



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1976

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MEASURES TO IMPROVE PASSENGER CAR SERVICE  
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO INTRODUCE NEW MEASURES WITH THE OBJECT OF PROVIDING A BETTER AND MORE RATIONAL PASSENGER CAR SERVICE FOR THE PUBLIC, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. ALAN ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. JOHN BREMRIDGE, HE SAID THE MEASURES WERE THE ISSUE BY TENDER OF 100 TAXI LICENCES PER MONTH FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD, THE INTRODUCTION OF CONTRACT HIRE PERMITS, AND THE ABOLITION OF PUBLIC CARS.

EXPLAINING THE GOVERNMENT'S MOVE, MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH A SHORTAGE OF TAXIS WAS TO INCREASE THEIR NUMBERS.

REFERRING TO THE INTRODUCTION OF CONTRACT HIRE PERMITS, HE SAID: +THESE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ANY CAR OWNER WHO WISHES TO HIRE OUT HIS PASSENGER CAR, PROVIDED THAT HE HAS ADEQUATE INSURANCE COVER FOR SUCH USE AND THAT THE VEHICLE IS MECHANICALLY SOUND. THE USE OF SUCH CARS AS ILLEGAL TAXIS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO HEAVY PENALTIES.+

ON THE ABOLITION OF PUBLIC CARS, HE SAID THAT THESE CARS CLOSELY RESEMBLED AND WERE OFTEN OPERATED AS, ILLEGAL TAXIS, ALTHOUGH IN LAW THEY SHOULD BE HIRED ONLY ON A PRE-ARRANGED CONTRACT.

MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID THAT FULL DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED MEASURES WOULD BE ANNOUNCED VERY SHORTLY.

AT PRESENT, HE ADDED, THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE LAW TO PREVENT TAXI DRIVERS' PRACTICE OF COVERING THE METER FLAG WITH A TOWEL TO INDICATE THAT THEY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN PICKING UP PASSENGERS WHILE RETURNING TO THEIR GARAGES.

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FAILURE TO CARRY A DRIVING LICENCE WHILE DRIVING  
NOW A FIXED PENALTY OFFENCE

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THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN HOBLEY, TODAY ASSURED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE OFFENCE OF FAILING TO CARRY A DRIVING LICENCE WHEN DRIVING WOULD NORMALLY BE DEALT WITH BY A DEMAND FOR PAYMENT OF THE FIXED PENALTY AND NOT BY PROSECUTION.

+PROSECUTIONS WILL BE INSTITUTED ONLY IN THE CASE OF DRIVERS WHO PERSISTENTLY FAIL TO CARRY THEIR DRIVING LICENCES AND THEN ONLY ON THE AUTHORITY OF A POLICE OFFICER OF THE RANK OF SUPERINTENDENT,+ HE SAID.

HE WAS REPLYING TO THE HON. JAMES WU DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS (ROAD TRAFFIC) BILL 1976.

MR. HOBLEY SAID HE RECOGNISED THE CONCERN WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED BY DRIVERS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HEAVY FINES MIGHT BE IMPOSED IN THE EVENT OF PROSECUTION.

+ACCORDINGLY I THINK IT APPROPRIATE TO EMPHASIZE, FIRSTLY, THAT THE MONETARY PENALTIES NOW PROPOSED ARE MAXIMUM PENALTIES AND, SECONDLY, THAT THE COURTS IN DEALING WITH INDIVIDUAL OFFENDERS MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF THEIR PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES, INCLUDING THEIR MEANS, IN DECIDING THE LEVEL OF FINE TO BE IMPOSED IN A PARTICULAR CASE,+ HE ADDED.

EARLIER, MR. WU, SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, HAD ASKED FOR AN ASSURANCE THAT THE PROSECUTION FOR SUCH AN OFFENCE IN COURT WOULD ONLY BE INSTITUTED UNDER VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THAT THE DECISION TO INSTITUTE COURT PROCEEDINGS FOR THIS OFFENCE SHOULD ONLY BE MADE BY A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE POLICE FORCE OR THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS, THROUGH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR UNIONS, HAD EXPRESSED TO THE UNOFFICIALS THEIR CONCERN OVER THE HEAVY FINES WHICH MIGHT BE IMPOSED UPON CONVICTION OF THIS PARTICULAR OFFENCE.

MR. WU SAID THE DRIVERS FELT THAT THE THREAT OF A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF \$1,000 OR \$2,000 WAS UNDULY SEVERE FOR PERSONS WHO WERE EARNING THEIR LIVING BY DRIVING BECAUSE THIS OFFENCE COULD EASILY ARISE THROUGH ABSENT-MINDEDNESS OR OVERSIGHT, AGGRAVATED BY THE NEED TO CHANGE CLOTHING FREQUENTLY IN SUMMER AND BY THE OCCURRENCE OF A DRIVING LICENCE BEING MISPLACED, DROPPED OR STOLEN.

+MY UNOFFICIAL COLLEAGUES ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE PLEA BUT ARE AWARE THAT THE INCLUSION OF THIS NEW OFFENCE IS CRUCIAL TO THE WORKING OF THE WHOLE SCHEME OF FIXED PENALTIES UNDER THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

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HOWEVER, HE ADDED, +IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE \$50 FIXED PENALTY FOR THIS OFFENCE IS GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE AND ADEQUATE IN DETERRENT EFFECT.+

MR. WU SAID THAT THE UNOFFICIALS WERE NOW PREPARING TO PRESENT SOME OF THE POINTS COLLECTED DURING THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WITH A VIEW TO AVOIDING AMBIGUITIES AND ABUSE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIXED PENALTY LAWS.

HE STRESSED THAT IN THE HIGHLY CONGESTED CONDITIONS OF HONG KONG, PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE LAWS WERE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE FOR SMOOTH TRAFFIC FLOW WITH MINIMUM OBSTRUCTION, HAZARDS AND DANGER TO ALL ROAD USERS, AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF PEDESTRIANS, PASSENGERS, AND PROFESSIONAL AS WELL AS NON-PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS.

+APPROPRIATE PENALTIES FOR OFFENDERS IMPOSED IN A FAIR AND JUST MANNER WOULD ENSURE SATISFACTORY ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW, AND THIS DESERVES THE SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION OF ALL CONCERNED,+ HE SAID.

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MAXIMUM LOAN GUARANTEES FOR MTR FURTHER INCREASED  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY APPROVED A MOTION TO FURTHER AMEND THE SCHEDULE TO THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 23, 1975 DEALING WITH LOAN ARRANGEMENTS TO BE GUARANTEED BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ON BEHALF OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION.

IN MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID THAT IN EARLY JULY, THE CORPORATION HAD LET A FURTHER EIGHT ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING CONTRACTS WORTH ALMOST \$700 MILLION.

A FURTHER TWELVE CONTRACTS HAVE STILL TO BE LET AND THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE WHOLE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM REMAINED WITHIN THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE OF \$5,800 MILLION, HE SAID.

THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TODAY SOUGHT + TO COVER THE RELATED BORROWINGS THAT WILL BE MADE BY THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION AS A RESULT OF THE RECENTLY LET CONTRACTS.+

TO THIS END, HE SAID THE MOTION SOUGHT TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM GUARANTEE IN RESPECT OF CERTAIN EXPORT CREDITS AND LOANS, AND TO AUTHORISE HIM TO GRANT ADDITIONAL GUARANTEES IN RESPECT OF LOANS TO FINANCE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS WHICH HAD BEEN LET.

HE PROPOSED TO:

- \* INCREASE THE U.K. EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE FROM 80 MILLION POUNDS STERLING TO 140 MILLION POUNDS STERLING TO COVER THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTS PLACED WITH BRITISH FIRMS,
- \* INCREASE THE GERMAN EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE FROM 41.5 MILLION DEUTSCHE MARKS TO 69.6 MILLION DEUTSCHE MARKS TO COVER THE ONE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACT AWARDED TO A GERMAN FIRM,
- \* INCREASE THE GUARANTEE IN RESPECT OF LOANS ARRANGED BY WARDLEY LIMITED FROM HK\$570 MILLION TO HK\$690 MILLION TO COVER THE RECENTLY AWARDED LOCAL CONTRACTS,
- \* GUARANTEE A LOAN FACILITY OF HK\$72.5 MILLION TO BE ARRANGED BY JARDINE FLEMING LIMITED TO FINANCE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS,
- \* GUARANTEE A LOAN FACILITY OF HK\$15 MILLION TO BE ARRANGED BY KYOWA LIMITED TO FINANCE CONTRACTS PLACED IN JAPAN,
- \* GUARANTEE A LOAN FACILITY OF US\$55 MILLION TO BE ARRANGED BY JARDINE FLEMING LIMITED TO FINANCE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS,
- \* GUARANTEE A US DOLLAR LOAN FACILITY AND HONG KONG DOLLAR LOAN FACILITY OF UP TO US\$17 MILLION OR ITS HONG KONG DOLLARS EQUIVALENT FOR CONTRACTS PLACED IN THE UNITED STATES AND TO

/X GUARANTEE .....

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\* GUARANTEE A STERLING LOAN FACILITY OF 8 MILLION POUNDS TO FINANCE CONTRACTS PLACED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ADDED THAT THE BULK OF THE FINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC CONTRACTS HAD NOW BEEN ARRANGED AND THE CORPORATION WAS NOT AT PRESENT PLANNING FURTHER MEDIUM TERM FOREIGN CURRENCY LOANS.

+HOWEVER, I EXPECT THAT, FROM TIME TO TIME, THE CORPORATION WILL ARRANGE LONGER TERM FINANCE IN HONG KONG DOLLARS AND FOREIGN CURRENCIES IN SUBSTITUTION FOR SOME OF ITS EXISTING SHORTER TERM FACILITIES AND THUS FURTHER AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 23, 1975 WILL BE NECESSARY,+ HE SAID.

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LOANS SCHEME FOR SMALL FACTORIES TO BE DISCONTINUED  
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A LOANS SCHEME, DESIGNED TO HELP SMALL FACTORIES INCREASE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY, IS TO BE DISCONTINUED DUE TO LACK OF RESPONSE FROM INDUSTRIALISTS.

THIS WAS ANNOUNCED IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, MR. BILL DORWARD, WHO SAID THAT BOTH THE LOANS FOR SMALL INDUSTRY COMMITTEE AND THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON THE MATTER.

THE SCHEME, CALLED THE LOANS FOR SMALL INDUSTRY SCHEME, WAS INSTITUTED IN 1972 FOR AN INITIAL TRIAL PERIOD OF THREE YEARS. ITS OBJECTIVE WAS TO ASSIST SMALL INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES, DEFINED ORIGINALLY AS BEING FACTORIES EMPLOYING NOT MORE THAN 200 WORKERS AND HAVING NOT MORE THAN \$600,000 IN PROPRIETORS' FUNDS, TO INCREASE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY BY THE PURCHASE OF MODERN MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT.

MR. DORWARD POINTED OUT THAT DESPITE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY AND TWO MAJOR MODIFICATIONS, INVOLVING AN INCREASE BOTH IN THE LOAN CEILING AND MAXIMUM PROPRIETORS' FUNDS, THE SCHEME HAD BEEN LITTLE USED.

HE ADDED: +DURING THE ORIGINAL THREE YEAR TRIAL PERIOD AND A ONE YEAR EXTENSION, ONLY 10 LOANS HAD BEEN APPROVED, TOTALLING \$1.4 MILLION AGAINST THE PERMISSIBLE COMMITMENT OF \$30 MILLION.+

THE SCHEME WAS EFFECTIVELY A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BANKING SYSTEM. MEDIUM TERM LOANS AT REASONABLE INTEREST RATES WERE MADE THROUGH COMMERCIAL BANKS, AND THESE, MR. DORWARD EXPLAINED, WERE UNDERWRITTEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO THE EXTENT OF 50 PER CENT, SUBJECT TO A MAXIMUM COMMITMENT OF \$30 MILLION.

MR. DORWARD ALSO POINTED OUT THAT FROM THE OUTSET OPINION HAD BEEN DIVIDED ON THE NEED FOR SUCH A SCHEME. THERE WERE THOSE, HE SAID, WHO MAINTAINED THAT SMALL INDUSTRIALISTS WERE SOMETIMES UNABLE TO OBTAIN MEDIUM TERM LOANS DUE TO COLLATERAL SECURITY.

+BANKING OPINION, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS THAT THE EXISTING SYSTEM PROVIDED ADEQUATE FACILITIES. EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THE LATTER VIEW WAS PROBABLY CORRECT,+ MR. DORWARD SAID.

MR. DORWARD ADDED THAT HE HAD BEEN ASSURED BY BANKING CIRCLES THAT ADEQUATE FACILITIES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE TO MEET THE KIND OF NEEDS THE SCHEME WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO SERVE.

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TANNERS BEGIN MOVING  
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OPERATORS OF 15 OF THE MAJOR SHEUNG SHUI TANNERIES TODAY BEGAN REMOVING THEIR MACHINERY AND DEMOLISHING THEIR FACTORIES IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S JULY 31 CLEARANCE DEADLINE.

THE OPERATORS ARE MEMBERS OF THREE OF THE FIVE CONSORTIA WHICH OPERATE 55 TANNERIES IN THE AREA.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION SAID TODAY IT WAS EXPECTED THAT MEMBERS OF OTHER CONSORTIA WOULD ALSO BEGIN THEIR OWN REMOVAL OPERATIONS SOON.

+WE ARE HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE REMAINING OPERATORS REGARDING FINAL DETAILS OF THE REMOVAL FROM SHEUNG SHUI,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

+THEY KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL MOVE IN AND CLEAR THEIR SITES IMMEDIATELY AFTER JULY 31 IF THEY HAD NOT MOVED BY THAT DATE.+

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE OPERATORS WHO BEGAN MOVING TODAY HAD BEEN GIVEN PERMISSION TO TEMPORARILY STORE THEIR MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND STOCK ON THE LAND THEY HAD ALREADY PURCHASED AT THE KWAI CHUNG OFFENSIVE TRADES AREA AS SITES FOR THEIR NEW FACTORIES.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED: +THE TANNERIES OPERATORS HAVE SOME VERY VALUABLE MACHINERY WHICH THEY WANT TO STORE UNDER TEMPORARY STRUCTURES ON THEIR KWAI CHUNG LAND WHILE THEY GET ON WITH BUILDING THEIR NEW FACTORIES.

+WE HAVE GIVEN THEM PERMISSION TO DO SO BECAUSE IT IS OBVIOUSLY BEST FOR ALL CONCERNED IF THE OPERATORS THEMSELVES REMOVED THEIR EQUIPMENT AND DEMOLISHED THEIR STRUCTURES BEFORE THE JULY 31 DEADLINE.+

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SUBVENTIONS FOR WELFARE AGENCIES  
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OF THE \$52 MILLION PROVIDED THIS YEAR FOR SUBVENTIONS TO SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCIES, OVER \$1 MILLION HAS BEEN SET ASIDE TO MEET URGENT APPLICATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS AND FOR UNFORESEEN CONTINGENCIES DURING THE YEAR.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. M.C. MORGAN, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM DR. THE HON. HARRY S.Y. FANG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. MORGAN SAID THE MONEY WAS SET ASIDE ON THE ADVICE OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND IT WAS CONSIDERED THE AMOUNT WOULD BE ADEQUATE TO COPE WITH ANY DIFFICULTIES AGENCIES MIGHT BE FACING.

+BUT IF IT SHOULD PROVE INSUFFICIENT, THE GOVERNMENT IS ALWAYS PREPARED TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE,+ HE SAID.

+THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE HAS ALREADY INDICATED TO VOLUNTARY WELFARE AGENCIES THAT SUPPLEMENTARY SUBVENTIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR THOSE AGENCIES WHICH REQUIRE THEM TO IMPROVE THE SALARIES OF THEIR STAFF IN LINE WITH THE RECENT AWARD TO THE CIVIL SERVICE,+ HE ADDED.

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STEPS TO EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN GARDEN ROAD  
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TWO NEW MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN GARDEN ROAD AND COTTON TREE DRIVE ARE ABOUT TO BE PUT IN HAND, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. D.W. MCDONALD TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. F.W. LI, HE SAID: +THE FIRST OF THESE MEASURES IS THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL DOUBLE-LINE LANE MARKINGS ON COTTON TREE DRIVE BEYOND THE KENNEDY ROAD SLIP-ROAD UP THROUGH GARDEN ROAD TO THE ROUNDABOUT.+

THIS SHOULD PREVENT THE IRRESPONSIBLE LANE-JUMPING WHICH OFTEN CAUSES ACCIDENTS, DELAYS AND FRUSTRATION, MR. MCDONALD SAID.

THE SUCCESS OF THE RECENTLY APPLIED DOUBLE-LINE LANE MARKING ON COTTON TREE DRIVE DOWNHILL OF THE SLIP-ROAD TO KENNEDY ROAD, HE ADDED, JUSTIFIED EXTENDING THE MARKINGS UPHILL.

+THE SECOND MEASURE IS AN INTERIM WIDENING OF ROBINSON ROAD FROM GARDEN ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 100 YARDS WEST OF OLD PEAK ROAD WHICH WILL PROVIDE FOR TWO LANES OF WESTBOUND TRAFFIC AND WILL ALLOW VEHICLES DESTINED FOR OLD PEAK ROAD TO SLIP OUT FROM THE ONGOING TRAFFIC FLOW,+ HE EXPLAINED.

THIS WIDENING, HE SAID, WOULD ALSO HELP TRAFFIC DIVERSIONS DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PERMANENT ROAD IMPROVEMENT WORKS ALONG ROBINSON ROAD BETWEEN OLD PEAK ROAD AND GLENEALY.

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+MAXICAB+ SYSTEM PROVES SUCCESSFUL  
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THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. ALAN ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY THAT THE +MAXICAB+ SYSTEM BY WHICH A LIMITED NUMBER OF PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES OPERATE OVER SPECIAL ROUTES AND AT STANDARD FARES HAD PROVED TO BE A SUCCESS.

HE SAID: +ON THE ADVICE OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND WHEN THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT HAS ADDITIONAL CONTROL STAFF, THIS SYSTEM WILL BE EXPANDED SO THAT MORE PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL IN FACT OPERATE ON STANDARD FARES AND ROUTES.+

MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN ABOUT GOVERNMENT'S PLANS TO STANDARDISE FARES FOR THE VARIOUS ROUTES OF THE PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES SO AS TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF OVERCHARGING.

HE SAID CONSIDERATION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE STANDARDISATION OF FARES FOR PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES BUT THIS WOULD INVOLVE NOT ONLY THE RIGID DESIGNATION OF A COMPLEX NETWORK OF ROUTES BUT ALSO THE IMPOSITION OF CONTROLS ON A SYSTEM WHICH GENERALLY SEEMED TO BENEFIT THE PUBLIC BY BEING FLEXIBLE IN MEETING DEMANDS.

+ALSO IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ENFORCE STANDARD FARES OVER SUCH A WIDE NETWORK OF ROUTES AND UPON SO MANY INDIVIDUAL OPERATORS,+ HE SAID.

MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID THAT THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAD CONSIDERED A SYSTEM OF ZONAL FARES BUT CONCLUDED THAT THIS WOULD NOT WORK, ALSO BECAUSE OF THE ENFORCEMENT DIFFICULTIES.

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR JUNE  
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THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) FOR JUNE 1976 WAS 111, TWO POINTS HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS ROSE BY THREE POINTS. INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SALT WATER FISH, OTHER FISH, FRESH VEGETABLES AND FRESH FRUITS.

THE INDEX FOR HOUSING ADVANCED BY ONE POINT AS A RESULT OF AN INCREASE IN THE RENTS OF PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

INCREASES OF ONE POINT EACH WERE ALSO RECORDED IN THE INDEXES FOR ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO, AND MISCELLANEOUS GOODS.

MOVEMENTS IN THE INDEXES FOR OTHER SECTIONS OF COMMODITY AND SERVICE WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (B) FOR JUNE 1976 WAS 112, TWO POINTS HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS ROSE BY THREE POINTS. INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES FOR SALT WATER FISH, OTHER FISH, FRESH VEGETABLES, FRESH FRUITS AND MEALS BOUGHT AWAY FROM HOME.

THE INDEX FOR HOUSING ADVANCED BY ONE POINT AS A RESULT OF AN INCREASE IN THE RENTS OF PRIVATE DWELLINGS.

INCREASES OF ONE POINT EACH WERE ALSO RECORDED IN THE INDEXES FOR DURABLE GOODS AND SERVICES.

MOVEMENTS IN THE INDEXES FOR OTHER SECTIONS OF COMMODITY WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

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BILLS PASSED  
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THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, WHICH INTRODUCES A NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS REGARDING THE ADMISSION OF SUITABLY QUALIFIED PEOPLE AS SOLICITORS AND BARRISTERS IN HONG KONG, TODAY PASSED THROUGH ITS COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND BECAME LAW.

ONE OF THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN HOBLEY, DURING ITS COMMITTEE STAGE WAS THE POSTPONEMENT TO AUGUST 1, 1976 OF THE DATE AFTER WHICH NEWLY QUALIFIED SOLICITORS AND SOLICITORS QUALIFIED IN BRITAIN WOULD HAVE TO SPEND A PERIOD OF UP TO TWO YEARS AS ASSISTANT SOLICITORS BEFORE THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO PRACTISE ON THEIR OWN OR IN PARTNERSHIP.

THE POSTPONEMENT, MR. HOBLEY SAID, WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE DELAY IN THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL THROUGH COUNCIL.

ALSO PASSING THROUGH ITS COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING TODAY WAS THE MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS (ROAD TRAFFIC) BILL 1976.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1976, WHICH SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN THE LAW DEALING WITH SUCH OFFENCES AS INJECTING WATER INTO MEAT AND EXCESSIVELY NOISY AIR-CONDITIONERS, WAS INTRODUCED INTO COUNCIL FOR FIRST READING.

CHANGES FOR VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICES  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY ADOPTED TWO MOTIONS CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATI FERRY COMPANY'S VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICES -- ONE INTRODUCING REVISED CATEGORIES OF VEHICLES AND CHARGES AND THE OTHER EXEMPTING THE COMPANY FROM PAYING ITS MONTHLY FEE OF \$100,000 FOR RUNNING THE NORTH POINT TO KWUN TONG VEHICULAR SERVICE.

IN MOVING THE FIRST MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. ALAN ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT, SAID THE EXISTING SCALE OF CHARGES FOR VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICES WAS BASED ON A CLASSIFICATION OF VEHICLES WHICH IN SOME CASES ONLY VAGUELY MATCHED THE VEHICLES USING THE SERVICE.

THERE IS, FOR EXAMPLE, NO MENTION OF LIGHT BUSES AND OMNIBUSES, HE SAID.

+TO REMOVE DOUBTS AS TO THE CATEGORY OF ANY PARTICULAR VEHICLE, IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE CLASSIFICATION SHOULD ACCORD WITH THE CLASSIFICATION USED IN ROAD TRAFFIC LEGISLATION,+ HE SAID.

ALSO, A DISTINCTION WILL BE MADE BETWEEN GOODS VEHICLES UNDER 100 HUNDREDWEIGHT AND THOSE OVER 100 HUNDREDWEIGHT, AND NEW CHARGES WILL BE LEVIED ON THOSE EXCEEDING 100 HUNDREDWEIGHT AND LONG VEHICLES EXCEEDING 36 FEET IN LENGTH.

+AS THESE VEHICLES OCCUPY MORE SPACE THAN ORDINARY GOODS VEHICLES AND REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STAFF TO CONTROL THEIR LOADING AND UNLOADING, IT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE THAT THEY SHOULD ATTRACT HIGHER CHARGES,+ MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT ADDED.

HE FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT IN THE REVISED SCALE OF CHARGES, THE EXISTING CHARGES LEVIED ON PRIVATE CARS, MOTORCYCLES, LIGHT BUSES, OMNIBUSES AND ORDINARY GOODS VEHICLES WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED.

IN MOVING ANOTHER MOTION WHICH SOUGHT TO WAIVE THE MONTHLY FEE PAYABLE BY THE COMPANY FOR THE SERVICE BETWEEN NORTH POINT AND KWUN TONG, MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT POINTED OUT THAT THE COMPANY WAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO OPERATE THIS ROUTE IN AUGUST 1972 WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE NORTH POINT TO KOWLOON CITY VEHICULAR SERVICE WOULD HAVE TO BE SUSPENDED TO AVOID DUPLICATING THE ROUTE SERVED BY THE CROSS-HARBOUR TUNNEL.

THE TERMS OF THE NEW SERVICE INCLUDED THE NORMAL ROYALTY OF 25 PER CENT OF THE NET PROFIT, AND A MONTHLY FEE OF \$100,000 WHICH WAS WAIVED FOR THE FIRST TWO YEARS TO GIVE THE SERVICE TIME TO SETTLE DOWN. THE COMPANY WAS ALSO GIVEN THE RIGHT TO APPLY FOR A TERMINATION OF THE SERVICE IF IT PROVED TO BE UNPROFITABLE, HE ADDED.

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THE NORTH POINT TO KWUN TONG VEHICULAR SERVICE STARTED OPERATION ON JULY 1, 1974 AND THE MONTHLY FEE OF \$100,000 BECAME PAYABLE FROM JULY 1, 1976.

IN 1975, THE SERVICE SUSTAINED A LOSS OF \$82,500 BUT THE COMPANY HAD INDICATED TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONTINUE OPERATING IT FOR THE TIME BEING IN THE INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD EXEMPT IT FROM PAYING THE MONTHLY FEE OF \$100,000 FROM JULY 1, 1976, MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID.

+THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT, IF THE MONTHLY FEE WERE TO BE ENFORCED ON THIS SERVICE, THE COMPANY WOULD RESPOND BY APPLYING FOR A TERMINATION OF THE SERVICE,+ MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID.

THIS, HE ADDED, WOULD RESULT IN MOST VEHICLES DIVERTING TO THE CROSS-HARBOUR TUNNEL, ADDING TO THE CONGESTION OF THE ROAD SYSTEMS AT BOTH ENDS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE COMMUNITY WOULD ALSO LOSE A USEFUL ADJUNCT TO THE CROSS-HARBOUR VEHICULAR FACILITIES AND THE PROSPECTIVE FEE WOULD BE LOST TO GENERAL REVENUE.

+IT IS THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT THE MONTHLY FEE SHOULD BE WAIVED IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THIS VEHICULAR SERVICE IS MAINTAINED,+ HE SAID, +THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUPPORTS THE PROPOSED EXEMPTION OF THE MONTHLY FEE.+

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1976

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COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE  
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COUNSELLING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IS ALREADY AVAILABLE AT ALL 13 DISTRICT FAMILY SERVICES OFFICES AND CENTRES OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. M.C. MORGAN, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, HE SAID: +IN ADDITION, VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ARE OPERATING AN EXPERIMENTAL YOUTH COUNSELLING PROJECT TO PROVIDE IN-DEPTH COUNSELLING TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND FOUR PILOT YOUTH GUIDANCE SCHEMES ON A DISTRICT BASIS.

+THESE SCHEMES AIM AT SEEKING OUT AND HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 11 AND 15 YEARS WHO ARE SCHOOL DROP-OUTS OR POTENTIAL DROP-OUTS OR WHO HAVE BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS.+

MR. MORGAN SAID THE FORMER PROJECT WAS ALREADY UNDER REVIEW AND THE LATTER SCHEMES WILL BE EVALUATED AT THE END OF THIS YEAR.

EXPERIENCE GAINED, HE ADDED, SHOULD BE INVALUABLE IN DETERMINING IN WHAT DIRECTION SUCH SERVICES SHOULD DEVELOP.

HE POINTED OUT THAT COUNSELLING WAS ALSO AVAILABLE ON A LIMITED BASIS TO STUDENTS THROUGH SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK.

+IT IS THE INTENTION TO EXPAND THESE SERVICES AS RESOURCES PERMIT,+ HE CONCLUDED.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1976

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WATER SUPPLY TO KAT O  
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THE PRESSURE AND THE QUALITY OF THE KAT O WATER SUPPLY SHOULD BE SATISFACTORY WHEN THE NECESSARY REPAIRS NOW BEING CARRIED OUT ARE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS TOLD TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. OSWALD CHEUNG, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID THE VILLAGE RECEIVED ITS WATER FROM A DAM ON THE MAINLAND THROUGH AN UNDERSEA PIPELINE.

HE SAID COMPLAINTS WERE RECEIVED EARLIER THIS YEAR FROM THE VILLAGERS THAT THE WATER WAS DISCOLOURED AND THAT THE PRESSURE WAS LOW.

+TESTS CARRIED OUT BY THE WATERWORKS OFFICE SHOWED THAT WHILE THERE WAS SOME RUST PRESENT, THE WATER WAS SUITABLE FOR DRINKING PROVIDED IT WAS BOILED.+

THE LOW PRESSURE, HE ADDED, WAS DUE TO BLOCKAGE AT THE INTAKE, SILTING AND INCRUSTATION OF THE PIPELINE AS WELL AS A LARGE NUMBER OF LEAKS.

REPLYING TO ANOTHER QUESTION FROM MR. CHEUNG, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES SAID AN APPLICATION FROM THE TIN HAU TEMPLE MANAGEMENT BOARD AT KAT O FOR A GRANT TOWARDS THE COST OF PURCHASING A NEW VESSEL FOR THE PRIVATELY RUN LOCAL FERRY BETWEEN KAT O AND SHA TAU KOK WAS CONSIDERED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECENTLY.

+THE COMMITTEE WAS UNABLE TO RECOMMEND SUCH A GRANT SINCE THE SERVICE DOES MAKE A CONSIDERABLE PROFIT, WHICH IS APPLIED TO FINANCE THE CELEBRATION OF RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS, AND NOT FOR SOCIAL WELFARE PURPOSES,+ MR. AKERS-JONES SAID.

HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE BOARD WAS ABLE TO RAISE THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM ITS OWN RESOURCES, AND THAT THE NEW FERRY WAS NOW IN SERVICE.

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AREAS UNDER FLYOVERS USUALLY UNSUITABLE FOR RECREATIONAL USE  
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THE AREAS UNDER FLYOVERS ARE USUALLY QUITE UNSUITABLE FOR RECREATIONAL USE BECAUSE OF THEIR SHAPE OR HEADROOM AND LACK OF SAFE OR EASY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. ALAN ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. ROGER LOBO, HE ADDED THAT AT HEAVILY TRAFFICKED AND CONFINED INTERCHANGES, THE TRAFFIC FUMES AND DUST PROVIDED A POOR ENVIRONMENT FOR RECREATION.

+HOWEVER, WHERE REASONABLY SUITABLE AREAS CAN BE FOUND UNDER FLYOVERS, THESE ARE FENCED OFF AS GARDENS AND AMENITY AREAS AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR INFORMAL RECREATIONAL PURPOSES,+ MR. ARMSTRONG-WRIGHT SAID.

+FOR EXAMPLE, THE AREAS UNDER THE WANCHAI AND HUNG HOM FLYOVERS AT THE CROSS-HARBOUR TUNNEL ENTRANCES AND THE AREA UNDER THE KOWLOON CITY INTERCHANGE HAVE BEEN TREATED IN THIS WAY,+ HE ADDED.

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CHINESE CLASSES FOR HK CHINESE IN U.K.  
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THIRTEEN CHINESE CLASSES OF VARYING SIZE ARE BEING ORGANISED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE.

THIS WAS STATED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. COLVYN HAYE, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. ALEX WU.

IN ADDITION, MR. HAYE CONTINUED, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF OTHER CLASSES ORGANISED BY CHINA-ORIENTED GROUPS.

+THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE HAS RESPONDED TO ALL REQUESTS IT HAS RECEIVED FOR ASSISTANCE EITHER BY DONATION OF TEXT BOOKS OR BY FINANCIAL GRANTS,+ HE SAID.

+THE POLICY HAS BEEN TO DEVELOP THIS SERVICE GRADUALLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARTICULAR LOCAL NEEDS, BEARING IN MIND THE OVER-RIDING DESIRABILITY OF ENCOURAGING THE CHINESE COMMUNITY TO INTEGRATE INSTEAD OF EMPHASISING ITS SEPARATE IDENTITY,+ HE ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1976

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SOCIAL STUDIES EXHIBITION OPENS

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THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. COLVYN HAYE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CONGRATULATED THE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS ON THEIR INITIATIVE, INDUSTRY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS FOR THE SUBJECT AT FORM I LEVEL.

+TO ME,+ HE SAID, +THE AIM OF SOCIAL STUDIES IS HIGHLY COMMENDABLE - TO MAKE CHILDREN AWARE OF THEMSELVES AND OF THE SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY LIVE, TO GIVE THEM AN EDUCATION THAT IS MORE RELEVANT AND INTERESTING, TO ENABLE THEM NOT ONLY TO HAVE A MORE REALISTIC KNOWLEDGE OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR HERITAGE BUT ALSO TO SEE THE PART THEY CAN PLAY IN THE RAPIDLY CHANGING SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY LIVE.+

MR. HAYE WAS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE SOCIAL STUDIES EXHIBITION PREPARED BY THE 15 MONITORED SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS.

HE NOTED THAT THE TEACHERS HAD FORMED THEIR OWN TEACHERS' WORKING GROUP FOR JUNIOR SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES AND WERE NOW STAGING AN EXHIBITION OF THEIR OWN PERSONAL PROJECTS, THE PRODUCTION OF CURRICULUM PACKAGES ON INDIVIDUAL TOPICS IN THE FORM I SYLLABUS.

+THIS, TO ME AS DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IS MOST SATISFYING - THE FACT THAT TEACHERS ARE INVOLVED IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN SUCH A REALISTIC AND PRACTICAL WAY,+ MR. HAYE SAID.

HE ASSURED THE TEACHERS THAT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WAS KEEN TO CO-OPERATE WITH THEM IN EVERY WAY THROUGH THE TEAMS OF INSPECTORS.

IT WAS ALSO THE INTENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT TO USE THE MEDIUM OF TELEVISION FROM THIS SEPTEMBER ONWARDS TO PROMOTE AN EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES AND OTHER SUBJECTS IN THE COMMON CORE CURRICULUM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS AT THE JUNIOR SECONDARY LEVEL, HE ADDED.

MR. HAYE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE EFFORTS AND SUCCESS OF THE 15 MONITORED SCHOOLS WOULD ATTRACT OTHER TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS TO ADOPT THE NEW PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS IN SOCIAL STUDIES.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1976

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WATER CUT  
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WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN TSIM SHA TSUI, KOWLOON AND IN CENTRAL ON HONG KONG ISLAND WILL BE TURNED OFF FOR FIVE HOURS FROM 1 A.M. ON FRIDAY (JULY 23) TO ALLOW THE WATERWORKS OFFICE TO CARRY OUT NIGHT LEAKAGE TESTS.

IN TSIM SHA TSUI, THE AREA AFFECTED IS BOUNDED BY NATHAN ROAD, MODY ROAD, CHATHAM ROAD, HART AVENUE AND CARNARVON ROAD, INCLUDING CORNWALL AVENUE AND HANOI ROAD.

IN CENTRAL, THE AREA AFFECTED IS BOUNDED BY ALBANY ROAD, ARBUTHNOT ROAD, CHANCERY LANE, OLD BAILY STREET, ELGIN STREET, HOLLYWOOD ROAD, ABERDEEN STREET, KAU U FONG, WEST SIDE OF GAGE STREET, LYNDHURST TERRACE, POTTINGER STREET, INCLUDING WYNDHAM STREET.

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