



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, January 3, 1973

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SECURITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL TO BE FORMED

To Help Curb Undesirable Practices In Exchanges

The Government will establish a Securities Advisory Council and create a post of Commissioner for Securities to help the stock exchanges curb questionable practices.

Announcing this at the Legislative Council this afternoon, the Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, said that the Advisory Council would be set up on an administrative basis, subject to the voting of the necessary funds by the Finance Committee.

The Government's decision, he said, had been taken "to anticipate the enactment of legislation providing for a statutory Securities Council and Commissioner for Securities."

The Advisory Council would consist of seven members, of whom one would be an independent Chairman.

Four would be unofficial members representing various sectors of the business community and the remaining two would be members of the public service, the Commissioner for Securities and the Registrar General.

The appointment of these members, Mr. Haddon-Cave said, was likely to be made by the Governor within the next few days.

The Financial Secretary pointed out that over the last 12 months, both turnover and prices at the four stock exchanges in Hong Kong had risen to new and unprecedented heights.

/"But, perhaps

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"But, perhaps partly as a result of this very high level of activity, various undesirable practices have grown up. These relate for example, to the frequent use of placements of securities on the exchanges instead of public offers, listing procedures, undue influencing of prices and non-recording of transactions.

"None of these practices is in the general interest of the investing public and cannot, therefore, be viewed with equanimity."

In relation to the Companies (Amendment) Bill 1972, he continued, further legislation arising from the recommendations of the Companies Law Revision Committee was now being drafted.

Supervisory Body

One of the Bills involved, the Securities Bill, would cover all aspects of trading securities and would provide for the establishment of a supervisory body, to be called the Securities Council, and for the creation of the post of Commissioner for Securities.

The Securities Council's main concern would be to supervise the implementation of all parts of the Securities Bill.

"This will include the creation of a Federation of Stock Exchanges, the registration of dealers and investment advisers, trading in securities outside the stock exchanges, the prevention of false markets, and the keeping and auditing of accounts.

"The Council will also be empowered to take up with the stock exchanges, underwriters, financial institutions acting as issuing houses and other organisations and persons involved in trading in securities, any matters which, in its view, appear to give rise to concern and which call for authoritative rulings.

/"In addition,

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"In addition, the Council will deal with a range of problems arising from the implementation of other bills which are now being drafted dealing with takeover bids and the regulation of mutual funds and unit trusts which are on sale within Hong Kong."

Mr. Haddon-Cave went on to say that the preparation of the Securities Bill was well in hand but "it is unlikely that the Bill can be finalised before the end of March at the earliest.

"However, in present conditions, it would not be prudent to wait until the enactment of the Bill before taking action to provide some more authoritative guidance and help to those responsible for managing the stock exchanges and other institutions in the field of trading in securities."

Statutory

The Government had thus decided to anticipate the enactment of legislation providing for a statutory Securities Council and Commissioner of Securities by establishing now, on an administrative basis, the Securities Advisory Council and creating the Commissioner's post.

As neither the Advisory Council nor the Commissioner will have any statutory powers until and unless the Securities Bill is enacted, for mal terms of references are not proposed.

But even so, the Financial Secretary said he was convinced that it would give the Adivsory Council considerable influences from the outset since the introduction of statutory powers was envisaged.

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"And I doubt whether anyone concerned will wish to treat its advice lightly. The immediate establishment of a Securities Advisory Council and the appointment of a Commissioner for Securities will mean that useful experience will be acquired and a working organisation created before the Securities Bill is enacted.

"The Securities Advisory Council's successor body, The Securities Council, itself should thus be enabled to be fully effective in the exercise of its powers almost as soon as the Bill is enacted," he added.

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PROBE INTO SEWAGE DISCHARGE INTO H.K. WATERS

Report On Marine Investigations Tabled

Marine investigations into the effects of sewage discharge into Hong Kong waters show that conditions are generally good but that there are some trouble spots.

These trouble spots include the shallow waters off West Kowloon between Lai Chi Kok and Yau Ma Tei and just off the shore of the townships of Sha Tin and Tai Po.

The report on the investigations, tabled in Legislative Council today, was prepared by Messrs J.D. & D.M. Watson, Consulting Engineers, with the help of the Drainage Works Division of the Civil Engineering Office, Public Works Department.

Compiled after a two-year study, the report will assist the Public Works Department in planning future sewage disposal facilities which will not increase the pollution of the sea above tolerable limits.

As a result of the findings, the Public Works Department's views on the form of sewage treatment to be adopted at Castle Peak and Sha Tin New Towns have now been finalised.

A submarine outfall with diffusers discharging into the tidal stream is proposed for Castle Peak while full treatment will be provided in Sha Tin before sewage is discharged into the more sheltered waters of Tide Cove.

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The report is now available to the public from the Government Publications Centre at \$5 per copy.

Meanwhile, the consulting engineers are undertaking a separate detailed investigation to study alternative methods of treating and disposing of sewage from the West Kowloon area and to recommend and implement a solution.

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LEGCO PROCEEDINGS RECORDED

Note to Editors: The proceedings in today's Legislative Council meeting have been recorded. You are welcome to consult the tapes at the Press Room, Government Information Services.

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COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR WAN CHAI

Buildings In Southorn Playground To Be Redeveloped

The Children's Playground Association has formed an ad hoc committee to examine in detail a proposal to redevelop the War Memorial and other buildings in Southorn Playground into a community centre complex.

This was disclosed by the Director of Social Welfare, the Hon. F.K. Li, at the Legislative Council today in reply to a question from Mrs. Ellen Li Shu-pui.

Mrs. Li asked what progress had been made regarding the possibility of redeveloping the playground.

Mr. Li said the President of the Association had proposed the redevelopment scheme to Government last May.

The preliminary plan envisaged "the construction of a high block to provide accommodation for welfare and youth organisations and a low block for a stadium," costing \$10 million and \$13 million respectively.

The scheme would affect the buildings presently occupied by the Family Planning Association, the Violet Peel Polyclinic, a public latrine and bath house.

Both the Medical and Health Department and the Urban Services Department had indicated their willingness to co-operate with the Association, Mr. Li said.

The Government had recently informed the Association of its support in principle of the proposed project, subject to the examination of certain details including the financial arrangements to meet both the capital and recurrent costs.

The Association's ad hoc Committee, Mr. Li added, had met twice to study the proposal in greater detail.

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NO PLANS FOR PERMANENT EXHIBITION SITE

Future Stadium In Hung Hom Will Be Suitable

The Government has no plans at present to provide a permanent exhibition site for trade exhibitions, the Director of Public Works, the Hon. J.J. Robson, said today.

He told the Legislative Council that in view of the acute shortage of land in Hong Kong "it may be very difficult to justify the permanent sterilisation of a large open area for this purpose."

Mr. Robson was replying to a question raised by the Hon. P.C. Woo who wanted to know whether a permanent exhibition site would be made available for trade displays such as the Chinese Manufacturers' Association's annual exhibition.

The Director said he understood that there had already been some discussions with the C.M.A. about such possible sites in the New Territories.

However, the indoor stadium to be built at Hung Hom by 1976 would provide a suitable venue for such exhibitions to be held there at an appropriate fee, he added.

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LAND FOR INDUSTRIAL USE IN N.T.

About 200,000 square feet of land is now available for industrial development in Tuen Muen (Castle Peak) and more may be provided should the need arise.

Announcing details of available industrial land in the New Territories, the District Commissioner, New Territories, the Hon. D.C. Bray, told the Legislative Council today that a tentative sales programme had been drawn up for a six-month period from April 1 to September 30 this year.

This included some five industrial sites in area 12 of Tuen Mun New Town of between 10 and 15,000 square feet, with the possibility of one site of over 100,000 square feet being made available.

Mr. Bray explained that Castle Peak and Sha Tin were not the principal areas available for industrial development and there was no pressure for industrial sites in Castle Peak.

"But if this developed we could offer more," he said.

With regards to Sha Tin, Mr. Bray said that industrial land there could be made available around March 1975, at the earliest, when some 13 acres were expected to be ready.

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RESIDENTS OF LICENSED AREA TO MOVE TO LAM TIN ESTATE

The Government now intends to begin moving the residents of Sections 4,5 and 6 of the Hong Ning Road licensed area to Lam Tin Estate in the middle of next month.

The Secretary for Housing, the Hon. I.M. Lightbody, told the Legislative Council today that an assurance was given in July last year that the intention was to clear the area, housing some 2,400 people, towards the end of the year for its development as a playground.

"Unfortunately, the clearance has had to be delayed on two counts," he said.

Firstly, the accommodation earmarked for these people had to be allocated to over 2,000 fire victims from Tai Hom Village recently; such disaster victims are of course at the top of the housing priority list.

Secondly, the completion dates of a number of blocks have fallen behind schedule, and they will not now be available until February.

Replying to a question by the Hon. R.H. Lobo, Mr. Lightbody gave a warning, that the intention to resettle the residents of the Hong Ning Road licensed area "could again be frustrated if we are faced with any more unforeseen emergencies, such as squatter area fires, in the meantime."

"The immediately homeless must be given top priority," he added.

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CAR PARK AT ABERDEEN

The Government is looking into the possibility of incorporating a suitable site for a car park within a private development at Aberdeen.

Speaking in the Legislative Council today, the Director of Public Works, the Hon. J.J. Robson, said tentative plans had been submitted for the redevelopment of a very large lot at Aberdeen by a private developer.

But he said it was too early to say whether negotiations could be successfully concluded with the developer so that about 1,000 parking spaces could be provided.

Mr. Robson recalled that a site at Aberdeen was originally earmarked for the building of a market and it was hoped that several floors of parking could have been economically incorporated within the building.

It was found, however, that the site was too small for this purpose.

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DECENTRALISATION OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY SUGGESTED

As One Solution To Meal Problem In Central

The Director of Urban Services, the Hon. D.R.W. Alexander, today suggested a "decentralisation of business activity" as one of the possible solutions to ease the acute shortage of restaurants and eating places in the Central area.

The establishment of more self-service type cafes and restaurants, and the provision by employers of canteens and, possibly, lunch vouchers, were other likely alternatives, he said.

Mr. Alexander made the remarks in the Legislative Council today while replying to a question from the Hon. James Wu.

Mr. Wu asked whether the Government would consider providing space in Central for "economy cafeterias" and "brought-out meals" as a basic solution to the illegal caterers problem and to help the many thousands of office workers.

Mr. Alexander said that the Government could consider the suggestion for providing space for "brought-out" meals "but other aspects of this whole problem were still being examined by the Urban Council."

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GREATER COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FOR WORKS

Under U.K. Act And New Bill

Owners of copyright in literary, musical and dramatic works will be afforded greater protection under the United Kingdom Copyright Act 1956 and under the Copyright Bill 1973, the Attorney General, the Hon. D.T.R. Roberts, said today.

He gave the assurance when moving the second reading of the new Bill in the Legislative Council this afternoon.

The 1956 Copyright Act was applied to Hong Kong as from December 12 last year but the new Bill seeks to introduce a number of supplementary provisions to make the Act fully effective to meet Hong Kong's needs.

The Attorney General explained that the Act obliged the prosecution to prove that a person charged with possession of an infringing copy of a work for the purpose of trade, knew that the article was an infringing copy.

"However, copyright infringement is so widespread in Hong Kong that it is often virtually impossible to prove such knowledge," he said.

Under the new Bill, a person will have to prove that he did not know that an infringing copy of a work in his possession for the purpose of trade was an infringing copy.

Mr. Roberts suggested this should not be difficult for an innocent person to prove.

He added: "It is necessary for us to take vigorous action to stamp out the trade in pirated records and books which could be so damaging to our commercial reputation abroad."

/To make

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To make it easier to prosecute successfully where the copyright owner is not in Hong Kong, the Bill requires sworn statements (affidavits) to be produced in court as evidence to the ownership of the copyright.

The Attorney General said provisions were also made to extend the time within which a prosecution might be undertaken from six months to three years from the date of the offence, or one year from its discovery, whichever was the later.

He said this was considered necessary "since experience has shown that such offences are often not detected in Hong Kong until long after they were committed."

A number of other clauses in the Bill give the police and other authorised officers power to investigate suspected pirating of copyright.

Search Warrant

However, a search of domestic premises will only be permitted under a search warrant issued by a magistrate or an Assistant Director of Commerce and Industry.

The Attorney General said the Bill also aimed at applying the United Kingdom Copyright Act to local broadcasters, namely Radio Hong Kong, Hong Kong Commercial Radio and H.K.T.V.B.

At present, he said, there was no diffusion service of sound or television broadcasts in Hong Kong since R.T.V. originated all its television programmes.

/However,

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However, Mr. Roberts said that since it was possible that such a diffusion service may be introduced, the Bill reproduced a provision in the U.K. Copyright Act to deal with this.

"Its effect is that the person diffusing the programme is deemed to have a licence to do so from the owner of the copyright in the work being broadcast," said Mr. Roberts.

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SAFETY STANDARDS FOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Legislation Being Considered

The Government is currently considering legislation on safety standards for household equipment and appliances.

The Secretary for Information, the Hon. J. Cater, told the Legislative Council today that whatever the outcome of these deliberations, he believed that "public education in such matters is important."

He was replying to Mrs. Joyce Symons.

He said some years ago, the Government issued some useful pamphlets about safety in the home. These were now being revised and improved and would include advice on the safe use of home appliances.

Mr. Cater said the pamphlets would be issued in conjunction with appropriate warning announcements over the Government's broadcasting services.

Mr. Cater said: "It seems to me that this is only part, albeit an important part of, a much larger problem.

"There are many dangers in the home; from open fires, from kerosene stoves, from electrical equipment, and other household appliances, and regrettably as Hong Kong's householders become more affluent and more mechanised, these dangers may well increase.

"Elsewhere, much difficulty has been found in legislating for, and policing, safety standards for household equipment and appliances. But the Government is, nevertheless, currently considering the matter."

/Mr. Cater

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Mr. Cater referred the five tragic and fatal accidents this winter connected with people using gas water heaters in bathrooms which were not properly ventilated.

"The Hong Kong and China Gas Company is naturally very concerned over these serious incidents, but it has emphasised that, usually in such cases, accidents occur because of lack of proper ventilation and not because of faults in the appliances themselves."

Mr. Cater said the Company had run campaigns in the press, issued warning notices with consumers' accounts, and attached warning plaques to heaters using town gas.

However, he gave an assurance that warnings on the misuse of gas water heaters would form an important part of the Government's campaign on safe use of home appliances.

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NEW H.K.-MACAU TERMINAL BEING CONSIDERED

Present Wharf To Be Improved

The possible need for a new terminal to handle steamers, hydrofoils and hovercraft serving Hong Kong and Macau is under active consideration by a number of Government departments concerned.

The Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, said this at the Legislative Council this afternoon in reply to a question from the Hon. Dr. S.Y. Chung who asked for a Government announcement on the practicability of building a new terminal and also improving the existing facilities.

From a marine point of view, Mr. Haddon-Cave said a site at the western end of Hong Kong Island for the proposed new terminal would be preferable.

"But this would involve reclamation and a greatly expanded road system, which again would require extensive reclamation. Yet reprovisioning at the present site would present major problems because space is limited and existing ferry activities would be disrupted.

"If we are to proceed, therefore, the first step will be to seek the inclusion of an item in Category B of the Public Works Programme to allow for a detailed and comprehensive feasibility study to be carried out," he said.

On plans to improve the existing Macau Ferry Wharf, Mr. Haddon-Cave said the work would be carried out in two stages.

/Stage I

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Stage I would include an extension to the covered way from the Arrival/Departure Hall to the hydrofoil waiting area and the removal of various offices on the landward side of the Hall, providing an area of about 16,000 sq. ft. for passengers waiting to enter the terminal.

A wall on the seaward side of the Arrival/Departure Hall would also be removed to facilitate passenger access to the Immigration Department processing desks.

The plans for Stage I included the re-arrangement of various offices and the provision of additional office space in order to facilitate a more rapid flow of passengers through the terminal.

The work is expected to start in July and be completed early next year.

"Stage II generally provides for a further expansion of office accommodation, as well as changing and toilet facilities and the establishment of a canteen in the premises now occupied by the Transport Office," he said.

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OVERALL TRANSPORT POLICY FOR 70's AND 80's

Bill Will Improve Traffic Situation

The Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, today cited three elements which he considered vital for Government's overall transport policy for the Seventies and Eighties.

These are:

- * the expansion of Hong Kong's network of roads and rail and water links.
- * the improvement of public transport facilities, and
- * the optimisation of use of road space.

In moving the second reading of the Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973 in the Legislative Council, Mr. Haddon-Cave stressed: "In the increasingly crowded conditions on Hong Kong, it is becoming more and more necessary for a high and courteous standard of driving to be maintained at all times and for the perpetrators of traffic offences to be brought to justice."

He added the Government hoped that the new provisions contained in the Bill would go some way towards improving the situation in this respect.

The Financial Secretary said the element concerning the optimisation of use of road space involved three aspects.

"First, the restraint of private transport so as to accord priority to those vehicles which are the most efficient passenger carriers in relation to road use.

/"Secondly,

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"Secondly, the policing of the road worthiness of all vehicles on the roads so as to minimise the risk of mechanical failures and, therefore, interruption to traffic flows.

"Thirdly, the supervision of drivers so as to ensure that high driving standards are observed and, if they are not, to detect and prosecute offenders," he said.

Mr. Haddon-Cave explained that the Bill was concerned with optimising the use of road space as well as being concerned with safeguarding life.

Furnishing Of Particulars

Besides enabling regulations to be made for the compulsory wearing of crash helmets by motorcyclists and their pillion passengers, the Bill also removes certain difficulties being experienced by the police in enforcing existing regulations regarding the furnishing of particulars by drivers at the time of an accident involving damage or injury.

The Bill repeals and replaces the two relevant sections in the Ordinance with wider and simpler provisions, and seeks to extend to three months the present statutory time limit of 14 days within which the police can require particulars to be given of the driver of the vehicle.

Under the Bill, a person will be required to supply to the police his name, address, driving licence number and his relationship (if any) to the person driving a motor vehicle at the time of an alleged offence.

If the demand for such particulars are made by means of a notice, a signed written statement giving the required particulars must be furnished to a specified police officer within 21 days after the date of notice.

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Failure to comply with such a demand will be an offence carrying a maximum fine of \$2,000 and six months imprisonment.

The Bill also provides that such a signed statement given by an accused person will be admissible against that person as prima facie evidence that the accused was the driver of the vehicle at the time of the alleged offence.

Formerly, such a statement was only admissible if it were made and signed by the registered owner of the vehicle and it was the owner who was accused of the alleged offence.

On the introduction of legislation to make the wearing of crash helmets compulsory for motorcyclists and their passengers, the Financial Secretary said this was considered necessary because recently "the number of serious motorcycle accidents has continued to increase."

Further evidence, he added, had been accumulated "to show that fatalities are largely caused by head injuries and that the absence of a crash helmet is thus a major factor involved."

Mr. Haddon-Cave said the Government was also considering other measures to improve the safety of those using the roads, such as the compulsory wearing of safety belts by those travelling in passenger cars.

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SEVEN BILLS INTRODUCED INTO LEGCO

The Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1972 passed its committee stage and third reading after a further debate in Legislative Council this afternoon and became law.

Seven bills had their first and second readings, but debate on them was adjourned.

They were the Urban Council (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Copyright Bill 1973; the Television (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Inland Revenue (Amendment) Bill 1973; the Rating Bill 1973; the Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 1973 and the Import and Export (Amendment) Bill 1973.

Debate on the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill 1973 was resumed.

The Accounts for the Lotteries Fund for 1971-72 and a report on marine investigation into sewage discharges were also tabled in the Council this afternoon.

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SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE INCREASE

90 Per Cent Jump In Enrolment Announced

Enrolment in the School Medical Service stood at 68,837 on December 31, 1972, compared with 37,589 on the same date the previous year -- representing a 90 per cent increase.

The scheme was revised on October 1, 1972, to bring it more in line with the Government's policy of providing nine years of aided education.

The revision meant that pupils in kindergartens were excluded, and participation limited to pupils in primary schools, and secondary schools up to Form III.

A special provision permitted pupils already participating in the scheme, even those in Form V, to continue, if they wished.

Commenting on the increase, a spokesman for the School Medical Service Board says there are a number of reasons for "this gratifying jump."

In his view, "the obvious one is that more parents are coming to believe that it is useful to have their children in a medical scheme which allows for an unlimited number of visits to a doctor, and medicine free of charge, all for \$5 a year."

The School Medical Service is a scheme designed to provide economical medical treatment among normally healthy children. It is voluntary, and participating doctors are private medical practitioners. They receive \$25 a child a year -- \$5 from the participant's contribution, and \$20 from the Government.

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Specialist treatment is not provided, but cases requiring the services of a specialist are referred by the attending doctor to the Government's specialist clinics.

The spokesman regrets that at present, "only one-third of all registered schools participate." It is the hope of the Board that "more and more school principals, who have the responsibility for choosing a doctor from among those practising near their establishments, will come to realise that there is, for them, little administrative work attached to the distribution of participation cards."

He explains that enrolment is simple, and not restricted to any given date. Pupils may join at any time of the year, and qualify for participation in the scheme for 12 months from the date of enrolment.

Additionally, pupils in registered schools wishing to join the scheme although their schools are not participating in it, may call at the Board's office in Lee Gardens, Hysan Avenue, for a participation card. It will cost them \$5.

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WATER INTERRUPTION

Water supply to a number of premises in Mong Kok and Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon, will be interrupted for five hours from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Friday (January 5) and Saturday (January 6) respectively to facilitate leakage tests in the areas.

The area to be affected on Friday is bounded by Prince Edward Road, Nathan Road, Mong Kok Road, Shanghai Street, Bute Street and Tong Mei Road.

Premises to be affected on Saturday are in Wang Tau Hom Resettlement Estate Block 1 - 13 and Yan Oi San Chuen.

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LAST CHANCE TO OBTAIN NEW PEDLAR LICENCES

N.T. Hawkers Asked To Apply This Month

All bona fide itinerary hawkers trading in the New Territories are urged to obtain a pedlar licence or to renew expired licences within this month.

A spokesman for the Urban Services Department said that after January 31, 1973, no new pedlar licences will be issued, but valid licences will be eligible for annual renewal on their expiry dates as usual.

New Territories pedlar hawker licences will entitle the holders to trade only on an itinerary basis in the New Territories.

These licences can be obtained from the District Offices in Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long and Tai Po, and the post offices in Sai Kung, Cheung Chau, Tai O, Peng Chau and Mui Wo.

The applicant should bring along two photographs and pay a licence fee of \$10.

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

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DRIVING TESTS FOR LORRIES TO BE RESUMED

Within Next Four Weeks

Limited driving tests for goods vehicles and certain categories of public and private omnibuses are expected to be resumed within the next four weeks, the Financial Secretary, the Hon. C.P. Haddon-Cave, said this afternoon.

These tests have been suspended since October 9 last year as a measure taken by the Transport Department to concentrate its efforts on an accelerated programme of testing for licences to drive private cars.

Other measures taken by the Department as from September 11 were the employment of volunteer civil servants to conduct tests in the evenings, at week-ends and on public holidays and the combination of the intermediate and final road tests into one.

The Financial Secretary, in reply to Mrs. Ellen Li, said that it was hoped that these measures would, within a limited period of time, eliminate the "enormous backlog" of tests for licences to drive private cars.

"Indeed," he said "as a result of the accelerated programme, the number of appointments for road tests per day has risen from some 350 to 900."

He added that "the waiting time between the written test and the combined road test has fallen from a year to less than three months, although the actual number of aspirant drivers waiting to take their road tests is about the same as before at 60,000 and so is the number of tests which have to be conducted."

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An average of 40 per cent of candidates get through on their first attempt.

The Financial Secretary said it had been intended, once the backlog of applicants for licences to drive private cars had been dealt with, to start testing applicants again for other categories of vehicle.

"But things have not turned out quite as we had hoped," he said.

The crash programme of tests had enabled most of those in the original backlog to be cleared.

But it had also encouraged so many applicants to come forward for the written test that there was now a backlog of applicants for this test of no less than 75,000 compared with 54,000 at the end of August.

Delay

"As a result, there is a delay of 10 months in Hong Kong and 14 months in Kowloon for the written test," the Financial Secretary said.

In view of the situation, Mr. Haddon-Cave said, plans were now being put in hand to run down the emergency testing programme for licences to drive private cars and, accordingly, to resume limited testing for the categories of vehicle which had been halted since last October.

"It is hoped that tests for these types of vehicle can be started again within the next four weeks," he added.

The Financial Secretary said since it had proved impossible to meet the unhindered demand for driving tests, urgent consideration was now being given to measures designed to reduce the numbers of applicants for such test.

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PUBLIC CALLED ON TO TACKLE HARBOUR POLLUTION

Anti-Pollution Measures In Shelters Outlined

The Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Norman-Walker, today urged the public to continue to tackle with "vigour and determination" the problem of harbour pollution, specially in typhoon shelters.

Sir Hugh made the appeal at the Legislative Council today when he answered a question from the Hon. H.J.C. Browne on the problem of dealing with pollution in typhoon shelters.

Outlining the various measures undertaken, Sir Hugh said the Marine Department's efforts had so far been concentrated on the two main harbour shelters at Yau Ma Tei and Causeway Bay, and in the Aberdeen typhoon shelter.

Last July, a limited beach-to-beach refuse collection and general scavenging service in Yau Ma Tei and Causeway Bay typhoon shelters was introduced. There was also a general scavenging service at Aberdeen.

"The intention was to try not only to prevent refuse drifting into the harbour and on to beaches, but also to reduce health hazards and damage to propellers and engine intakes of small craft."

In the Yau Ma Tei shelter, Sir Hugh said ten-gallon refuse containers on large stationary vessels would soon be provided at strategic locations on a trial basis.

To deal with the problem in other typhoon shelters, and with known "black spots" in the harbour area, the Harbour Scavenging Fleet's present strength would, from this month, be doubled to 24 sampans and eight mechanised cargo boats.

/In addition,

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In addition, refuse collection in shelters such as Aldrich Bay and the North Kowloon Camber would receive more concentrated attention, he said.

The Government, Sir Hugh continued, was also making every effort to educate the floating population and those involved in trade activities near the waterfront about pollution prevention.

He stressed that it was essential to dissuade them from dumping rubbish indiscriminately into the waters. The Director of Marine and some of his senior officers had obtained useful co-operation and assistance in this task from local associations visited during the Clean Hong Kong campaign.

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Release Time: 8.30 p.m.