH BABIES AND MOTHERS.

THESE SERVICES (WITH THE CHARGES BEING KEPT TO THE MINIMUM IF NOT FREE) INCLUDE BABY DELIVERY, INFANT CARE, FREE VACCINATIONS FOR BABIES, FAMILY PLANNING SERVICE, AND WELL-ORGANISED MATERNAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR MOTHERS. THERE ARE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMMES ON NUTRITION, HOME SAFETY, FEEDING PROBLEMS, INFANT CARE, ADVICE ON FAMILY PLANNING AND BIRTH CONTROL.

THE HISTORY OF THE FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE SCHEME DATES BACK TO APRIL 1932 WHEN THERE WAS ONLY ONE MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CLINIC IN LOCKHART ROAD. SUBSEQUENT EXPANSION LED TO THE OPENING OF TWO MORE AFTER THE WAR IN 1946.

TODAY, THERE ARE 37 CLINICS EACH MANNED BY A MEDICAL OFFICER AND FIVE TO SEVEN PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING STAFF. TWENTY-EIGHT OF THE CLINICS ALSO PROVIDE DELIVERY SERVICE.

IN ORDER TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND OF A GROWING POPULATION, FOUR NEW CLINICS ARE PLANNED FOR IN LEI MUK SHU, LAM TIN, NGAU TAU KOK AND LOWER KWAI CHUNG, FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF BABIES AND MOTHERS.

OF THE 80,400 BABIES BORN LAST YEAR, ABOUT 76,000 (94 PER CENT) ATTENDED THESE CLINICS.

ON THIS HIGH PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE SAID THAT PUBLICITY IN MAKING THE VARIOUS SERVICES KNOWN TO MOTHERS HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR. THE INCREASING APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF THE SERVICES AMONG THE EXPECTANT AND NURSING MOTHERS IS ALSO ANOTHER FACTOR.

SHE NOTED THAT AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE IS HEALTH EDUCATION WHICH TAKES THE FORM OF TALKS, INTERVIEWS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS SUPPLEMENTED BY VISUAL AIDS. THERE ARE 40 TOPICS, MAINLY ON NUTRITION, HOME SAFETY, INFANT CARE AND FEEDING PROBLEM.

+THE EDUCATION PROGRAMME IS MET WITH ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT. EVER SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION, THERE HAS BEEN A REMARKABLE DROP IN INFANT MORTALITIES CAUSED BY INFECTIOUS DISEASES,+ SHE SAID.

- 3 -

IN 1973, SHE SAID STATISTICS SHOWED THAT NO BABY DIED OF DIPHTHERIA AND POLIOMYELITIS. +THIS COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH FIGURES OF 10 YEARS AGO WHEN 86 DEATHS WERE CAUSED BY DIPHTHERIA, AND FOUR BY POLIOMYELITIS.+ DEATHS FROM MEASLES ALSO SHOWED A CONSIDERABLE DECREASE FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF MEASLES VACCINATION SINCE THE END OF 1967.

THIS EDUCATION PROGRAMME, SHE ADDED, IS COUPLED WITH THE FACT THAT PROSPECTIVE MOTHERS ARE ADVISED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTE-NATAL CARE, THUS MAXIMISING THEIR CHANCE OF GIVING BIRTH TO HEALTHY BABIES.

DURING THEIR FIRST VISITS TO THESE CLINICS, NEW BORN BABIES HAVE TO UNDERGO COMPLETE PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS, WHICH ARE REPEATED AFTER TWO YEARS. THE PURPOSE IS TO DETECT, AT THE EARLIEST INSTANCE, ANY PHYSICAL ABNORMALITY OF THE BABIES, AND TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY ARE LEADING HEALTHY LIVES.

IN ADDITION, BABIES HAVE TO TAKE A DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING TEST WHEN THEY ARE SIX WEEKS OLD, IN THE COURSE OF WHICH THEIR HEARING AND SEEING FACULTIES ARE CHECKED.

A SPEECH TEST IS SET FOR BABIES ONE AND A HALF YEARS OLD. DEFECTIVE CASES WILL BE REFERRED TO SPECIALISTS AFTER THREE REPEATED TESTS SET AT THREE-MONTH INTERVALS.

THIS SERIES OF EXAMINATION WILL DETECT ANY PHYSICAL ABNORMALITY OR UNDER-DEVELOPMENT AT AN EARLY STAGE SO THAT CORRECTIVE MEASURES CAN BE EFFECTIVELY TAKEN.

MANY MOTHERS DO NOT KNOW THE CORRECT WAY TO APPLY DRESSING OF THE UMBILICAL CORDS OF NEW BORN BABIES. THEREFORE BATHING SERVICE WAS INTRODUCED.

A COMPLETE IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS, SMALLPOX, DIPHTHERIA, WHOOPING COUGH, TETANUS, POLIOMYELITIS AND MEASLES IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE AT THE CLINICS FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN.

BABIES ARE WEIGHED EVERY WEEK DURING THE FIRST THREE MONTHS TO CHECK IF THEY ARE GROWING AT THE NORMAL RATE OF FOUR TO EIGHT OUNCES PER WEEK. IF THE GROWTH RATE IS NOT SATISFACTORY, WAYS OF BRINGING UP THE BABIES WOULD BE REVIEWED AND CORRECTED.

WHEN THE BABIES ARE SIX MONTHS OLD, WEIGHTS ARE TAKEN EVERY TWO WEEKS, AND AFTER THEY HAVE COMPLETED THE IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME, WEIGHING BECOMES A MONTHLY ROUTINE.

TODDLERS OF TWO OR ABOVE VISIT THE CLINICS TWO TO FOUR TIMES PER YEAR. THE SERVICE IS TERMINATED WHEN THEY REACH FIVE YEARS OLD.

ADVICE ON FAMILY PLANNING AND BIRTH CONTROL IS ALSO OFFERED AT THE CLINICS FOR MARRIED COUPLES AS WELL AS YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT TO GET MARRIED.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1974

- 4 -

SMOKERS URGED NOT TO DISCARD CIGARETTE ENDS INDISCRIMINATELY
* * * * *

THE ROLE OF THE CIGARETTE END IN STARTING FIRES IS PARAMOUNT.

STATISTICS FROM COUNTRIES ALL OVER THE WORLD REVEAL IT AS TOPPING THE +CAUSES OF FIRE+ CHARTS YEAR AFTER YEAR.

AND HONG KONG IS NO EXCEPTION.

ONE IN EVERY THREE OF OUR FIRES IN 1973/74 RESULTED FROM SMOKERS CARELESSLY DISCARDING CIGARETTE ENDS OR MATCHES WHILE STILL ALIGHT.

IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, A CIGARETTE END THROWN INTO A CAN OF FLAMMABLE LIQUID MISTAKEN FOR AN ASH TRAY LED TO A FIRE WHICH GUTTED THE PREMISES OF A PRINTING COMPANY AND CAUSED LOSSES EXCEEDING \$1 MILLION.

IN HONG KONG, A WAN CHAI HOTEL FIRE A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WAS ESTABLISHED AS VERY LIKELY HAVING BEEN CAUSED BY A CIGARETTE END SETTING FIRE TO A BED. EIGHT PEOPLE LOST THEIR LIVES AND 21 WERE INJURED.

MANY OTHER MAJOR FIRES IN HONG KONG HAVE BEEN TRACED TO CIGARETTE ENDS AND, CERTAINLY, MANY OF OUR GRASS AND FOREST FIRES OWE THEIR ORIGINS TO LACK OF CARE ON THE PART OF SMOKERS.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE AT ALL FOR CIGARETTE ENDS AND MATCHES TO BE DISPOSED OF OTHER THAN IN AN ASH TRAY. THOUSANDS OF THESE HAVE BEEN PROVIDED IN THE STREETS, BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, MANY SMOKERS FIND IT MORE CONVENIENT TO THROW THEIR BUTTS ON THE GROUND, UNCONCERNED - POSSIBLY UNKNOWING - THAT SUCH NEGLIGENCE CAUSED 2,923 TOTALLY UNNECESSARY FIRES AND INJURED 31 PEOPLE IN THE 1973/74 FINANCIAL YEAR.

MOST CARS ARE FITTED WITH ASH TRAYS, BUT TOO MANY MOTORISTS PREFER TO TOSS THEIR CIGARETTE ENDS OUT OF THE WINDOW WHILE ON THE MOVE, OBLIVIOUS TO WHAT THE RESULTS OF THIS ACTION MIGHT BE.

SOME OF THE WORST TYPES OF OFFENDERS ARE SMOKERS WHO THROW THEIR FINISHED BUTTS FROM THE BALCONIES OF MULTI-STORY BUILDINGS. IT IS A COMMON SIGHT TO SEE THIS EXTREME EXAMPLE OF IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR OCCURRING. A PUFF OF WIND COULD EASILY TAKE THE BUTT ANYWHERE. IT MIGHT LAND IN AN OPEN CAR, FALL AMONG DANGEROUS GOODS, EVEN ON A BABY IN A PRAM. WHO KNOWS? AND ALL FOR THE WANT OF A FEW SECONDS TO FIND AN ASH TRAY.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW EASILY A CIGARETTE END CAN CAUSE A FIRE OCCURRED IN MONG KOK LAST DECEMBER, WHEN CONDITIONS WERE EXTREMELY DRY (THE FIRE SERVICES WERE DEALING WITH AN AVERAGE OF 60 CALLS EACH DAY). EXPERT INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT THE END WAS THROWN INTO A PILE OF RUBBISH. THIS CAUGHT FIRE WHICH VERY QUICKLY SPREAD TO A NEARBY AREA WHERE DANGEROUS GOODS WERE BEING STORED. FORTUNATELY, A PASSER-BY NOTICED WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND IMMEDIATELY TELEPHONED THE FIRE SERVICES, WHO HAD THE FIRE UNDER CONTROL BEFORE THERE WAS ANY SERIOUS DAMAGE.

SUNDAY, COTOBER 27, 1974.

- 5 -

THROWING A LIGHTED CIGARETTE END OR MATCH ON THE GROUND IS HARDLY SENSIBLE AT THE BEST OF TIMES, BUT IT IS CRIMINAL TO DO SO DURING THE MONTHS OF LOW HUMIDITY (SAY, NOVEMBER TO MARCH). THIS IS WHEN HONG KONG BECOMES TINDER DRY AND IT ONLY NEEDS THE SLIGHTEST SPARK TO START A FIRE. REGRETTABLY, THERE ARE SUFFICIENT THOUGHTLESS SMOKERS AROUND WHO ARE WILLING TO PROVIDE THAT SPARK.

STATISTICS FOR 1972/73 SHOW THAT LIGHTED CIGARETTE ENDS AND MATCHES CAUSED 1,808 FIRES, A BIG DROP COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER FOR THE PAST FINANCIAL YEAR. A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THIS IS THAT, IN 1972/73, THE KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN CAMPAIGN WAS AT ITS HEIGHT AND THROWING CIGARETTE BUTTS AWAY IN THE STREET WAS SHOWN IN THE CAMPAIGN PUBLICITY TO BE ONE OF THE OFFENCES FOR WHICH A FINE COULD BE IMPOSED. THIS SUGGESTS THAT LITTER WARDENS MAY UNWITTINGLY HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE FIRE PREVENTION OFFICERS.

IN THE PRESENT DRY WEATHER A FIRE CAN START WITH THE SLIGHTEST SPARK. THEREFORE, IT IS TIME FOR ALL SMOKERS TO DECIDE - NO MORE CIGARETTE ENDS TO BE THROWN OVER BALCONIES OR THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF MOVING CARS. IF THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED, WHICH IS SURELY NOT ASKING VERY MUCH, NOT ONLY WOULD A CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION BE MADE TO THE CAMPAIGN TO RID HONG KONG OF LAP SAP CHUNG, BUT A GREAT DEAL WOULD BE DONE TO REDUCE THE GROWING LOCAL FIRE TOLL, OF WHICH, ONE DAY, YOU - MR THOUGHTLESS SMOKER - MIGHT WELL BE A VICTIM.

- - - - 0 - - - -