



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1976

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EMPLOYMENT SITUATION & IMPROVEMENT INDICATED

ACCORDING TO A SAMPLE SURVEY CONDUCTED IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, THERE WERE AT THAT TIME 177,000 UNEMPLOYED PERSONS IN HONG KONG.

THIS NUMBER REPRESENTED 9.1 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL LABOUR FORCE.

IN ANNOUNCING THESE FIGURES, THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS EXPLAINED THAT DEFINITIONS OF THE WORDS +UNEMPLOYED+ AND +LABOUR FORCE+ VARIED IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE DEFINITION USED IN THE RECENT SURVEY WAS THAT ANYONE WAS UNEMPLOYED IF HE WAS AGED BETWEEN 14-64 AND WAS NOT IN EMPLOYMENT BUT WAS LOOKING FOR WORK. ANYBODY WHO HAD WORKED FOR MORE THAN 15 HOURS IN THE SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO THE SURVEY DATE WAS TAKEN TO BE EMPLOYED.

THE COMMISSIONER EMPHASISED THE DIFFICULTY OF DETERMINING ANY COMMONLY ACCEPTED DEFINITION OF TERMS IN THIS FIELD. FOR EXAMPLE, THE FIGURE GIVEN INCLUDES PEOPLE WHO HAD JUST LEFT SCHOOL AND WHO REALLY HAD NOT HAD MUCH OF A CHANCE TO PICK UP A JOB- IT INCLUDES PEOPLE WHO HAD JUST, BUT ONLY JUST, TAKEN UP WORK- IT INCLUDES PEOPLE WHO HAD TEMPORARILY, BUT ONLY TEMPORARILY, BEEN LAID OFF WORK- AND ALSO INCLUDES PEOPLE WHO WERE AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BUT WHO WERE NOT ACTUALLY LOOKING FOR WORK BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS NONE TO BE HAD. ON THE OTHER HAND, AMONGST THE EMPLOYED WERE INCLUDED SUCH PEOPLE AS HAWKERS AND UNPAID FAMILY WORKERS WHO, IF OTHER JOBS WERE AVAILABLE, WOULD BE IN THEM.

COMMENTING ON THESE FIGURES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EMPHASISED THAT THEY RELATED TO A PERIOD SOME FOUR MONTHS AGO AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IS BETTER THAN IN SEPTEMBER. HE POINTED TO THE VERY ENCOURAGING TRADE FIGURES FOR THE LAST QUARTER OF 1975. EMPLOYMENT FIGURES ALSO SEEMED TO INDICATE IMPROVEMENT.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST EMPLOYMENT SURVEY CONDUCTED IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1975 BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, A TOTAL OF 678,857 PERSONS WERE ENGAGED IN MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS AS AT DECEMBER 4, 1975. THIS REPRESENTED AN INCREASE OF 51,226 PERSONS OR 8.2 PER CENT WHEN COMPARED WITH THE FIGURE OF 627,631 FOR SEPTEMBER 1975.

AT THE INDUSTRY SECTOR LEVEL, MAIN INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN GARMENTS (+25,328), ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS (+5,611), COTTON WEAVING (+2,567), MISCELLANEOUS FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS (+1,596) AND MISCELLANEOUS PLASTIC PRODUCTS (+1,519). DECREASES IN EMPLOYMENT WERE RECORDED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF GLOVES (-819), SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIRING (-729) AND PLASTIC FLOWERS (-423).

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IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT, THE TWO LARGEST INDUSTRY GROUPS REMAINED WEARING APPAREL (238,958) AND TEXTILES (112,922). ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, APPLIANCES AND SUPPLIES (66,353) HAS REGAINED FROM PLASTIC PRODUCTS (63,706) AS THE THIRD LARGEST INDUSTRY GROUP WHILE FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS (57,322) WAS STILL IN THE FIFTH POSITION.

WHEN COMPARED WITH A TOTAL OF 600,128 PERSONS ENGAGED IN DECEMBER 1974, THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS IN DECEMBER 1975 WAS HIGHER BY 79,000 PERSONS OR 13 PER CENT.

THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ALSO NOTED THAT THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY LAST SEPTEMBER WAS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND AND THUS HAD NO REAL BASIS FOR COMPARISON WITH ANYTHING ELSE, EXCEPT POSSIBLY THE 1971 POPULATION CENSUS WHICH WAS HOWEVER REMOVED AT A FAR DISTANCE OF TIME. A SIMILAR LABOUR FORCE SURVEY WILL BE CONDUCTED IN MARCH 1976 AND SUBJECT TO CONSIDERATIONS OF SEASONALITY, THERE WOULD THEN BE SOME BASIS FOR COMPARISON OVER A FAIRLY SHORT TIME SPAN.

GENERALLY, HE THOUGHT THAT THE RESULTS OF THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY WERE FAR FROM PROVIDING CAUSE FOR ALARM AND NOTED THAT THE OVERALL UNEMPLOYED FIGURE WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LESS THAN SOME OF THE MORE PESSIMISTIC GUESSES PUT OUT OVER PAST MONTHS.

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DEATH SENTENCES COMMUTED

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HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, AFTER TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE ADVICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, HAS DECIDED THAT THE DEATH SENTENCES PASSED ON MAY 29, 1975 ON WONG TAK-SANG AND WONG SUI-LUN SHOULD BE COMMUTED TO 15 YEARS' AND 10 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT RESPECTIVELY.

IT WAS ALLEGED BY WONG TAK-SANG DURING THE TRIAL THAT WONG TIM HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH WONG TAK-SANG'S WIFE AGAINST HER WILL, HAVING THREATENED HER CHILDREN AND PESTERED HER ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS.

WONG TAK-SANG AND HIS NEPHEW WERE BOTH FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER FOLLOWING AN ATTACK ON WONG TIM.

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EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

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THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR. THOMAS LEE, TODAY (TUESDAY) PRAISED THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG FOR THEIR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY TOWARDS VICTIMS OF DISASTERS.

HE WAS ADDRESSING THE LIONS CLUB OF LION ROCK AT THEIR LUNCHEON MEETING HELD AT THE MANDARIN HOTEL WHERE HE WAS PRESENTED WITH A CHEQUE FOR \$10,000 FOR THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND IN AID OF THE ALDRICH BAY FIRE VICTIMS.

THE DIRECTOR SAID, +UP TO YESTERDAY MORNING, MORE THAN \$800,000 DONATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE FUNDS RAISED BY THE TWO TELEVISION STATIONS.

+IT IS MOST GRATIFYING TO SEE THE ENTHUSIASTIC AND WARM RESPONSE SHOWN BY PEOPLE OF HONG KONG TOWARDS THE LESS FORTUNATE WHO ARE AGGRIEVED BY DISASTER OF SUCH MAGNITUDE.+

MR. LEE ALSO POINTED OUT HONG KONG HAD ITS FAIR SHARE OF FIRES AND OTHER DISASTERS ALL THE TIME BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR LESSER EXTENT OF DAMAGE CAUSED, THEY TENDED TO ATTRACT LESS PUBLIC CONCERN.

+BUT, REGARDLESS OF THE SIZE OF THE DISASTER, THE SUFFERINGS OF ALL VICTIMS AND THEIR NEEDS ARE THE SAME. THEREFORE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND HAS ALWAYS WELCOMED DONATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR VICTIMS OF ALL DISASTERS SO THAT THEY MAY BE ABLE TO BENEFIT MORE,+ HE SAID.

THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND, THE DIRECTOR SAID, WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1962 DESIGNED TO PROVIDE HELP FOR VICTIMS OF FIRES AND OTHER DISASTERS.

THE FUND IS ADMINISTERED BY A COMMITTEE WHICH HAS CAREFULLY WORKED OUT THE WAY IN WHICH PAYMENTS TO VICTIMS SHOULD BE MADE WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE TO MEET THE DIFFERENT NEEDS OF THOSE WHO REQUIRE HELP.

+IT IS ALSO THE PRACTICE OF THE COMMITTEE TO RESPECT THE WISH OF THE DONORS TO THE FUND- AND IF THEY WISH THEIR DONATIONS BE USED TO BRING HELP DIRECTLY TO THE ALDRICH BAY FIRE VICTIMS, THE DONATIONS WILL CERTAINLY BE DISTRIBUTED ACCORDINGLY,+ MR. LEE SAID.

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TURNING TO THE 1972 JUNE RAINSTORM DISASTER, THE DIRECTOR NOTED THAT ABOUT \$17 MILLION DONATION WAS RECEIVED IN AID OF SOME 23,000 VICTIMS. +THE DONATIONS TOGETHER WITH INTEREST DEPOSITED WITH THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND HAVE BEEN PAID OUT TO THE VICTIMS,+ HE SAID.

THE PAYMENTS INCLUDED ABOUT \$6.6 MILLION ON EX-GRATIA GRANTS FOR EACH VICTIM- \$2.4 MILLION FOR RE-ACCOMMODATION AND RE-EQUIPMENT GRANTS- \$400,000 FOR GRANTS IN RESPECT OF DEATH OR PERSONAL INJURIES- \$800,000 FOR AGRICULTURAL GRANTS- AND SOME \$500,000 AS REHABILITATION GRANTS TO CERTAIN FAMILIES IN SPECIAL NEED.

APART FROM THIS, MR. LEE CONTINUED, A SPECIAL ORPHANS FUND WAS SET UP FOR 76 CHILDREN WHO LOST ONE OR BOTH OF THEIR PARENTS IN THE DISASTER, AND ABOUT \$5.7 MILLION HAD BEEN PAID TO THESE CHILDREN.

+A DOMESTIC FLAT AND A PIECE OF LAND IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WERE DONATED BY THE PUBLIC FOR THE DISASTER VICTIMS AND WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SALE OF THESE PROPERTIES. ONCE THEY ARE SOLD, THE PROCEEDS TOGETHER WITH THE BALANCE NOW DEPOSITED WITH THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND UNDER A SEPARATE ACCOUNT WILL ALL BE SPENT AS THE FINAL PAYMENT TO THE ORPHANS,+ MR. LEE SAID.

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NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS
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NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED AT THE JUNCTION OF JAVA ROAD AND TONG SHUI ROAD, NORTH POINT, ON THURSDAY (FEBRUARY 12).

STARTING FROM 10 A.M., THE WESTERN CARRIAGEWAY OF TONG SHUI ROAD TO THE NORTH OF JAVA ROAD WILL BECOME ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND WHILE THE EASTERN CARRIAGEWAY OF TONG SHUI ROAD TO THE NORTH OF JAVA ROAD WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY SOUTHBOUND.

TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE PUT UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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SCHOLARSHIPS AND TRAINING GRANTS OFFERED

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS NOW AVAILABLE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS AND THOSE WHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR POTENTIAL TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY TO PURSUE FURTHER STUDIES OR TRAINING EITHER LOCALLY OR ABROAD.

THE SIR ROBERT BLACK TRUST FUND COMMITTEE IS INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF AWARDS FOR 1976/77.

A SPOKESMAN SAID THE PRIMARY AIM OF THE AWARDS WAS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE OF EXCEPTIONAL MERIT TO DEVELOP THEIR INITIATIVE AND CHARACTER SO THAT THEY COULD BETTER SERVE THE COMMUNITY.

PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO CANDIDATES OF PROVEN ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE IN FIELDS WHICH ARE OF SIGNIFICANCE TO COMMUNITY LIFE, SUCH AS JOURNALISM, SOCIAL WORK, EDUCATION, ARTS, TELECOMMUNICATION AND TOURISM.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POST-GRADUATE STUDIES OR RESEARCH AND GRANTS FOR TRAINING PROGRAMMES SUCH AS ATTACHMENTS AND STUDY TOURS WILL BE AVAILABLE. CANDIDATES ARE REQUIRED TO PROPOSE THEIR OWN PROGRAMMES OF STUDY OR TRAINING.

THE AMOUNT OF AWARD WOULD VARY WITH DIFFERENT PROGRAMMES AND MAY OR MAY NOT COVER THE FULL EXPENSES.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUPPORTED BY EITHER THE HEAD OF SCHOOL OR COLLEGE IN THE CASE OF SCHOLARSHIPS OR THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON OF A FIRM OR ORGANISATION IN THE CASE OF TRAINING GRANTS.

APPLICANTS SHOULD HAVE RESIDED IN HONG KONG FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS AND MUST BE PREPARED TO RETURN TO HONG KONG AND WORK HERE FOR AT LEAST THREE YEARS.

APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE TRUST FUND OFFICE, HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, INTERNATIONAL BUILDING, 10TH FLOOR, 141 DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL, HONG KONG AND MUST BE RETURNED TOGETHER WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS TO THE SAME OFFICE BY APRIL 15.

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CAS PRAISED FOR FIRE PREVENTION EFFORTS

THE CIVIL AID SERVICES WERE OUT IN FORCE LAST WEEKEND SUPPORTING THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PRESERVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE FROM HILL-FIRES.

THE DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN PAID TRIBUTE TO THE COMMENDABLE WORK OF THE SERVICES' VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND SAID THE COMMUNITY WAS GRATEFUL TO THEM.

A HUNDRED REGULAR MEMBERS AND 50 CADETS GAVE UP THEIR HOLIDAYS FOR THIS PRAISE-WORTHY PUBLIC SERVICE.

THEY SET OUT EARLY ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND AGAIN ON SUNDAY MORNING AND WERE POSTED TO PLANTATION AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WHICH ARE POPULAR PICNIC AND BARBECUE SPOTS.

TRACKING OVER LARGE STRETCHES OF ROUGH COUNTRYSIDE, THEY HELPED THE DEPARTMENT'S FIRE-FIGHTING PATROLS LOOKING OUT FOR GRASS-FIRES AND BEATING THEM OUT.

ALTOGETHER THERE WERE NINE FIRES DURING THE WEEKEND — TWO ON SATURDAY AND SEVEN ON SUNDAY. THE CAS WERE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN STAMPING OUT THREE — AT BRIDE'S POOL, TAI LAM CHUNG AND SHING MUN. THESE FIRES WERE CONFINED IN TIME AND DID NOT LEAD TO DISASTERS.

THE SPOKESMAN CALLED ON MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO CONTINUE TO PAY HEED TO THE PROPER DISPOSAL OF MATCHES AND CIGARETTE ENDS AND THE STARTING OF BARBECUE FIRES IN THE COUNTRY AREAS.

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NEW PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT

A STREET IN MEI FOO SUN CHUEN WILL BECOME A PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT ON THURSDAY (FEBRUARY 12).

THE STREET, MOUNT STERLING MALL, WILL BE CLOSED TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FROM 10 A.M. ON THURSDAY WHEN PEDESTRIANS WILL HAVE FULL USE OF THE MALL.

TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE PUT UP AT EACH END OF THE MALL.

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