



Received by PRO
on ~~25~~ MAY 1993

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1993

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SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1993

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DATE SET FOR FOURTH ROUND OF ELECTION TALKS

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THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS ISSUED BY THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN BEIJING AT 1600 HOURS TODAY (SUNDAY).

THE BRITISH AND CHINESE SIDES HAVE AGREED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE, SIR ROBIN MCLAREN, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO CHINA, AND THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE, MR JIANG ENZHU, VICE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, WILL HOLD THEIR FOURTH ROUND OF TALKS ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 1994/95 ELECTIONS IN HONG KONG ON 28 AND 29 MAY 1993 IN BEIJING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION, THE PRINCIPLE OF CONVERGENCE WITH THE BASIC LAW AND THE RELEVANT AGREEMENTS AND UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED BETWEEN CHINA AND BRITAIN.

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NEW SOCIAL SECURITY PACKAGE STARTING JULY 1

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A NEW SOCIAL SECURITY PACKAGE INCLUDING THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE (CSSA) SCHEME AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY ALLOWANCE (SSA) SCHEME WILL COME INTO EFFECT FROM JULY 1, TO REPLACE THE EXISTING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA) SCHEME AND SPECIAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE (SNA) SCHEME.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (SUNDAY) THAT TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING SYSTEM, THE BASIC RATE AND SUPPLEMENTS (EXCEPT FOR THE LONG-TERM SUPPLEMENT) UNDER THE PA SCHEME AND BENEFITS UNDER THE SNA WILL BE CONSOLIDATED INTO A STANDARD RATE FOR EACH CATEGORY OF PA RECIPIENTS UNDER THE NEW CSSA SCHEME.

OTHER SPECIAL GRANTS, LIKE RENT ALLOWANCE, DIETARY ALLOWANCE, ALLOWANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES AND SO ON WILL CONTINUE TO BE PAID TO MEET THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL RECIPIENTS UNDER THE NEW CSSA SCHEME.

IN ADDITION, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A HIGHER STANDARD OF LIVING FOR PA RECIPIENTS, THE STANDARD RATES UNDER THE NEW SCHEME WILL PROVIDE REAL INCREASES OF BETWEEN FOUR PER CENT AND 37 PER CENT OVER THE LEVELS OF PAYMENT UNDER THE EXISTING PA AND SNA SCHEME.

THE NEW STANDARD RATES FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF RECIPIENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

/STANDARD RATE

STANDARD RATE

	SINGLE PERSON ----- (\$ PER MONTH)	FAMILY MEMBER ----- (\$ PER MONTH)
ELDERLY PERSON -----	1,550	1,285
DISABLED ADULT -----		
50% DISABLED	1,550	1,285
100% DISABLED	1,935	1,675
REQUIRING CONSTANT ATTENDANCE	2,835	2,570
DISABLED CHILD -----		
50% DISABLED	1,770	1,510
100% DISABLED	2,160	1,895
REQUIRING CONSTANT ATTENDANCE	3,055	2,795
ABLE-BODIED ADULT -----	1,035	895
ABLE-BODIED CHILD -----	1,260	995

"TO IMPLEMENT THE PACKAGE, ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN TAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT TO COMBINE BENEFITS UNDER THE SNA WITH PA PAYMENTS FOR RECIPIENTS OF BOTH SCHEMES," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

THEY WILL RECEIVE THE COMBINED PAYMENTS IN JUNE AND THE NEW STANDARD RATES FROM JULY 1.

IN A FAMILY CASE, THE APPLICANT WILL RECEIVE THE FAMILY'S TOTAL ENTITLEMENT WHICH WILL EMBRACE THE STANDARD RATES PAYABLE TO OTHER ELIGIBLE MEMBERS.

"IN ADDITION, WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE BENEFITS, THAT IS OLD AGE ALLOWANCE AND DISABILITY ALLOWANCE UNDER THE SSA SCHEME FOR THE ELDERLY OR DISABLED WHO WILL NOT RECEIVE THE CSSA PAYMENT," HE SAID.

THE CURRENT RULE, ALLOWING 45 DAYS OF ABSENCE FROM THE TERRITORY FOR PA RECIPIENTS AND 119 DAYS ABSENCE FOR SNA RECIPIENTS BEFORE BENEFITS ARE SUSPENDED, WILL ALSO BE RELAXED TO 60 DAYS FOR ABLE-BODIED RECIPIENTS AND 180 DAYS FOR ALL ELDERLY AND DISABLED RECIPIENTS UNDER THE CSSA AND 180 DAYS FOR SSA RECIPIENTS.

"ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PAYMENTS ARE BEING MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE RECIPIENTS WILL RECEIVE THE NEW RATES IN GOOD TIME," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE STRESSED THAT THE NEW SCHEMES WERE SIMPLE TO APPLY AND WERE FREE OF CHARGE.

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67 NEW BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN MARCH
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THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT APPROVED 67 NEW BUILDING PLANS IN MARCH.

OF THESE, 23 WERE FOR HONG KONG, 19 FOR KOWLOON AND 25 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE APPROVED PLANS INCLUDED 26 FOR APARTMENT, APARTMENT/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS, 15 FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS AND NINE FOR FACTORY AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.

DURING THE MONTH, THE OFFICE GAVE CONSENT FOR WORK TO START ON 61 PROJECTS, INVOLVING 95,053 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA AND 221,907 SQUARE METRES OF USABLE NON-DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA.

THE TOTAL DECLARED COST OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED DURING THE MONTH WAS ABOUT \$3,371 MILLION.

USABLE FLOOR AREAS OF THESE BUILDINGS FOR DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC USES WERE ABOUT 102,818 SQUARE METRES AND ABOUT 369,436 SQUARE METRES RESPECTIVELY.

IN THE MONTH, THE OFFICE ISSUED 52 OCCUPATION PERMITS - 12 FOR HONG KONG ISLAND, 13 FOR KOWLOON, AND 27 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

IN ADDITION, 42 DEMOLITION CONSENTS INVOLVING 99 BUILDINGS WERE ISSUED.

THE OFFICE'S CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION RECEIVED 877 COMPLAINTS OF UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS, CARRIED OUT 1,346 INSPECTIONS AND ISSUED 718 REMOVAL ORDERS IN RESPECT OF UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS.

THE DANGEROUS BUILDINGS SECTION OF THE OFFICE INSPECTED 706 BUILDINGS AND OBTAINED TWO EMERGENCY CLOSURE ORDERS.

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FIRING PRACTICE IN JUNE

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FIRING PRACTICE WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE HA TSUEN-CASTLE PEAK RANGE ON 16 DAYS NEXT MONTH.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED NOT TO ENTER THE AREA WHEN RED FLAGS ARE HOISTED.

FOLLOWING ARE THE DATES AND TIMES FOR THE FIRING PRACTICE:

DATE	TIME
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JUNE 1 (TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 2 (WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 3 (THURSDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 4 (FRIDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 7 (MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 8 (TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 9 (WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 10 (THURSDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 11 (FRIDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 21 (MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 22 (TUESDAY)	0.01 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 23 (WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 25 (FRIDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 28 (MONDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 29 (TUESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM
JUNE 30 (WEDNESDAY)	8.30 AM - 5 PM

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