



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1974

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NEW LEGISLATION CONTROLLING CRECHES,
NURSERIES AND CARE CENTRES

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ALL CHILD CARE CENTRES INCLUDING NURSERIES AND CRECHES WILL IN FUTURE HAVE TO REGISTER WITH THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT BEFORE THEY CAN OPERATE IF A NEW BILL MADE PUBLIC TODAY IS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE NEW LEGISLATION, THE CHILD CARE CENTRES BILL 1974, IS PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE. ALSO PUBLISHED FOR INFORMATION IS THE PROPOSED CHILD CARE CENTRES REGULATIONS 1974 THAT LAY DOWN THE STANDARDS TO BE FOLLOWED.

CHILD CARE CENTRES THAT ARE IN OPERATION AT THE TIME THE BILL IS BROUGHT INTO OPERATION MUST REGISTER WITHIN 12 MONTHS, BUT WILL BE GIVEN SUFFICIENT TIME TO COMPLY WITH THE FULL CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION. A PHASED APPROACH WILL BE ADOPTED WHEREBY CENTRES WILL HAVE TIME TO MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS IN STAGES OVER A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

UNDER THE BILL, A CHILD CARE CENTRE IS DEFINED AS ANY PREMISES IN WHICH THERE ARE UNDER CARE, MORE THAN FIVE CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF SIX AND NOT OF THE SAME FAMILY.

BEFORE A CENTRE IS REGISTERED, CERTIFICATES AS TO THE SUITABILITY OF THE PREMISES FOR USE AS A CHILD CARE CENTRE WILL BE REQUIRED FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE BUILDING AUTHORITY.

THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE IS GIVEN THE POWER TO REFUSE OR CANCEL A REGISTRATION ACCORDING TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS LAID DOWN IN THE BILL OR TO REQUIRE REMEDIAL MEASURES TO BE TAKEN. A CHILD CARE CENTRE WHOSE REGISTRATION IS REFUSED OR CANCELLED HAS THE RIGHT OF APPEAL TO THE GOVERNOR.

SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS MAY BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR TO BE INSPECTORS AND MEDICAL OFFICERS RESPECTIVELY OF CHILD CARE CENTRES. AS SUCH THEY WILL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ENTER AND CARRY OUT INSPECTION, EXAMINE RECORDS OR REQUIRE ANY INFORMATION TO BE FURNISHED.

THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS SET OUT THE STANDARDS WHICH REGISTERED CHILD CARE CENTRES WILL BE EXPECTED TO MEET. THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE IS GIVEN THE AUTHORITY TO WAIVE, EITHER WHOLLY, PARTLY OR CONDITIONALLY THESE REQUIREMENTS. HE WILL THEREFORE BE PUBLISHING A CODE OF PRACTICE BEFORE THE LEGISLATION IS BROUGHT INTO FORCE FOR THE GUIDANCE OF BOTH OPERATORS AND PARENTS.

THE QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS, APPOINTMENTS AND DUTIES OF STAFF ARE SET OUT IN THE REGULATIONS AS ARE OTHER CONDITIONS RELATING TO THE OPERATION OF REGISTERED CHILD CARE CENTRES.

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CENTRES WILL BE REQUIRED TO HAVE ON DUTY ONE STAFF MEMBER FOR EVERY SIX RESIDENT CHILDREN . FOR NON-RESIDENT CHILDREN THE RATIO IS ONE FOR EVERY SIX CHILDREN UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE AND ONE FOR EVERY 14 WHO ARE TWO YEARS OR OLDER.

IN DAY CARE, THOSE CHILDREN UNDER TWO MUST HAVE 30 SQ. FT. OF SPACE EACH AND THOSE TWO YEARS OR OVER 20 SQ. FT. IN THE CASE OF OVERNIGHT CARE IT WILL BE 35 SQ. FT. IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE.

CERTAIN POWERS OF ENTRY INTO REGISTERED CHILD CARE CENTRES PREMISES AND ADJACENT PREMISES ARE GIVEN TO OFFICERS OF THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO CHECK ON FIRE SAFETY MEASURES. REGULAR FIRE DRILLS ARE ALSO REQUIRED.

HEALTH AND SANITATION MATTERS COVERED INCLUDE ADEQUATE FLOOR SPACE , LATRINES AND WASHING FACILITIES, THE PROPER PREPARATION OF FOOD, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT AND THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF CHILDREN AND PERSONS EMPLOYED IN CHILD CARE CENTRES.

PENALTIES ARE ALSO PROVIDED FOR IN THE BILL AND IN THE REGULATIONS FOR CONTRAVENTION OF ANY OF THE CONDITIONS LAID DOWN.

COMMENTING ON THE NEW LEGISLATION, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THERE ARE ABOUT 300 NURSERIES, CRECHES AND OTHER SIMILAR CHILD CARE ESTABLISHMENTS IN HONG KONG WHICH DO NOT COME UNDER ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL OR SUPERVISION.

+THOSE CENTRES OPERATED BY SUBVENTED VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS ARE GENERALLY OF AN ACCEPTABLE STANDARD, BUT PROFIT-MAKING CENTRES VARY CONSIDERABLY IN THEIR MODE OF OPERATION.

+BECAUSE THE DEMAND ON PROPERLY-RUN NURSERIES HAS BEEN VERY HEAVY, SMALL BADLY-RUN ONES OPERATING ON A PURELY COMMERCIAL BASIS HAVE PROLIFERATED. INSTANCES OF NEGLECT OR ABUSES HAVE OCCURRED IN SOME OF THESE CENTRES IN RECENT YEARS AND THE CONDITIONS IN OTHERS ARE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY,+ HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH CERTAIN MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS ARE STIPULATED AND OFFENCES PROVIDED TO ELIMINATE THE WORST ABUSES, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE HAS BEEN GIVEN AS MUCH DISCRETION AS POSSIBLE TO ENABLE HIM TO BE FLEXIBLE IN ENFORCING THE LEGISLATION.

+THE STANDARDS ARE THE MINIMUM, REALISTIC REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST FIRE, HEALTH AND OTHER HAZARDS UNDER WHICH IT IS FELT CHILD CARE CENTRES SHOULD OPERATE.+

HE SAID THE BILL AND REGULATIONS ARE THE OUTCOME OF DETAILED CONSULTATION OVER A LONG PERIOD BETWEEN THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT. THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAVE ALSO BEEN CONSULTED AND HAVE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSALS.

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SAFETY RULES ON LIFTING APPLIANCES EFFECTIVE FROM NOVEMBER 1
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REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SAFE OPERATION OF LIFTING APPLIANCES AND GEAR USED IN INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS WILL COME INTO FORCE ON NOVEMBER 1.

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR. DAVID LIN, TODAY REMINDED EMPLOYERS, WORKERS AND EQUIPMENT INSPECTORS THAT CONTRAVENTION OF THE REGULATIONS CARRIED A FINE UP TO \$5,000 ON CONVICTION.

+PLENTY OF TIME HAS BEEN GIVEN TO OWNERS OF LIFTING APPLIANCES AND GEAR TO MAKE THE NECESSARY PREPARATION+,+ HE SAID.

+WE HOPE EVERYONE CONCERNED WILL CO-OPERATE IN MAKING SURE THE NEW REGULATIONS ARE FOLLOWED AND HELP IN THE DRIVE FOR IMPROVEMENT IN INDUSTRIAL SAFETY.+

THE REGULATIONS — THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (LIFTING APPLIANCES AND LIFTING GEAR) REGULATIONS 1974 — WERE MADE BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR. IAN PRICE, LAST NOVEMBER.

THEY COVER THE SAFE USE OF LIFTING APPLIANCES IN INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS INCLUDING ANY DOCK, QUAY, WHARF OF WAREHOUSE.

THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS EXCLUDED FROM THE REGULATIONS, BECAUSE THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS WHICH CAME INTO FORCE IN MAY THIS YEAR, INCLUDE DETAILED REGULATIONS ON LIFTING APPLIANCES USED IN CONSTRUCTION SITES.

MR. LIN SAID: +UNDER THE NEW REGULATIONS, OWNERS MUST ENSURE THEIR LIFTING APPLIANCES AND GEAR ARE OF SOUND CONSTRUCTION.

+THE EQUIPMENT MUST BE TESTED AND EXAMINED BY COMPETENT EXAMINERS BEFORE BEING USED AND MUST HAVE PERIODICAL TESTS AFTER THAT.

+THESE APPLIANCES AND GEAR MUST NOT BE USED FOR LOADS GREATER THAN THEIR MAXIMUM WORKING LOADS, WHICH MUST BE LEGIBLY MARKED ON THE EQUIPMENT.

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HONG KONG TRADE TALKS IN LONDON

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THE DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, MR. DAVID JORDAN, LEFT FOR LONDON TONIGHT (FRIDAY) TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS ON TRADE MATTERS WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

HIS VISIT MARKS THE THIRD OF A SERIES OF INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS IN THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE AND THE DEPARTMENTS OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY. THE AIM OF THE MEETING IS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND IDEAS ON TRADE MATTERS THAT ARE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO HONG KONG.

THE MAIN SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION ARE HONG KONG'S STATUS IN THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY'S GENERALISED PREFERENCE SCHEME AND RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENTS COVERING HONG KONG'S TEXTILE EXPORTS TO THE EEC.

MR. JORDAN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MR. LAWRENCE MILLS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.

THEY WILL BE JOINED FOR THE TALKS IN LONDON BY HONG KONG'S REPRESENTATIVES IN EUROPE - MR. BILL DORWARD AND MR. GERRY PEARSON (GENEVA) AND MR. CLAUDE BURGESS AND MR. PAT DODGE (BRUSSELS).

MR. BURGESS, A FORMER COLONIAL SECRETARY IN HONG KONG, IS A NEW ADDITION TO HONG KONG'S OVERSEAS STAFF. HE HAS BEEN APPOINTED MINISTER FOR HONG KONG COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS IN BRUSSELS IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN HONG KONG'S REPRESENTATION IN THE EEC.

ALSO AT THE TALKS WILL BE OFFICIALS FROM THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN LONDON, INCLUDING MR. TEDDY KIDD, THE HONG KONG COMMISSIONER.

A COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT, IN ADDITION TO TRADE TALKS WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THE MEETING IN LONDON PROVIDED A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR MR. JORDAN TO GET TOGETHER WITH HONG KONG'S RESIDENT STAFF IN EUROPE.

+ALTHOUGH WE MAINTAIN CONSTANT CONTACT THROUGH TELEGRAM EXCHANGES, THE CHANCE TO MEET AS A GROUP DOES NOT ARISE VERY OFTEN AND FULL ADVANTAGE WILL BE TAKEN OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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WHOLE OF HONG KONG BECOMES SMOKE-FREE ZONE

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THE GOVERNMENT TODAY TOOK THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IN ITS CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE INDUSTRIAL AIR POLLUTION BY DECLARING ALL OF HONG KONG A SMOKE CONTROL AREA.

THE DECLARATION, PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S GAZETTE, COMES INTO FORCE ON DECEMBER 17.

THE EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY CONSERVATIONISTS. IT HAD BEEN EXPECTED THAT THE DECLARATION COULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL EARLY NEXT YEAR.

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT CAPS A CONTINUOUS PROGRAMME BY THE GOVERNMENT TO GRADUALLY BRING ALL THE TERRITORY UNDER ITS CONTROL UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CLEAN AIR ORDINANCE.

THE ORDINANCE STRICTLY LIMITS THE VOLUME OF POLLUTION-PRODUCING DARK SMOKE WHICH CAN BE EMITTED AND CARRIES A FINE OF UP TO \$2,000.

PREVIOUSLY, THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECLARED SEVEN SMOKE CONTROL AREAS -- THE MOST RECENT BEING HONG KONG ISLAND WHICH CAME INTO EFFECT ON OCTOBER 2. TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BRING THE REMAINING AREAS OF KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER, MR. DAVID NEWBURY, DESCRIBED THE ANNOUNCEMENT AS +VERY TIMELY+.

HE SAID IT WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF OVERSEAS INDUSTRIALISTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET DOWN +GROUND RULES+ ON FUEL BURNING.

+ALREADY WE HAVE MAJOR OVERSEAS MANUFACTURERS PLUNGING INTO THE LOCAL INDUSTRIAL SCENE IN AREAS OF TSING YI AND TUEN MUN AND THERE ARE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS ON LAMMA AND LANTO,+ HE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF HAS PLANS TO DEVELOP AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AS INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL ESTATES.+

MR. NEWBURY SAID THAT DESPITE SOME RESERVATIONS A FEW YEARS AGO, THINKING PEOPLE IN HONG KONG INDUSTRY NO LONGER REGARDED THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT AS +BOGEY MEN+.

+WE HAVE SHOWN THAT WE CAN HELP INDUSTRY SAVE MONEY WHILE AT THE SAME TIME EFFECTIVELY REDUCING AIR POLLUTION,+ HE SAID.

/HE ADDED

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HE ADDED: +EXCESSIVE SMOKE IS NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY AND HARMFUL IT IS MORE OFTEN THAN NOT A SIGN THAT FUEL IS BEING WASTED. IT REPRESENTS A WASTE OF PRECIOUS RAW MATERIAL, WHICH IS NOT LIMITLESS, AND A WASTE OF INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL FINANCE.+

THE SECRETARY OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION (CEPCOM), MR. LOU HALL, SAID TODAY HE WAS DELIGHTED BY THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT.

+IN MY VIEW THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS VERY MUCH IN FAVOUR OF MEASURES DESIGNED TO CONTROL AIR POLLUTION.

+I HOPE FACTORY AND RESTAURANT OWNERS AND OTHERS DIRECTLY AFFECTED WILL ALSO BE IN FAVOUR.+

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