



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Monday, August 20, 1973

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MORE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES FOR HANDICAPPED

Special classes for handicapped children will be extended to aided primary schools in the new academic year which starts next month.

Supervised by the Special Education Section of the Education Department, these classes are designed for less severely handicapped children such as the slow learning, the partially hearing and the partially sighted.

At present, special classes are run only in government primary schools. It is planned that by the beginning of the next school year there will be a total of 86 such classes in government primary schools.

In addition, eleven such classes will be operated in four subsidised primary schools -- the Po Leung Kuk Primary School, Our Lady of China Primary School in Kwun Tong, the St. John Bosco School, Ngau Tau Kok Branch, and the Holy Cross Lutheran School in Tsuen Wan.

The Special Education Section regularly runs one-year in-service training courses for teachers of blind, partially sighted, deaf, partially hearing, physically handicapped, slow learning, maladjusted and socially deprived children in special schools and classes.

The section also runs a special education service centre at Sir Ellis Kadoorie Primary School at Hospital Road in the Western District to provide diagnostic and remedial services.

/These services

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These services are provided free and include psychological testing and educational assessment for handicapped children, audiometric and speech screening for primary school children, audiological testing for children with suspected hearing-impairment, speech testing for children with suspected speech defects, auditory and speech training for hearing-impaired children and individual speech therapy for children with speech defects.

Parents are urged to avail themselves of these specialists' services to help their children if they find them slow learning, having behaviour problems or handicaps in their sense of sight, hearing or speech.

Teachers are also urged to refer pupils with such problems to the Special Education Section for specialists' attention.

"Early assessment and proper treatment will prevent a minor handicap from developing into a serious disability," a spokesman of the Section said.

"Remedial measures based on specialists' recommendations will enable children with hearing or behaviour problems to receive the correct form of education and lead a normal life."

He revealed that his section planned to set up another centre in Knowloon which would have the same comprehensive services.

In addition there are hospital schools for children undergoing treatment or convalescing in hospitals.

Hospital school education prevents children from falling behind in their studies when they rejoin normal classes after their discharge from hospitals. It also keeps them usefully occupied while they are in hospitals.

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BETTER DEAL FOR ESTATE SHOPS

Shopkeepers in the older public housing estates are to get a better deal. The Housing Department is asking nearly 11,000 shopkeepers and restaurant owners who now let premises on a month-to-month basis to sign long-term tenancy agreements.

Under the old system, where premises were let on a tenancy-card basis, the tenancy could be terminated at any time by landlord or tenant at a month's notice. The new tenancy agreement which shopkeepers are being asked to sign will be for two years in the first instance, renewable for another three years.

A letter is being sent to each individual shop tenant setting out the advantages of the new system. In it, the Deputy Director of Estate Management, Mr. Ralph Husband, explains that the long-term agreement will enable tenants to better plan their business.

"It does not mean that after five years' time your tenancy will be terminated and your shop recovered. Normally if a tenancy is satisfactory to both parties it will be renewed, although the terms may be varied."

According to Mr. Husband present shop rents included a considerable subsidy which made them much lower than those in the private sector.

Under the monthly tenancy system, rents could be increased at any time but with fixed tenancies the rent can not be varied until the tenancy has expired. Once the agreements are signed, no rent re-adjustment will be made before December 1975.

/New tenants

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New tenants of shops will have to pay a refundable deposit equal to three months' rent but existing tenants who sign the agreement will be exempted from this condition.

The new system will correct existing anomalies. For example the policy of allowing shopkeepers to change trades will be stopped. But this has advantages for tenants.

Says Mr. Husband: "Superficially you may feel that you would have less liberty in this respect, but as this ruling applies to other shops also it would as a matter of fact enable you to enjoy a better business by preventing a neighbouring shop from changing to a trade competitive to your own."

Under tenancy agreements, transfer of a shop to another tenant will not be permitted but this ruling will not affect existing tenants immediately. They will be allowed to transfer their tenancies until December 1 this year.

As a special concession, partners can be added to the tenancy before the agreement is signed. Partners were not allowed under tenancy-card agreements.

Calling for tenants' cooperation in the new system, Mr. Husband said: "They need have no fears about their tenancy being taken away from them. This is one of several moves the Housing Department is making to improve management as well as living conditions in the older estates."

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SURVEY ON TRAFFIC LIGHT SIGNALS

A survey will be carried out later this week to find out whether traffic movement at road junctions can be improved by omitting the red-amber "prepare to start" light at traffic signals.

Announcing this today, the Commissioner for Transport said the amber with red lights -- which denotes an impending change to green -- was not respected by many drivers.

"This is a contributory factor in accidents at junctions controlled by traffic lights," he said.

The survey will start at 10 a.m. on Thursday (August 23) and will last for two months.

During this period, the red-amber light will be disconnected on traffic signals at four selected locations -- Nathan Road/Austin Road junction and Nathan Road pedestrian crossing at Soy Street in Kowloon; and, Garden Road/Queensway junction and Chater Road pedestrian crossing at the subway to Star Ferry, on the Island.

The survey aims at assessing what effects the omission of the red-amber light will have on delays to traffic, pedestrians, accidents at traffic signals and drivers' behaviour.

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NEW REGISTRAR OF TRADE UNIONS

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has approved the promotion of Mr. Tsang Tat-sing to Registrar of Trade Unions.

He succeeds Mr. J.R. Allen who will be proceeding on pre-retirement leave on September 2.

Mr. Tsang, who is 51, was first appointed as a Clerk/Interpreter in 1951. He became Assistant Registrar of Trade Unions four years later and Deputy Registrar in 1969.

Mr. Tsang is married with no children.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph of Mr. Tsang are boxed for collection.

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WATER INTERRUPTION

Water supply to a number of premises in Tsuen Wan will be interrupted for five hours starting from 1 a.m. on Wednesday (August 22).

The temporary stoppage is to enable the Waterworks Office to carry out a leakage test.

The area affected is bounded by Texaco Road, Tai Wo Hau Road, Tai Wo Hau Estate block 1, and 12-20, and Asbury Methodist Cottage.
Area.

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DANGEROUS BUILDINGS

Two three-storey pre-war buildings located at Nos. 7 and 9 Wing Wo Street were today declared dangerous by the Building Authority.

In a statement issued this morning the Principal Government Building Surveyor said that these buildings were inspected subsequent to a complaint. Precautionary measures were carried out by the owners, removing the immediate danger.

"However, during the course of a subsequent inspection it was discovered that the party wall between the two buildings is now badly bulged and fractured and there is a risk of failure giving rise to a collapse," he said.

Notices of intention to apply for closure orders in Victoria District Court at 9.30 a.m. on September 21 were posted today.

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FLOWER COMPETITION

A cut-ribbon flower competition has been organised for the girls in the care of the Ma Tau Wei Girls Home of the Social Welfare Department. It will be held on Friday (August 24).

"The aim of organising this competition is to promote the girls' skills and interest in this particular field which is one of our newly designed training courses introduced this year," said Miss Cheung Suk-fong, superintendent of the home.

Two experts, Miss Fukuda Junko and Miss Hiroko Kito, who are instructors of the cut-ribbon flower class at the YWCA, have been invited to judge the competition. They will also give a demonstration of cut-ribbon flower arrangement.

On the occasion, Mr. Mak Wing-hong, Principal Social Welfare Officer (Correctional Institutions), has been invited to address the audience and Mrs. Mak will present prizes to winners of the competition.

Guests will include Mrs. C.B. Marr, Magistrate of the Juvenile Court, Mr. S.M. Lee, Senior Principal Social Welfare Officer (Probation), Mr. Wallace Lee, Principal Probation Officer, superintendents and staff of correctional institutions, caseworkers and probation officers.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.