



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1976

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DRIVER SHORTAGE NOT CAUSE OF IDLE PLB'S  
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT TODAY (TUESDAY) DENIED RECENT CLAIMS BY CERTAIN MINI-BUS OPERATORS THAT VEHICLES WERE LYING IDLE BECAUSE OF A LACK OF LICENSED DRIVERS.

MR. PETER MILLER, CHIEF TRANSPORT OFFICER, SAID THAT AT THE END OF MARCH 1976 THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 49,772 DRIVERS LICENSED TO DRIVE THE 4,308 PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES.

+ANY SUGGESTION THAT AS MANY AS A THOUSAND MINI-BUSES WERE LYING IDLE ON THE ROADS IS NOT BORNE OUT BY THE FACTS,+ HE SAID.

MR. MILLER, WHO RECENTLY MET PLB ORGANISATIONS, INDICATED THAT IT WAS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT BETWEEN 400 AND 500 MINI-BUSES WERE NOT IN USE ON ANY PARTICULAR DAY BUT THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS WAS THAT THE PLB'S WERE EITHER AWAITING MECHANICAL INSPECTION OR UNDERGOING ACCIDENT OR BREAK DOWN REPAIRS.

AS MANY AS 180 MINI-BUSES WHICH ARE PRESENTED FOR INSPECTION EACH MONTH PRIOR TO ANNUAL RELICENSING ARE FOUND TO HAVE SERIOUS MECHANICAL FAILURES AND THE DEPARTMENT HAS HAD TO FAIL AS MANY AS 46 PER CENT OF THE VEHICLES PRESENTED FOR INSPECTION AND SEND THEM AWAY TO HAVE THE DEFECTS RECTIFIED.

MR. MILLER CLAIMED THAT THE RECENT DECISION TO RE-OPEN NEW APPLICATIONS FOR PLB DRIVING TESTS HAD RESULTED IN NO LESS THAN 17,000 APPLICATIONS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THERE WAS NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER THESE WERE GENUINE APPLICATIONS FROM PEOPLE WHO WISHED TO BE ENGAGED FULL TIME IN DRIVING MINI-BUSES OR WHETHER THEY WERE MERELY FROM PEOPLE WHO WANTED JUST ANOTHER ENDORSEMENT ON THEIR ORDINARY LICENCE.

MR. MILLER STATED THAT UNDER THE PRESENT ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS, IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO ALLOW DRIVERS OF PRIVATE CARS AND SMALL GOODS VEHICLES THE RIGHT TO AUTOMATICALLY DRIVE MINI-BUSES WITHOUT REQUIRING A SEPARATE TEST SINCE THE PLB'S IN OPERATION AT PRESENT CONSTITUTED THE HIGHEST RATIO OF VEHICLES INVOLVED IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

HE SAID: +IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS MATTER IF THE DEPARTMENT WERE TO FAIL IN ITS DUTY TO ENSURE THAT DRIVERS CARRYING LARGE NUMBERS OF PASSENGERS EVERY DAY WERE NOT SUBJECT TO A SPECIALIST DRIVING TEST.+

HE ADDED THAT WITHIN THE LIMITED RESOURCES OF THE DEPARTMENT IN REGARD TO BOTH PREMISES AND MANPOWER, IT WAS HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CALL UP ABOUT 400 APPLICANTS EACH MONTH FOR THE PLB DRIVING TEST AND ON THE BASIS OF PAST EXPERIENCE BETWEEN 35 TO 40 PER CENT OF THESE CANDIDATES WOULD PASS.

+THE HIGH FAILURE RATE IS AN INDICATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE DRIVING TESTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE BETTER ROAD DISCIPLINE AND FEWER TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS,+ MR. MILLER WENT ON.

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FIVE-DOLLAR NOTE TO BE REPLACED BY COIN  
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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED TODAY THAT A \$5 COIN WILL BE INTRODUCED TO HONG KONG IN AUGUST OF THIS YEAR AND THAT IT WILL GRADUALLY REPLACE THE \$5 NOTE AT PRESENT IN USE.

THE COINAGE REVIEW COMMITTEE ORIGINALLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE \$5 COIN SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN 1978. HOWEVER, THE ESCALATION OF NOTE PRINTING COSTS HAS BEEN SUCH THAT THE LONG TERM BENEFITS OF REPLACING NOTES WITH COINS NOW FAR EXCEED THOSE ENVISAGED BY THE COMMITTEE AND IT WAS THEREFORE DECIDED TO ADVANCE THE ISSUE TO THIS YEAR. THE ECONOMIES DERIVE FROM THE FACT THAT THE LIFE OF A COIN CAN BE AS LONG AS 50 YEARS WHEREAS THE \$5 NOTE ONLY HAS A LIFE OF ABOUT 8 OR 9 MONTHS.

LIKE THE PRESENT \$1 COIN, THE NEW COIN, WHICH IS TEN SIDED, WILL BE MINTED IN CUPRO-NICKEL AND WILL BE ABOUT THE SAME SIZE AS THE PRESENT DOLLAR COIN BUT WILL BE SLIGHTLY LIGHTER IN WEIGHT.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO REPLACE THE PRESENT 50 CENT COIN AND \$1 COIN IN 1977 AND 1978 RESPECTIVELY. THE NEW COINS WILL BE BOTH SMALLER AND LIGHTER THAN THE CURRENT ISSUE.

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON G.C.E. EXAMINATION  
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PRIVATE CANDIDATES FOR THE G.C.E. EXAMINATION IN JUNE ARE REMINDED TO COLLECT THEIR ADMISSION FORMS ON THE DATE SPECIFIED IN THE NOTIFICATIONS POSTED TO THEM RECENTLY.

ANY CANDIDATE WHO HAS NOT RECEIVED THE NOTIFICATION OR WHO IS UNABLE TO GO AT THE SPECIFIED DATE SHOULD COLLECT HIS FORM IN PERSON AT THE EXAMINATIONS DIVISION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AT CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES BETWEEN MAY 17 AND MAY 21 DURING NORMAL OFFICE HOURS. HE SHOULD BRING WITH HIM HIS IDENTITY CARD.

THOSE WHO FAIL TO COLLECT THEIR ADMISSION FORMS BY MAY 24 WILL BE REGARDED AS HAVING WITHDRAWN THEIR ENTRIES.

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LEGCO MEETING TOMORROW

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AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY), THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ASKED WHETHER IT WILL CONSIDER THE EARLY INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION SO AS TO MAKE IT MANDATORY TO USE +SILENT TYPE+ PILE-DRIVERS IN ORDER TO FURTHER REDUCE NOISE POLLUTION.

THE HON. LI FOOK-WO, WILL ALSO ASK IF THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONSIDER EXTENDING THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE OPERATION OF PILE-DRIVERS TO OTHER ITEMS OF NOISY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TOMORROW.

DR. THE HON. S.Y. CHUNG WILL ASK THE GOVERNMENT FOR A MORE ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL ACCOUNTS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1976 WHILE THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN WILL ASK FOR A WRITTEN STATEMENT SHOWING THE PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE HONG KONG TELEPHONE COMPANY.

THE HON. JOHN BREMRIDGE WILL ENQUIRE IF THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO ENCOURAGE THE CULTIVATION OF AGRICULTURAL PLOTS WHICH ARE LYING FALLOW.

OTHER QUESTIONS CONCERN GOVERNMENT ACTION TO GUARD AGAINST FOOD POISONING IN FACTORY AND SCHOOL CANTEENS, MEASURES TO PREVENT AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BICYCLE ACCIDENTS AND THE NEED TO PROVIDE SWIMMING POOLS IN THE MORE DENSELY POPULATED TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

COMING UP FOR FIRST READING ARE THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE MIDWIVES REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1976.

DEBATE WILL BE RESUMED ON EIGHT BILLS. THEY INCLUDE THE MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 AND THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976.

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MORE RAIN EXPECTED  
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IN THE PRELIMINARY SEASONAL RAINFALL FORECAST ISSUED BY THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR IT WAS PREDICTED THAT THE RAINFALL FOR THE PERIOD FROM MAY TO OCTOBER AND FOR THE YEAR AS A WHOLE WOULD BE SLIGHTLY BELOW NORMAL.

HOWEVER, METEOROLOGICAL DATA FOR APRIL WHICH HAS NOW BEEN ANALYSED INDICATES THAT MORE RAIN MAY BE EXPECTED.

IT IS NOW FORECAST THAT THE RAINFALL BETWEEN MAY AND OCTOBER WILL RANGE FROM 1,750 MM TO 2,250 MM AS AGAINST AN AVERAGE OF 1,814 MM.

FOR THE YEAR AS A WHOLE THE RAINFALL IS FORECAST TO LIE BETWEEN 2,150 MM AND 2,650 MM. THIS COMPARES WITH AN AVERAGE OF 2,169 MM.

UP TO MAY 10 THIS YEAR, RAINFALL IS ABOUT 44 PER CENT BELOW AVERAGE WITH ONLY 196.1 MM RECORDED AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY AS AGAINST AN AVERAGE OF 347.5 MM.

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DEATH SENTENCE COMMUTED  
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THE GOVERNOR, AFTER TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE ADVICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, HAS DECIDED THAT THE DEATH SENTENCE PASSED ON SEPTEMBER 25, 1975 ON LAM MUI-YAU SHOULD BE COMMUTED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT.

LAM WAS FOUND GUILTY OF THE MURDER OF LAM HUNG ALIAS LAM KWAI-HUNG AND HIS WIFE, CHAN HEUNG.

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LIVING CONDITIONS IN KAU WAH KENG UPPER VILLAGE IMPROVED  
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LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE KAU WAH KENG UPPER VILLAGE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN IMPROVED WITH THE HELP OF THE SHAMSHUIPO CITY DISTRICT OFFICE.

THE IMPROVEMENTS FOLLOWED AN APPEAL BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ABOUT 1,000 INHABITANTS TO THE SHAMSHUIPO CITY DISTRICT OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE AFTER NUMEROUS ACCIDENTS IN WHICH VILLAGERS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE FALLEN INTO A DITCH FROM A NARROW FOOTPATH.

AS A RESULT OF A SITE VISIT, STAFF OF THE C.D.O. APPLIED FOR AN ALLOCATION OF FUND FROM THE LANDS DIVISION OF THE HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO BUILD A FENCE SEPARATING THE FOOTPATH FROM THE DITCH.

A 300-FOOT-LONG FENCE, COSTING \$5,520, WAS COMPLETED BY THE END OF MARCH. SINCE THEN, THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORT OF ACCIDENT.

MEANWHILE, THROUGH THE HELP OF THE C.D.O. STAFF, ANOTHER STANDPIPE HAS BEEN INSTALLED IN THE VILLAGE, BRINGING THE NUMBER OF STANDPIPES THERE TO TWO. THIS ENABLES THE VILLAGERS TO GET THEIR WATER SUPPLY MUCH EASIER.

APART FROM THIS, THE C.D.O. STAFF ARE GIVING ASSISTANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE VILLAGERS WHO ARE NOW CONTEMPLATING TO FORM A MUTUAL AID COMMITTEE IN AN AFFORT TO FURTHER IMPROVE THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS.

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WATER CUT  
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WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES ON THE PEAK AND TSUEN WAN AREAS WILL BE INTERRUPTED FOR FIVE HOURS STARTING FROM 1 A.M. ON MAY 14 (FRIDAY) TO ENABLE WATERWORKS STAFF TO CARRY OUT LEAKAGE TESTS.

THE AFFECTED AREA ON THE PEAK IS BOUNDED BY ROSMEAD ROAD, WATFORD ROAD, GUILDFORD ROAD, COOMBE ROAD, MIDDLE GAP ROAD, AND MT. CAMERON ROAD. ALSO AFFECTED WILL BE HOUSE NO. 21, 22, 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40, 44, 46, AND 50 MAGAZINE GAP ROAD= NO. 52, 54 AND 56 PEAK ROAD AND 1-3 BARKER ROAD.

IN TSUEN WAN, THE AFFECTED AREA IS BOUNDED BY TAI CHUNG ROAD, SHA TSUI ROAD AND CASTLE PEAK ROAD INCLUDING PAK TIN PA ROAD.

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