



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, September 19, 1973

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EXPORT OF TEXTILES TO THE EEC

Hong Kong is to extend for six months, up to the end of June 1974, the various current restraints on exports of textiles to the countries of the European Economic Community.

Announcing this today, a spokesman for the Commerce and Industry Department said that this action, which has been taken on the advice of the Textiles Advisory Board, is unilateral. No negotiations have been held with the countries concerned.

The reason for this unusual step, the spokesman explained, is that the existing arrangements are all due to expire on December 31, 1973, and in the present international situation it would be impractical to try to conclude a new bilateral agreement with the EEC.

This is because the international rules under which such an agreement would have to be negotiated are still themselves the subject of negotiation in the forum of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The so-called Cotton Textiles Arrangement, under which many of Hong Kong's textile restraint agreements have been negotiated, has been extended only to the end of 1973.

Negotiations to replace it with a new set of rules, in which Hong Kong will continue to play an active role, are to be held in Geneva later this year.

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The Commerce and Industry Department spokesman said that although Hong Kong did not welcome restrictions, it had been decided to protract the existing controls on exports to the EEC so that trade could continue on a stable and predictable basis during the interim period of uncertainty.

Full details of the new arrangements have been issued to the trade. They affect textile exports to the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Benelux countries, Italy, Denmark and France.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION

The Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Mr. Thomas C.Y. Lee, said today (Wednesday) ignorance about mental illness has led many people to believe it is a frightening condition.

"Ignorance," he said, "breeds misunderstanding which leads to fear, and fear again leads to ignorance. This is indeed a vicious cycle."

He said an isolated incident of a mad man in the street is too often dramatised and overshadows the many other persons, similarly afflicted yet harmless, who are just waiting to return to the community, but who are being refused by those of us who can be in a position to help.

He said the goal of psychiatric rehabilitation is the maximum development of physical, mental, social and vocational potentiality of the mentally disabled enabling them to become once again independent and productive members of society.

"Rehabilitation is especially important in the case of the mentally ill, because of the often disrupted sequelae resulting from their illness and because of the discrimination they suffer from it."

Mr. Lee said helping the mentally ill to become a member of society again was essential not just for humanitarian reasons alone.

"Psychiatric rehabilitation is also a sound economic investment for the community as well as for the patient and his family. The cause of mental illness weighs heavily on every member of the community.

"With psychiatric rehabilitation, a chronic schizophrenic previously left vegetating in the closed ward of a large mental hospital can now be helped to take up remunerative employment and can be useful and productive."

/Mr. Lee was...

Mr. Lee was speaking at the ceremony at which prizes were awarded to winners of the Christmas card design competition sponsored by the New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association.

He said in other more advanced countries where programmes in mental health and psychiatric rehabilitation are components of a well planned social welfare policy, multifarious programmes oriented towards community participation place much of the responsibility of rehabilitating the mentally ill person on the authorities.

Psychiatric rehabilitation in Hong Kong, he said, is as yet at an early stage of development. However, it is becoming increasingly important as our society becomes more affluent, more advanced and more complicated.

"Sound mental health for the citizen is regarded as one of the duties of the government. However, participation and involvement of volunteers and voluntary agencies must operate fully in the provision of mental health programmes.

"In Hong Kong, a number of government departments have been working closely together to promote many aspects of mental health. The New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, as a voluntary agency, has made significant contributions," he said.

Implementation of the new five year plan would see substantial expansion of service to the mentally ill and the Association, he said, with its ambitious plan for the future, would certainly continue to play a vital role.

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Note to Editors: Copies of Mr. Lee's speech in English and Chinese are distributed separately in the Press Boxes of the Government Information Services this evening.

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HOUSING SECRETARY TO MEET ESTATE SHOP TENANTS

Mr. Ian Lightbody, Secretary for Housing, has invited representatives of shopkeepers in public housing estates and estate Kaifong members to meet him on Friday (September 21) to discuss the new shop tenancy agreements proposed recently by the Housing Authority.

Mr. Roger Lobo, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Housing Authority will also attend. Nearly 11,000 shopkeepers in the older public housing estates at present hold their premises on a month-to-month tenancy card basis. Under the new system they are being asked to sign a long term agreement.

Since the new agreement was proposed shopkeepers and estate Kaifongs have sent representatives to the Housing Department objecting to some of its conditions.

A Housing Department spokesman said today: "We have met representatives of several shopkeepers groups and listened sympathetically to the points they raised. There seems to be some misapprehension that the main object to the agreement is to undermine their security of tenure.

"This in fact is not the case. We have said repeatedly that we have no intention of terminating tenancies."

In a letter going out to each individual shopkeeper today, Mr. Ralph Husband, Deputy Director of Estate Management, commenting on the coming meeting between Mr. Lightbody and shopkeepers representatives, says:

"I am sure that these discussions will help considerably to clarify the various problems which some shop tenants see in these new arrangements, and the department will then consider what can be done to meet these difficulties."

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN HAPPY VALLEY

A series of new traffic arrangements will be introduced in Happy Valley from 10 a.m. on Friday (September 21) to improve traffic flow and to facilitate road works in the area.

Announcing this today, the acting Commissioner for Transport, Mr. P.F. Leeds, said the re-arrangements were necessary to accommodate the fast increasing volume of traffic at the Canal Road flyover which had become a major traffic route following the opening of the Cross Harbour Tunnel.

"The new arrangements will also facilitate construction works in connection with extending the Canal Road flyover over Leighton and Morrison Hill Roads to Queen's Road East to eventually link with the proposed Happy Valley-Aberdeen tunnel," he added.

The new arrangements are as follows:

- * The section of Sports Road between the entrance to Royal Hong Kong Defence Force Headquarters and its junction with Wongneichong Road will be re-routed one-way eastbound.
- * Wongneichong Road between Village Road and Morrison Hill Road will be re-routed one-way in a clockwise direction.
- * The westbound lane of Leighton Road between Wongneichong Road and Canal Road East will be converted into a "Bus Only Lane" and no other vehicles except franchised buses will be permitted to enter this section of Leighton Road.

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- * Westbound traffic in Leighton Road, with the exception of franchised buses, when approaching the Wongneichong Road junction will have to turn left into Wongneichong Road.
- * The existing Cross Harbour Tunnel Route 101 bus stop in Morrison Hill Road will be relocated in due course to Canal Road West adjacent to Houses No.19 and 20. The existing C.M.B. route 1 bus stop in Morrison Hill Road will be cancelled.

At the same time, Tak Hing Street in Kowloon will be re-routed one-way northbound and Tak Shing Street between Nathan Road and Tak Hing Street will be re-routed one-way eastbound to improve traffic flow.

Appropriate traffic signs will be put up to guide motorists.

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WATER CUT

Water supply to a number of premises in Chai Wan on Hong Kong Island will be interrupted for eight hours starting from 10 p.m. on Friday (September 21) until 6 a.m. the following morning.

The temporary stoppage is to enable staff from the Waterworks Office to install drain pipes.

The premises affected are Nos. 31-69 Chai Wan Road, the Shaukiwan Fire Station and Nos. 2-4 Ah Kung Ngam Road.

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HONG KONG BARRISTER APPOINTED QUEEN'S COUNSEL

Mr. Benjamin Tsz Ming Liu, a prominent Hong Kong barrister, has been appointed a Queen's Counsel.

Mr. Liu was born in Hong Kong 1931, the son of Dr. and Mrs. Liu Yan-tak, and was educated at the Wah Yan College, Hong Kong.

He was called to the English Bar in July 1957 and was admitted as a Barrister in Hong Kong in March 1959. He has practised here ever since.

In the years 1957 and 1958 he served as a pupil in the chambers of the late Lord Justice Winn and of Mr. B.G. Burnett-Hall, Bencher of Lincoln's Inn and one of the Conveyancing Counsel to the High Court of Justice.

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THREE PRE-WAR BUILDINGS CONDEMNED

The Building Authority today (Wednesday) declared Nos. 8, 12 and 14 Tsung Sau Lane West, in Western District to be in a dangerous condition.

The Principal Government Building Surveyor said: "These three-storey pre-war buildings form part of a group inspected subsequent to a collapse at No. 10 Tsung Sau Lane West which resulted in an emergency closure order being granted."

The brickwork in the load bearing walls, he said was fractured and bulged in addition to a considerable amount of decay in roof and floor timbers indicating there was risk of failure leading to collapse.

Notices of intention to apply for Closure Orders in Victoria District Court at 9.30 a.m. on October 19, were posted today.

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ADVICE TO OFFICE BEARERS

When taking up a new responsibility make sure you have enough time to do your job properly.

This is the advice the Director of Social Welfare, Mr. K.W.J. Topley offered to the new Board Members of the Chinese Young Men's Christian Association when he spoke at their induction ceremony this (Wednesday) evening.

Mr. Topley said: "Most committee men and office bearers in Hong Kong are too busy and they would do a better job if they were less busy." When one took on a new task "it is time to review one's own responsibility to one's family, to the work by which one earns one's living, to others and last - to yourself," he added.

He said in taking up a new responsibility, something else has to go - a time consuming pastime or another committee.

Another important aspect, Mr. Topley said, was the attitude of mind one brought to the job.

"How do you make your contribution? This is a big subject. In a time when youth is on the move and the middle-aged are static if uncomfortable, you must reassess yourselves and the organisation you serve."

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Note to Editors: Copies of Mr. Topley's speech in English and Chinese are boxed for collection.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.