



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, September 21, 1972

MASS TRANSIT SCHEME TO MEET

"BOOMING DEMAND FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT"

The Acting Commissioner for Transport, Mr. R. Butler, today compared the difference between the Bay Area Rapid Transit system in the United States and the proposed Mass Transit system in Hong Kong.

Speaking at the Kowloon Rotary Club luncheon today, he said the attraction of BART is its speed.

Mr. Butler said: "The Rapid Transit has been reintroduced in America because the private car has failed to move people around at satisfactory speeds -- particularly on the trip to and from school and the place of work."

It has a maximum speed of 80 miles per hour and its service speeds are 45-50 m.p.h.

Referring to Hong Kong's proposed Mass Transit, he said, it is aimed at feeding a booming demand for public transport and enabling people who in the main are "car-less to move."

"With our short distances, the planned average speed of movement by the proposed mass transit is 20 miles an hour."

Today four million or so passengers travel on public transport. By mid 1980's it is estimated that the number will have risen to 7½ million.

/Mr. Butler

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Mr. Butler said: "Engineers predicted that even if we were really beastly to the private motorists our roads could not cope with the predicted demand for purely public transport."

This is why the Government has decided in principle to build the Mass Transit Railway.

Mr. Butler expressed the hope that the speed differential offered by the mass transit over the private car would provide some inducement to motorists to leave their cars at home in peak hours.

However, he emphasised that this is not the fundamental reason why consideration is being given to spending over \$6,000 million on the scheme.

The mass transit system is primarily for "the car-less majority."

The Acting Commissioner said he was not "gloomy" about Hong Kong's transport future. In a compact urban area good transport was fairly easy to establish.

"But in the peak hours, at any rate, it has got to be public transport. This means that private transport has to be discriminately discouraged and public transport improved to a level which at least makes it a second-best to the private car."

Mr. Butler said that for surface public transport improvements in speed and frequencies would come automatically as other traffic was constrained. At the moment, he added, bus speeds in many cases were down to five miles an hour in the "glue pot" at peak hours.

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Earlier today, a model of the proposed rolling stock for the mass transit system was shown at a press conference organised by the British consultants responsible for the design of the electrical and mechanical works.

Mr. Geoffrey Kennedy, a senior partner of the firm, said the trains proposed to meet the expected traffic requirements consisted of a maximum of eight coaches with a top speed of 50 miles an hour.

They would have a capacity of more than 3,000 people, while the system was designed to move 60,000 people an hour in each direction at peak hours.

"The coaches are designed to provide the maximum space possible for the high density passenger traffic expected, and only side-seating is provided with adequate hand-rail support for standing passengers," Mr. Kennedy said.

The speed and stopping of the train would be automatically controlled throughout the journey.

Mr. Kennedy said he expected the Government to make a decision on the train design before the group leaves Hong Kong at the end of the week.

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LAI CHI KOK HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS "PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL"

The new hospital on the Lai Chi Kok promontory is to be known as the Princess Margaret Hospital following the receipt of royal approval for the new name.

Announcing this today, the Director of Medical and Health Services, Dr. G.H. Choa, said: "It is a very happy choice indeed. The main government hospital on the Island has been known for many years as the Queen Mary Hospital, and the main government hospital in Kowloon as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

"It is therefore appropriate that the third major government hospital in Hong Kong is being named after a member of the Royal Family. Princess Margaret is well-known personally to the people of Hong Kong."

She was here on an official visit with her husband, Lord Snowdon, in 1966. In 1969, she passed through Hong Kong on her way home after an official visit to Japan.

The foundation stone of the Princess Margaret Hospital was laid by Princess Anne in October last year during a six-day visit to Hong Kong. Construction is now well advanced and the general wing of the hospital is expected to be opened in 1974.

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The Princess Margaret Hospital will consist of two wings of 1,300 beds each - general and psychiatric. The latter is expected to be operative in 1976.

The site is on the Lai Chi Kok promontory between the densely-populated area of north-west Kowloon and the rapidly developing townships of Kwai Chung and Tsuen Wan. It is conveniently situated to both these areas, and will also be readily available for the admission of patients from the western New Territories.

Tenders were only recently called for the construction of staff quarters, including a school for psychiatric nurses.

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CHAI WAN TO HAVE A NEW PEST CONTROL OFFICE

A new pest control office is to be built at Lin Shing Road in Chai Wan.

Costing about \$143,000, the project involves the construction of a single-storey concrete building of about 1,000 square feet. It will contain barrack accommodation for 10 anti-malarial officers of the Urban Services Department and storerooms for larvicide and various anti-malarial equipment.

Construction work will begin in early November and take about five months.

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TAIKOO DOCKYARD LABOUR DISPUTE

There were promising developments in the dispute at the Taikoo Dockyard this afternoon following a visit by the Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department.

Officers from the Service visited the workers shortly after lunch and established a dialogue with them. As a result, some of the workers later met with the management of the dockyard.

A spokesman for the Labour Department said that this is a most promising turn of events and it is hoped that the discussions between management and workers will continue and lead to a resumption of work.

The Service had offered assistance to both management and workers and will continue to keep in close touch with both parties.

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POLICE TO BE EQUIPPED WITH NEW DRIVING SCHOOL

The police force is to have its own driving school within the site of the new Police Tactical Unit now being constructed at Lung Cheung Road.

The school consists of administrative offices, classrooms, a demonstration and practice room, dining and recreation spaces and facilities for the inspection and repairing of vehicles.

There will also be a driving area with a road network for exercises and a large parking space.

The need for the school arises from the much greater skill required of a driver of a police vehicle, which may be a land rover, a saracen or a motor cycle.

The driver, who is also a policeman, has to proceed on emergency calls and manoeuvre under various, sometimes extremely difficult, road conditions.

He also has to set a good example of safe driving to members of the public.

Site formation for the driving school is expected to start early in November and be completed by the end of May next year.

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NEW STAMP FOR ISSUE IN NOVEMBER

The Post Office announced today that two special stamps to commemorate the Silver Wedding anniversary (25 years) of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will be on sale at all post offices in November.

The stamps, in horizontal format, will be issued in the 10 cent and 50 cent denominations.

They feature a portrait of the Royal Couple in a green background for the 10-cent stamp and grey for the 50-cent one.

The stamp will go on sale on November 20 and further detail will be announced later.

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Note to Editors: Copies of a photograph of the new stamp are distributed separately in the G.I.S. press boxes this evening.

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NEW PARKS IN KOWLOON AND KWAI CHUNG

Work will begin soon on two new projects to provide additional recreational facilities for Lo Fu Ngam and Kwai Chung.

A rectangular park, measuring about 83,000 square feet, is to be built on top of the existing Lo Fu Ngam service reservoir at the southwestern side of Fu On Street.

It will consist of a rest garden with flower beds, park benches and paved footpaths. Because of the proximity of the radar station for the approach system to the airport runway, it has been decided not to include any space for active sports such as football.

At the same time a rest garden will be built between blocks 14 and 22 of the Kwai Chung Resettlement Estate.

The garden, covering an area of about 12,000 square feet, will include sitting out areas and flower beds.

Both parks should be completed in the early part of 1973.

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THREE-DAY CAMP FOR YOUNG DISABLED

About 260 young handicapped members of the Social Welfare Department's clubs and centres for the physically and mentally disabled will spend three days at a camp in the Wu Kai Sha youth village beginning on Tuesday (September 26).

The group includes young people who are deaf, lame, retarded, spastic, or who have a speech defect. Forty-four staff members and volunteers will join the camp to look after them, in addition to two nurses, who will stay overnight.

As a precaution against any child becoming lost measures will be adopted for the easy identification of the participants. Staff and volunteers are being trained to keep a watch out for them during the outdoor activities and there will be special roll-calls.

A spokesman for the Rehabilitation Section says the camp has been designed to provide the youngsters with an opportunity for physical recreation, games, and creative work in an outdoor setting.

The three days and two nights they will spend at the Chinese YMCA site at Wu Kai Sha will give them some experience of sharing activities with others in games and living quarters.

"We have prepared a balanced programme," the spokesman says. "The programme will include activities for the whole camp, such as film shows and a barbecue, and activities for special groups, including Chinese billiards and ping pong. For the few who can only move with difficulty, there will be opportunities for observation and creative work."

Mrs. Rose Goodstadt, Acting Principal Social Welfare Officer (Rehabilitation), will present prizes to winners of various competitions at a ceremony marking the close of the camp.

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Note to Editors: You are invited to have the camp outing covered. It is an unusual event. A station wagon will be on hand at 12:30 p.m. on September 27 at the Kowloon City Ferry Pier to take reporters, broadcasters and TV cameramen to Ma Liu Shui. Mr. Ko Kwok Shue of the Kwun Tong Settlement for the Severely Disabled will accompany the Press to the camp.

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SPEED LIMIT ON SECTION OF CASTLE PEAK ROAD

The Commissioner for Transport announced today that starting from this Saturday (September 23), a speed limit will be imposed on a section of Castle Peak Road.

The section between Yuen Long Eastern Roundabout and Au Tau Cross Road will become restricted and no vehicles may drive on it at a speed above 30 miles an hour.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.