



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 2842 8777

Saturday, June 22, 1996

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Drug abuse telephone enquiry service boosted

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The drug abuse telephone enquiry service has been enhanced with the expansion of information provided to the public.

The new Anti-drug Abuse line 23668822 was officially launched today (Saturday) at the opening ceremony of the International Anti-drug Day Exhibition at the Times Square in Causeway Bay.

Speaking at the ceremony, Executive Councillor, Ms Rosanna Wong, said the expansion of the enquiry service would benefit more members of the public.

She said: "The service has been strengthened with the provision of additional information including guide to parents, teachers and social workers, refusal skills and healthy lifestyle."

The drug abuse telephone enquiry hotline was first set up in 1977 and was automated in 1993 to provide pre-recorded information on 12 substances of abuse.

In order to enhance the service to the public, the Narcotics Division decided to expand the scope of the messages by including information on preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation services, law enforcement in the voice messaging system. The new system also provides facsimile service for users to obtain information such as resources available in Narcotics Division.

Ms Wong noted recent statistics indicated that the problems of drug abuse remained a cause of concern.

"The upward trend in youth drug abuse, female drug abuse and multiple drug abuse was worrying,"

"According the statistics of the Central Registry of Drug Abuse, the number of newly reported drug abusers under 21 reaches an average of 2,000 in the past few years. It shows that we cannot spare efforts in the war on drugs."

Ms Wong stressed the importance of community joint effort in disseminating the anti-drug message.

She said: "Only with the support from all sectors of the community can we deliver the message clear and loud, in particular to our youngsters."

Also officiating at the ceremony were Chairman of the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN) Professor Chen Char-nie and Commissioner for Narcotics Raymond Wong.

The two-day event, organised by ACAN this Saturday and Sunday (June 22 - 23), features display panels, games stalls, drug exhibits and video displays.

The event was held annually to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking declared by the United Nations General Assembly.

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Planning Department sets higher performance targets

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The Planning Department announced today (Saturday) a higher level of performance targets for 1996.

"The department has raised the performance targets from 85 per cent for 1994 and 1995 to 90 per cent of the cases in such areas as replying to straightforward oral enquiries on the spot, complicated oral enquiries within three days, carrying out site inspections and providing replies on alleged unauthorised developments within four weeks as well as processing development proposals and replying within three months," a spokesman for the department said.

He pointed out that the department handled a total of 11 653 oral and 870 written enquiries last year.

"It managed to exceed the target set for 1995 for most of the services and achieved the performance targets in 90 per cent of the cases. This level of achievement has provided a basis to raise its service standards for 1996.

"We pledge to continue providing efficient, courteous and professional services to the public," he added.

Meanwhile, the department has come under the Code on Access to Information since October 1995 and received a total of 49 applications for access to information under the Code in 1995.

Photocopying service of information has been provided and is well received by members of the public.

Copies of the Planning Department's leaflet on the performance pledge for 1996 are available from the department's Planning Information and Technical Administration Unit on the 16th floor of Murray Building at Garden Road, District Planning Offices and District Offices.

End

Health competition for 18 District Boards

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District Board members should live a balanced life in order to set a good example for their constituents, Mrs Shelley Lau, Director of Home Affairs, said at the first ever health competition for the 18 District Boards today (Saturday) at the Harbour Road Indoor Games Hall.

Referring to the results of the questionnaire survey conducted as a prelude to the competition, Mrs Lau expressed appreciation for the devotion of the DB members to serve the community. She noted that some might even be prepared to skip dinner and sacrifice rest.

"I hope District Board members will take the opportunity today to relax and will help with health promotion," she added.

The competition, jointly organised by the Home Affairs Department, Hospital Authority and Department of Health with the assistance of Radio Television Hong Kong, included a number of entertaining games to test the DB members' fitness.

Also speaking at the opening ceremony, the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority, Dr E K Yeoh, praised the dedication of the DB members: "They have great determination in serving the community and enhancing the well-being of residents."

However, Dr Yeoh called on the DB members to pay more attention to their health. He pointed out that to stay healthy, regular exercise, a balanced diet and sufficient rest were essential.

The Director of Health, Dr Margaret Chan, noted that DB members faced a heavy responsibility of advising on district administration issues.

"I hope after today's programmes, DB members will be more health-conscious in their daily activities, relax and exercise more," she said.

More than 200 DB members participated in today's competition. Over 300 guests from the 18 districts and Miss Hong Kong 1996, Miss Lee San-san, attended the event.

There were performances by popular local artistes Mr Hacken Lee, Miss Amanda Lee, Mr Edmond Leung, Miss Christine Ng and Mr Ray Chan. The competition was broadcast live on Radio 1 Hong Kong.

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Firing practice in July

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Firing practice will take place at the Ha Tsuen/Castle Peak Range on 14 days next month. The public is advised not to enter the area when red flags are hoisted.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
July 2 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 3 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 4 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 5 (Friday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 11 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 18 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 22 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 23 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 24 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 25 (Thursday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 26 (Friday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 29 (Monday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 30 (Tuesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm
July 31 (Wednesday)	8.30 am - 5 pm

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ Million</u>	<u>Time (Hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative Change (\$ Million)</u>
Opening Balance in the account	1,814	09:30	+130
Closing Balance in the account	1,714	10:00	+130
Change Attributable to:		11:00	+130
Money Market Activity	+130	11:30	+130
Laf Today			-230

Laf Rate 4% Bid/6% Offer TWI 124.50 *+0.2* 22.6.96

End

Trading fund provides department with greater transparency

The Secretary for Works, Mr Kwong Hon-sang, today (Sunday) said that the administration has identified the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) as a good candidate for transforming into a trading fund through which customers will benefit from better services and more competitive prices.

Staff in the department will also benefit from working and developing their careers in a healthy, dynamic organisation which is able to move forward and adapt itself to meet its clients' changing needs.

"The introduction of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund (EMSTF) will serve to enhance the efficiency and productivity of the EMSD in delivering its services for the best interests of the community as a whole," Mr Kwong said.

"As taxpayers, the public will benefit from the better value for money and quality of services provided by the EMSTF at less cost to them."

In response to comments on the viability of trading funds, Mr Kwong said that the audited accounts of the Companies Registry and Land Registry, which have been operating under trading funds since 1993, clearly showed that both were financially viable and were generating healthy operating surpluses as intended.

The Post Office and the Office of the Telecommunications Authority have yet to submit their first accounts as trading funds, but their draft unaudited accounts show that both are operating successfully as planned.

"Upon the establishment of the EMSTF, detailed accounts of the Fund are required to be tabled in the Legislative Council annually for the scrutiny of Councillors," Mr Kwong said. "This makes the operation of the Department much more transparent and accountable."

On the question of staff relations, the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services is confident that the setting up of the EMSTF will not result in staff redundancies as new business opportunities arise in the coming years. Nevertheless, to address their worries, he has reassured staff that the Department will make full use of redeployment, retraining and natural wastage to deal with any staffing issues if they arise.

The Director has also assured them that provided all staff are willing to participate in meeting the challenges of the Department's business developments in future, no existing staff would be made redundant or forced to retire early.

Mr Kwong said that there have been extensive briefings and consultations with staff and over 500 of them have already received special training in commercial practices to prepare them for the establishment of the trading fund, in addition to the many improvement initiatives which are already under way.

"We understand that staff are concerned about job security. However, it is also our duty to strive to make continuous improvement in the services which we provide in the interests of the public," he added.

The Administration will table a Resolution to establish the EMSTF on June 26, 1996 to the Legislative Council for it to be set up from August 1, 1996.

End

Welfare recipients urged to watch for tricksters

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The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (Sunday) urged recipients of welfare assistance, elderly people in particular, to watch out for tricksters.

A spokesman for the department said that no money would be demanded from SWD staff in the process of applying for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) and Social Security Allowance (SSA).

"It has been found that elderly people receiving CSSA and SSA could easily fall prey to tricksters who claimed to be officers of the SWD or volunteers.

"These unruly elements usually gained access into the premises of the elderly victims and then cheated/robbed them of the money," he said.

The spokesman said that the services in processing CSSA and SSA applications were entirely free of charge and any demand for money should be brought to the attention of the SWD or the Police for follow-up investigations.

"We urge members of the public, including CSSA and SSA recipients, to be on guard against tricksters.

"They are advised to check the departmental identity cards of visitors who claimed to be SWD staff," he said.

In case of doubt, members of the public can call the nearest social security field units or the SWD hotline 2343 2255.

To arouse public awareness, posters advising welfare recipients to beware of tricksters have been put up at SWD's 33 social security field units throughout the territory.

End

Fresh water cut in Mong Kok

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Fresh water supply to some premises in Mong Kok will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Wednesday (June 26) to 6 am the following day to facilitate waste detection works on watermains.

The suspension will affect all premises bounded by Soy Street, Nathan Road, Dundas Street and Fa Yuen Street, as well as premises at Nos 546 to 580 Nathan Road.

End

Fresh and flushing water cut in Yuen Long

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Fresh and flushing water supply to some premises in Yuen Long will be temporarily suspended from 11 pm on Wednesday (June 26) to 6 am the following day to facilitate waste detection work on watermains.

The suspension will affect all premises in Sheung Cheung Wai, Hang Tau Tsuen, Hang Mei Tsuen, Tong Fong Tsuen and Ping Shan San Tsuen.

End