



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

MONDAY, MARCH 24, 1975

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VACANT OFFICE SPACE EXCEEDS ONE MILLION SQ. FT.
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A RECORD 1.1 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WAS LYING VACANT AT THE END OF 1974, THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION, MR. RAYMOND FRY, DISCLOSED TODAY.

THIS IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE 0.54 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF VACANT OFFICE SPACE AT THE END OF 1973, AND IS NEARLY TEN TIMES THE AMOUNT VACANT AT THE END OF 1972 WHEN ONLY SOME 125,000 SQUARE FEET LAY UNOCCUPIED.

MOST VACANCIES LAST YEAR OCCURRED IN THE LESS ATTRACTIVE BUILDINGS IN THE CENTRAL AND SHEUNG WAN DISTRICTS OF HONG KONG ISLAND AND IN THE TSIM SHA TSUI AND YAU MA TEI DISTRICTS IN KOWLOON, HE SAID.

THE COMMISSIONER SAID 1974 HAD BEEN A VERY ACTIVE YEAR FOR DEVELOPERS IN THIS PARTICULAR FIELD AND THE AMOUNT COMPLETED DURING THE YEAR WAS JUST OVER ONE MILLION SQUARE FEET. MOST OF THIS WAS CONSTRUCTED IN THE PERIPHERAL AREAS OF CENTRAL DISTRICT AND IN SHEUNG WAN, TSIM SHA TSUI AND YAU MA TEI. HOWEVER, THE AMOUNT COMPLETED WAS LESS THAN THE RECORD OF 1.33 MILLION SQUARE FEET COMPLETED DURING 1973.

COMMENTING ON FUTURE PROJECTS, MR. FRY SAID THAT IF ALL OFFICE BUILDINGS PLANNED FOR 1975 AND 1976 ARE COMPLETED, AN ADDITIONAL 3.2 MILLION SQUARE FEET WILL BE PROVIDED IN 1975 AND A FURTHER 3.8 MILLION SQUARE FEET IN 1976.

HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, AND A LIKELY FALL-OFF IN DEMAND FOR OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, IT APPEARS PROBABLE THAT COMPLETION OF SOME PROJECTS WILL BE DEFERRED, AS THIS AMOUNT OF ACCOMMODATION, TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE 1.1 MILLION SQUARE FEET VACANT AT THE END OF 1974, IS CONSIDERABLY IN EXCESS OF THE AVERAGE AMOUNT TAKEN UP DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS, HE ADDED.

OFFICE RENTALS CONTINUED ON AN UPWARD TREND OVER 1974 BUT, WITH MORE COMING ON TO THE MARKET, TENANTS NOW HAVE A WIDER CHOICE, AND THE VERY NOTICEABLE DOWNTURN IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1974 WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE, HE SAID.

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PUBLIC HOUSING FOR LOWER-PAID CIVIL SERVANTS
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UP TO 1,500 FLATS IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES ARE TO BE RESERVED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY EACH YEAR FOR LOWER-PAID LOCAL CIVIL SERVANTS.

THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF A SCHEME WHICH WAS INTRODUCED IN THE EARLY 60'S TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR JUNIOR CIVIL SERVANTS. THE NEW ALLOCATION REPRESENTS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PREVIOUS ONE.

A CIRCULAR JUST ISSUED BY THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH SETS OUT THE ELIGIBILITY RULES AND ALSO CALLS APPLICATIONS FOR 350 FLATS AT OI MAN ESTATE, 650 FLATS AT LEK YUEN ESTATE, 200 AT LEI MUK SHUE AND 300 FLATS AT KWAI SHING ESTATE.

SERVING OFFICERS WILL HAVE TO FULFIL THE SAME REQUIREMENTS, AS FAR AS TOTAL MAXIMUM HOUSEHOLD INCOME LIMITS ARE CONCERNED, AS ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC APPLYING FOR PUBLIC HOUSING.

THE REQUIREMENTS WERE RECENTLY AMENDED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO RAISE THE ELIGIBILITY LIMIT TO FAMILIES EARNING A MAXIMUM OF \$2,200 A MONTH.

THE CIRCULAR SAYS THAT THE ALLOCATION OF FLATS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED OR ALL THE FLATS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED .

+FLATS REMAINING UNALLOCATED FROM THE 1975 QUOTA WILL REVERT TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY POOL FOR ALLOCATION TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC,+ THE CIRCULAR NOTES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE SAID TODAY THAT THE NEW ALLOCATION SHOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR MORE LOWER-PAID LOCAL CIVIL SERVANTS TO RECEIVE PUBLIC HOUSING THAN IN THE PAST.

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PRESENTATION OF INSIGNIA

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FIFTY-EIGHT LOCAL RESIDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN DECORATED BY THE QUEEN WILL RECEIVE THEIR AWARDS FROM THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, AT A CEREMONY IN GOVERNMENT HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY (MARCH 26).

THE INSIGNIA TO BE PRESENTED INCLUDE ONE CMG, TWO CBE'S, FIVE OBE'S, ONE ISO AND SEVEN MBE'S.

THE RECIPIENTS HAVE BEEN DECORATED EITHER IN THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS OR THE NEW YEAR HONOURS.

SPECIAL PARKING ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR GUESTS ATTENDING THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY.

CARS BEARING 'G.H.' LABELS MAY ENTER BY THE MAIN GATE OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND PARK IN THE FORECOURT OR TENNIS COURTS AS DIRECTED BY THE POLICE, OR IF CHAUFFEUR DRIVEN, RETURN AT 11.50 A.M.

CARS BEARING BLUE LABELS MUST LEAVE BY THE EAST GATE AND MAY PARK AT UPPER AND LOWER ALBERT ROADS, THE SLIP ROAD TO THE SOUTH OF THE UNITED STATES CONSULATE BUILDING AND AT THE METERED CAR PARK BETWEEN KENNEDY ROAD AND GARDEN ROAD.

ALL VEHICLES PARKED INSIDE GOVERNMENT HOUSE HAVE TO LEAVE BY THE EAST GATE AFTER THE CEREMONY AND OTHER GUESTS ARE REQUESTED TO WALK TO THEIR CARS.

TO FACILITATE THESE ARRANGEMENTS, METERED PARKING SPACES IN UPPER AND LOWER ALBERT ROADS, AND THE METERED CAR PARK BETWEEN KENNEDY ROAD AND GARDEN ROAD WILL BE SUSPENDED BETWEEN 9.30 A.M. AND 1 P.M.

NOTE TO EDITORS: COPIES OF A LIST OF THE RECIPIENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION FROM THE PRESS ROOM, G.I.S., 6TH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, AT 11.30 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY.

ONLY PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH SPECIAL PASSES WILL BE ADMITTED TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE. THEY SHOULD MEET G.I.S. OFFICERS IN THE GUARD ROOM OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE NOT LATER THAN 11 A.M.

NEWSPAPERS NOT RECEIVING PASSES WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SUPPLY OF PRINTS IN THE ORDINARY WAY WITH GOLDEN STUDIO, AT 527, HENNESSY ROAD, TELEPHONE NO. 5-777940.

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RATES IN GROUP 'A' ESTATES
TO GO UP FROM MAY 1

FAMILIES LIVING IN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S TWENTY NINE GROUP +A+ ESTATES WILL HAVE TO PAY A FEW DOLLARS MORE FROM MAY 1 TO MEET THE TWO PER CENT RATES INCREASE ANNOUNCED EARLIER BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN HIS BUDGET PROPOSAL.

THIS ADJUSTMENT WILL NOT IMMEDIATELY AFFECT THE 195,000 FAMILIES IN GROUP +B+ ESTATES AS THE GOVERNMENT HAD AGREED TO REIMBURSE THE AUTHORITY THE COST OF INCREASED RATES ON THESE ESTATES UNTIL MARCH 31, 1976.

IN A FEW EXCEPTIONAL CASES, MOST OF THE 96,000 FAMILIES LIVING IN GROUP +A+ ESTATES WILL HAVE ONLY TO PAY AN EXTRA \$2 TO \$7 PER MONTH.

FOR THE MAJORITY OF SHOP TENANTS, THE INCREASE WILL RANGE FROM \$15 TO \$50. A FEW WILL HAVE TO PAY OVER \$200.

THE ADJUSTMENT SHOULD TAKE EFFECT ON APRIL 1, BUT IN ORDER TO GIVE REASONABLE NOTICE TO THE TENANTS, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAS DECIDED TO BEAR THE FIRST MONTH'S INCREASE, AMOUNTING TO OVER \$300,000.

GROUP +A+ TENANTS HAVE BEEN INDIVIDUALLY INFORMED OF THE AMOUNT OF INCREASE THEY WILL HAVE TO PAY.

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WEEKLY WATER SITUATION REPORT

THE TOTAL WATER STORAGE IN ALL RESERVOIRS AS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 46,891 MILLION GALLONS, REPRESENTING 69.7 PER CENT OF THE FULL CAPACITY OF 67,300 MILLION GALLONS. AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR THERE WERE 41,005 MILLION GALLONS.

THIS MORNING'S STORAGE AT PLOVER COVE WAS 36,050 MILLION GALLONS, COMPARED WITH 32,965 MILLION GALLONS ON THE SAME DAY LAST YEAR. PLOVER COVE'S PRESENT STORAGE REPRESENTS 71.4 PER CENT OF ITS FULL CAPACITY OF 50,500 MILLION GALLONS.

A TOTAL OF 2 MM (0.08 IN) OF RAINFALL WAS RECORDED AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS ENDING AT 9 AM TODAY. TOTAL RAINFALL RECORDED SO FAR THIS YEAR IS 130.4 MM (5.13 IN).

THE MEAN AVERAGE RAINFALL SINCE JANUARY STANDS AT 122.7 MM (4.83 IN).

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+KNOW OUR KWUN TONG+ EXHIBITION
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THIRTEEN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWUN TONG WILL HOLD A +KNOW OUR KWUN TONG+ EXHIBITION AT KEI CHI MIDDLE SCHOOL FROM MARCH 29 TO APRIL 2 TO CULTIVATE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG RESIDENTS AND WORKERS OF THEIR DISTRICT.

THE EXHIBITION WILL FEATURE THE HISTORICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TOWN IN THE LAST 20 YEARS.

STUDENTS OF THE 13 SCHOOLS WILL DISPLAY GRAPHS AND MODELS SHOWING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF KWUN TONG INCLUDING INDUSTRIES, POPULATION, HOUSING, EDUCATION AND POLLUTION.

THIS PROJECT, THE FIRST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF KWUN TONG, WAS FIRST INITIATED BY THE KWUN TONG CITY DISTRICT OFFICE AND COMMUNITY AND YOUTH OFFICE.

ITS OBJECTIVES ARE TO PROJECT A STRONGER SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, PROMOTE STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP AND CULTIVATE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES.

THE EXHIBITION WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FROM 10 AM TO 5 PM DAILY.

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EASTER POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS
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THERE WILL ONLY BE LIMITED POSTAL SERVICES DURING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS LATER THIS WEEK.

ON GOOD FRIDAY (MARCH 28) ALL POST OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED AND THERE WILL BE NO DELIVERY OF MAIL. ON SATURDAY AND EASTER MONDAY THERE WILL BE ONE MAIL DELIVERY AND A NUMBER OF POST OFFICES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HARBOUR WILL OPEN FROM 9 AM TO 12 NOON.

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WONG TAI SIN C.D.O. SPRING RECEPTION
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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE WONG TAI SIN CITY DISTRICT OFFICE WILL HOLD ITS ANNUAL SPRING RECEPTION TOMORROW (TUESDAY) AFTERNOON IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF NG WAH COLLEGE, CHOI HUNG ROAD, SAN PO KONG, KOWLOON.

MORE THAN 600 COMMUNITY LEADERS, REPRESENTATIVES OF AREA COMMITTEES, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES, KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS, VOLUNTARY BODIES AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT WILL ATTEND.

DURING THE OCCASION, 10 RESIDENTS OF WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT WILL BE PRESENTED WITH CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY WELFARE PROJECTS. PRIZES WILL ALSO BE AWARDED TO WINNERS OF 'KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN' COMPETITIONS.

THE PRESENTATIONS WILL BE MADE BY MR. I.R. STRACHAN, WONG TAI SIN CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, AND BY MR. CHRISTOPHER WONG, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND A REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER TO COVER THE RECEPTION WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 4.30 PM.

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TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CAUSEWAY BAY CAR PARK
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MOTORISTS ARE ADVISED THAT THE METERED CAR PARK NEXT TO THE FORMER ROXY THEATRE SITE AT YEE WOO STREET IN CAUSEWAY BAY WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED FOR THREE DAYS NEXT WEEK TO FACILITATE THE READJUSTMENT OF THE PARKING LAYOUT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RUN-IN AT THE CAR PARK.

THE CAR PARK WILL BE CLOSED FROM 8 A.M. NEXT TUESDAY (MARCH 25) UNTIL 8 A.M. ON FRIDAY (MARCH 28).

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FIRE PREVENTION LEAFLETS

THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS NOW PRODUCED A TOTAL OF TEN BI-LINGUAL PAMPHLETS ON THE SUBJECT OF FIRE PREVENTION. THE LATEST ONE IS ON ELECTRICAL SAFETY.

THE PAMPHLETS COVER A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, INCLUDING FIRE PRECAUTIONS IN THE ARTIFICIAL PEARL INDUSTRY, DANGEROUS GOODS, ORGANIC BLOWING AGENTS, HINTS ON THE SAFE USE OF KEROSENE AND GAS APPLIANCES, CARELESS SMOKING, HOME FIRE PREVENTION, PLASTICS, AND PRECAUTIONS WHEN WORKING IN CONFINED SPACES.

UNDER PREPARATION AT PRESENT IS A PAMPHLET COVERING FIRE EXTINGUISHERS WHICH IS INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR CONTRACTORS LICENSED TO INSTALL FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT.

A FIRE SERVICES SPOKESMAN SAID STOCKS OF THE PAMPHLETS ARE HELD AT THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU IN ASIAN HOUSE, 11TH FLOOR, AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOMED TO COLLECT COPIES THERE.

THE MORE THE PUBLIC KNOWS ABOUT HOW TO PREVENT FIRE, THE LESS FIRES THERE WILL BE, HE SAID.

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TRAFFIC CHANGE

MOTORISTS ARE ADVISED THAT THE UNNAMED STREET BEHIND HOUSE NOS. 19-45, WONG CHUK HANG ROAD, WILL BE ROUTED ONE-WAY FOR EASTBOUND TRAFFIC AS FROM 10 AM ON WEDNESDAY (MARCH 26).

TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE POSTED TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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SWEARING-IN OF CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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THE SEVENTH TERM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WONG TAI SIN COMMUNITY CENTRE'S CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL BE SWORN IN AT A CEREMONY AT THE WONG TAI SIN COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 5 P.M. TOMORROW (TUESDAY).

MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH, UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, WILL PRESIDE AT THE CEREMONY. ALSO PRESENT WILL BE MRS. HENRIETTA CHEN, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S COMMUNITY AND YOUTH OFFICER FOR WONG TAI SIN, AND MR. T.C. LEE, SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TWO ADVISORS TO THE COMMITTEE.

THE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL COMMITTEE WAS FORMED IN NOVEMBER 1968 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE WARDEN OF THE WONG TAI SIN COMMUNITY CENTRE WHICH IS THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S OLDEST COMMUNITY CENTRE.

+THE AIMS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE THREEFOLD,+ EXPLAINED MRS. CHEN. +THESE ARE TO GENERATE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE DISTRICT= TO LIAISE WITH SCHOOLS AND AROUSE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PROMOTING THE CULTURAL STANDARDS OF THE DISTRICT AND TO ORGANISE MORE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMMES FOR STUDENTS.+

SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IT HAS OVER THE YEARS ORGANISED VARIOUS TYPES OF PROGRAMMES AND THE THEME OF THE WORKING SCHEDULE THIS YEAR IS +COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT+.

SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES IT INTENDS TO ORGANISE INCLUDE COMPILING A RESOURCE BOOKLET CONTAINING DETAILS OF ALL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE AREA AND METHODS OF APPROACH TO MAKE USE OF THEM= A SURVEY OF THE NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES AVAILABLE IN WONG TAI SIN FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS= SEMINARS FOR HEADMASTERS, AS WELL AS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

ON THE RECREATION SIDE, IT WILL ORGANISE A CHILDREN'S NIGHT FOR TEN THOUSAND CHILDREN AT MORSE PARK AND VARIOUS CONTESTS ON CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY, PAINTING, SINGING, ART DESIGN AND MECHANICAL MODELS.

AT PRESENT SOME 83 SCHOOLS ARE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WHOSE EXECUTIVE COMPRISES 15 MEMBERS ELECTED ANNUALLY.

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APART FROM MRS. CHEN AND MR. LEE, THERE ARE TWO OTHER ADVISORS TO THE COMMITTEE, MR. LI YIU-BOR, AND MR. IAN STRACHAN, THE C.D.O. FOR WONG TAI SIN.

+THE COMMITTEE'S ACTIVITIES ARE GEARED TO STIMULATING YOUTH AND CHILDREN INTO TAKING MORE INTEREST IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SO AS TO INSPIRE IN THEM A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT FROM WHICH THEY WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO OFFER THEIR SERVICES TO BETTER THE SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY FORM A PART,+ MRS. CHEN SAID.

NOTE TO EDITORS : YOUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CEREMONY TOMORROW.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL
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THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. KENNETH TOPLEY, HELD A MEETING TODAY WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NINE ASSOCIATIONS AND UNIONS TO DISCUSS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE STAFF SIDE REPRESENTATION ON THE DEPARTMENTAL STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL.

DURING THE MEETING A CONSTITUTION FOR THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL WAS DISCUSSED AND THE PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONDUCTING THE COUNCIL'S BUSINESS WERE AGREED.

THE COUNCIL WAS RE-ACTIVATED ON A REGULAR AND PERMANENT BASIS FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WITH AND CO-OPERATION BY ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

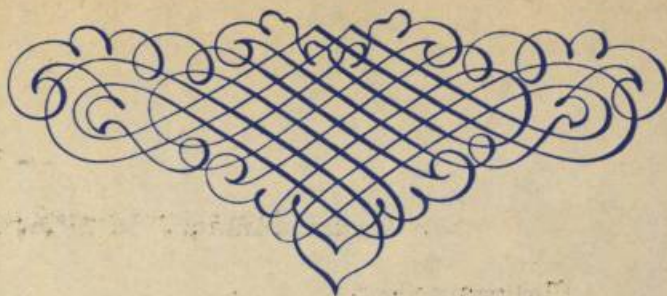
ITS GENERAL OBJECTS ARE TO SECURE THE GREATEST MEASURE OF CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION, IN ITS CAPACITY AS EMPLOYER, AND THE GENERAL BODY OF THE STAFF IN MATTERS AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT, WITH A VIEW TO INCREASING EFFICIENCY IN THE DEPARTMENT AND TO ENSURE THAT THE WELL-BEING OF THOSE EMPLOYED WILL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW.

OTHER OBJECTS OF THE COUNCIL ARE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF AND GENERALLY TO BRING TOGETHER THE EXPERIENCE AND DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEWS IN RESPECT OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.

THE ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED AT TODAY'S MEETING ARE THE HONG KONG CHINESE CIVIL SERVANTS' ASSOCIATION, THE ASSOCIATION OF EXPATRIATE CIVIL SERVANTS OF HONG KONG, THE SENIOR NON-EXPATRIATE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION, THE HONG KONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, THE MORRISON HILL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, THE ASSOCIATION OF LECTURERS AT COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL NON-GRADUATE TEACHERS' UNION, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS HEADS' ASSOCIATION AND THE WORKING PARTY OF GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION.

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ROYAL VISIT PRESS RELEASE



Monday, March 24, 1975

SECOND VISIT TO HONG KONG BY DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Career Of Long Journeys To Remote Parts Of The World

The Duke of Edinburgh, unlike the Queen, will be paying a second visit to Hong Kong when the Royal couple arrive in May. He was here for a few days in 1959.

The occasion was a tour of India, Pakistan, and British Far Eastern and Pacific territories, planned to coincide with an Indian Science Congress in New Delhi.

The Duke attended the Congress as the representative of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

The Duke's party for the visit to Hong Kong included Sir Alexander Grantham, who had been Governor of Hong Kong for ten years and who had some time earlier been succeeded by Sir Robert Black.

As the Royal yacht Britannia entered the harbour from Lyemun pass, Sir Alexander joined the Duke on the deck to point out interesting aspects along the waterfront at Shau Kei Wan, North Point, Wan Chai and Central. The route was thronged by members of the public.

At that time, Shau Kei Wan, North Point, Wan Chai and Central were being redeveloped. The skyline was already changing, but not to the extent that has since taken place, and the Duke, if he recalls the scene, will probably marvel at the transformation.

Besides New Delhi, Karachi and Hong Kong, the Duke also visited on this tour Singapore, Sarawak, Brunei, North Borneo (now Sabah), the Solomon Islands, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Christmas Island, the Bahamas and Bermuda.

/A year

A year earlier, in 1956, the Duke was in Melbourne to open the Olympic Games.

He took the opportunity to visit Commonwealth countries and British island territories. These included the Seychelles, Ceylon, Papua, New Guinea, Malaya, New Zealand, the Chatham Islands, Deception Island, the South Shetland Islands group, the Falkland Islands, Tristan da Cunha, St Helena -- with its memories of Napoleon's exile after Waterloo -- the Ascension Islands, the Gambia, and Gibraltar.

In 1964, after a visit to Nassau, the Duke toured Mexico. He then spent some time on the Galapagos Islands, which became world-famous as the result of Darwin's extensive exploration of their unique fauna and flora. It was from his observations of wildlife in this naturally isolated sanctuary that Darwin conceived his theory of natural selection.

From the Galapagos, the Duke continued onwards to Panama, then Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, St Vincent, Barbados, St Lucia, Dominica, St Kitts, and Montserrat and Antigua.

Since 1950, either with the Queen or by himself in various roles as the Queen's representative, head of an association such as the English-speaking Union of the Commonwealth, in a purely private capacity, or as a serving member of the Royal Navy, the Duke has made 69 visits abroad.

Both 1964 and 1973 are notable years in the Duke's travelling calendar because he was out of Britain during each of these years for eight times.

His 1964 visits included a trip to Greece to attend the funeral of King Paul of the Hellenes, an informal visit to Iceland, a few days at Malta as the Queen's representative at independence celebrations, and a trip to Morocco as a guest of King Hassan.

/In 1973,

In 1973, among other countries visited, he was in Australia in connection with the Australian Conservation Foundation, in Portugal for the 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance, in the Soviet Union as President of the International Equestrian Federation, and in Bulgaria for an Olympic Congress.

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