



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, November 10, 1972

FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO

DISCUSS MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY IN LONDON AND TOKYO

The Financial Secretary, Mr. C.P. Haddon-Cave, will visit London and Tokyo shortly to discuss the proposed mass transit railway.

Commenting on these visits Mr. Haddon-Cave said: "The Government has received a number of responses to the invitation, issued in July, for interested groups to submit proposals for the financing of the mass transit railway."

"The Mass Transit Steering Group, of which I am chairman, is still in the process of examining these proposals which must obviously remain confidential at this stage," he said. "The discussions which we will be holding in London and Tokyo over the next few weeks, will be strictly exploratory."

Mr. Haddon-Cave said that discussions had already been held in Hong Kong with interested parties and that these would continue during the next three to four weeks.

A spokesman for the Steering Group recalled that the Financial Secretary announced in the Legislative Council last June that the decision to proceed with the construction of the full mass transit railway was subject to satisfactory arrangements being made for financing it and for letting contracts.

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"All these discussions will enable a comprehensive assessment of the different proposals to be made so that a final decision can be reached in the near future as to whether actual negotiations should be entered into with a particular group or groups," the spokesman added.

Mr. Haddon-Cave is expected to leave for London on November 15 and will visit Japan later in the month. He will be accompanied by Mr. M.G.R. Sandberg, General Manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, who is a member of the Steering Group.

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FURTHER AMENDMENTS TO ROAD TRAFFIC BILL

An amending bill to empower the Governor-in-Council to regulate further the sale of special registration marks already assigned to motor vehicles is published in today's gazette.

At present, it is doubtful whether the regulation-making power, effected by the Road Traffic (Amendment) Ordinance 1972 enacted in July this year, would entitle the Governor-in-Council to do this.

The Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1972, to be introduced into the Legislative Council shortly, proposes to make it clear that the regulations may apply to numbers which were assigned to motor vehicles owned by members of the public before February 1, 1973 -- the proposed date of commencement of the bill -- as well as to numbers assigned after that date.

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FESTIVAL OF HONG KONG FOR 1973

The Government has decided to hold another Festival of Hong Kong towards the end of 1973 to provide once again entertainment and enjoyment for the people. The first was held in 1969, and was followed by one late last year.

The next Festival will be held from Saturday, November 24 to Sunday, December 2, 1973, both days inclusive.

A Steering Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Yuet-keung Kan, has been formed to start planning for the event, and one of its first decisions was to set the dates for the Festival.

Other members of the Committee are Dr. S.Y. Chung; Mr. T.K. ANN; Mr. P.G. Williams; Mr. A. de O. Sales; Mr. H.W. Lee; the Secretary for Home Affairs or his deputy; the Secretary for Information; the Commissioner of Police; the Festival Co-ordinator; a representative of the Hong Kong Tourist Association; and a representative of the Services.

Mr. Sales has again accepted the chairmanship of the Festival's Executive Committee, which will be responsible for the planning and preparation of entertainment programmes.

The terms of reference of the Steering Committee are:-

- * To decide on the date, theme and scope of the 1973 Festival taking into account as far as possible the points that (i) the next Festival should be broadly speaking on the same lines as the previous one;

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(ii) subject to the approval of the necessary funds by the Legislative Council's Finance Committee, the Festival Office should be reconstituted to consist of a permanent nucleus to carry out advance planning and be suitably expanded in time to organize the 1973 Festival; and (iii) the next Festival should cover a period of nine days and should end on a Sunday;

- * To co-ordinate and exercise general control over the Festival programme;
- * To appoint working committees to undertake detailed programme planning;
- * To advise on the provision of public funds and raising of revenue from other sources;
- * To decide on the extent to which commercial and industrial organisation should be invited to participate in the Festival; and
- * To submit a report to Government on the Festival and to make recommendations on the date of the next Festival, its organisation, planning and financing.

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TENDERS CALLED FOR WATERLOO ROAD INTERCHANGE

Tenders are now being called for the construction of the multi-million dollar Waterloo Road/Prince Edward Road/Boundary Street grade separated interchange.

During peak hours, this area is choked with traffic and the new interchange should help in easing the flow of vehicles.

An elevated road spanning the intersections of Waterloo Road with Prince Edward Road and Boundary Street will provide a dual two-lane carriageway for through traffic along Waterloo Road.

A system of scissors ramps will provide east to south movement for traffic from Boundary Street to Waterloo Road; and south to west movement for traffic from Waterloo Road to Prince Edward Road.

On completion of the main flyovers, the existing temporary flyover along Prince Edward Road will be dismantled. It will be replaced by a vehicle underpass which will take westbound through traffic beneath Waterloo Road.

The temporary flyover can be re-used as required at other traffic "black spots" as either a three-lane or a two-lane flyover.

Work on the interchange complex is expected to begin early next year, and will take about two and a half years to complete.

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CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND LION ROCK TUNNEL

Construction of the dual-purpose Second Lion Rock Tunnel will begin soon as tenders are now being called for the project.

It is an enlarged waterworks tunnel required for the High Island Water Scheme to convey increased water output from Sha Tin to the urban areas.

The tunnel will also handle the increasing volume of traffic travelling to the New Territories. This is expected to further increase with the development of Sha Tin new town and the construction of a new race course.

The Second Lion Rock Tunnel, about a mile long, will be similar to the existing one with internal dimensions of 30' 4" by 29' 6". Two 60-inch diameter water mains will be laid in the tunnel.

Construction work consists of tunnel driving, concrete lining, portal works, the laying of mains, formation of approach roads and associated drainage works.

The project is expected to start by the end of this year and will take about 30 months to complete.

A spokesman for the Public Works Department said: "Although the works are unlikely to cause nuisance to residents nearby, noise level will be kept to a minimum."

On completion, the lined tunnel will be handed over to the Highways Office to provide the road slab, ventilation, lighting and other ancillary works for the road tunnel.

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PEDLAR HAWKER LICENCES TO BE DISCONTINUED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES

The Urban Services Department will stop issuing new Pedlar Hawker Licences in the New Territories from February 1 next year.

Announcing this today, a spokesman for the department said: "This will discontinue the present policy of unrestricted issue of licences. The move is in line with the policy already adopted by the Urban Council in the urban areas."

Pedlar Hawker Licences for the New Territories will still be obtainable on or before January 31, 1973 at the District Offices of Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long and Tai Po, and the Post Offices at Sai Kung, Peng Chau, Tai O, Mui Wo and Cheung Chau. Applicants should bring along two photographs and \$10 for the licence fee.

Renewal of existing valid licences will continue as before and will not be affected.

"Pedlar Hawker Licences entitle the holders to trade only on an itinerant basis," the spokesman said, "all bona fide hawkers who have failed to obtain a licence or to renew expired licences are urged to obtain them before February 1."

"It is proposed to introduce new regulations shortly under which hawking without a licence will lead to mandatory forfeiture of goods and equipment," the spokesman stressed.

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CHINESE PORCUPINE TO BE PROTECTED

The Government plans to include Chinese porcupines on the list of protected wild life in an endeavour to preserve the species.

Amending legislation will be introduced in the Legislative Council soon which will have the effect of prohibiting the hunting and trapping of the porcupine as well as a number of marine mammals including dolphins, whales and dugongs.

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said today the Chinese porcupine, indigenous to Hong Kong, represents a unique group of rodents and is of special zoological interest.

He said that for one reason or another, most of the south-east Asian countries where the species is also found are relatively inaccessible.

"Hong Kong is therefore one of the few places where the species can be studied in its natural habitat."

The spokesman said the Chinese porcupine is the only remaining animal in Hong Kong which can still be legally trapped. But the traps are of such a size that they could just as easily be used for catching a variety of other species, such as civet cats and monkeys -- a practice which has long been illegal.

At the same time, the use by New Territories villages of dangerous and cruel gin traps, some of which are capable of breaking a man's leg, present a growing hazard to the increasing numbers of people using the countryside for recreation.

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In an effort to improve the enforcement of the protection of wild life in Hong Kong, the bill also seeks to confer on police officers the authority to inspect game licences, arrest people and seize items such as nets, gins and snares used for the trapping and killing of wild birds and mammals. At present only justices of the peace and game wardens have these powers.

Details of the amending legislation, known as the Wild Birds and Wild Mammals Protection (Amendment) Bill 1972, are published in today's gazette.

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HUNG HOM RAILWAY TERMINUS

Further development of the site for the new railway terminus at Hung Hom will take place soon.

The work will include the construction of a reinforced concrete podium, six buildings at track level, a footbridge and some ancillary works.

The podium will be 31 feet above ground level and will cover an area of over 250,000 square feet. This will be the site for the new railway station building, a multi-storey car park and a bus station, all to be built at a later stage.

The six ground level buildings will have a floor area of approximately 40,000 square feet. Two of them will be used as dangerous goods stores and the others as a stores and signal cabin, a transit check block, a way and works block and a transport firms block.

The work is expected to begin next February and take about 15 months to complete.

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AMENDING LEGISLATION ON CONTRACT ENFORCEMENTS

The existing requirement that some types of contract must satisfy formalities if they are to be enforceable is done away with under an amending bill to be introduced into the Legislative Council shortly.

The bill seeks to repeal a section in the principal Ordinance which provides that no action may be brought to enforce these contracts unless there is a note or memorandum in writing evidencing the agreement signed by the person to be charged.

It is the Law Amendment and Reform (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill 1972, published in today's Government Gazette for general information.

A Government spokesman said that over the years, in England and in Hong Kong, formal requirements of proof have been relaxed in many branches of the law, and now most contracts may be proved by a variety of types of evidence.

"The retention of this section in the law of Hong Kong, which imposes formal requirements on four dissimilar types of contract, is thus no longer necessary. With one exception, the comparable provisions were repealed in England some years ago," he said.

The four types of contract concerned are (i) on a special promise by an executor or administrator to answer damages out of his own estates; (ii) on a special promise to answer for the debt, default or miscarriage of another; (iii) upon an agreement made in consideration of marriage; and (iv) upon an agreement that is not to be performed within one year of the making thereof.

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The amending legislation also seeks to empower the court to award damages where a contract has been part performed, but the circumstances of the case render it impossible for the court to decree specific performance.

At present, the court can only award damages in a case where specific performance could also be ordered.

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ANOTHER CONDUIT ROAD BUILDING OPENED

Another building in Conduit Road, which was closed as a result of the June rainstorm, was re-opened today.

It is Mirror Marina at No. 47 Conduit Road.

The Principal Government Building Surveyor said that certain specified works had been completed under the supervision of an authorised architect and he was now satisfied that the building was no longer dangerous.

A notice of the expiry of the closure order was posted on the premises at 3 p.m. today.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.