



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, August 9, 1973

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INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT REACHES NEW HIGH

Hong Kong's industrial work force reached an all-time high of 625,087 in June this year, according to an industrial employment survey carried out by the Census and Statistics Department on behalf of the Labour Department.

This represents an increase of 8,478 or 1.4 per cent over the figure for the previous quarter ending March 31.

At the same time, a record number of 22,108 industrial establishments were recorded -- an increase of 313. Compared to June last year, this represents a rise of 8.3 per cent.

Commenting on the findings of the survey, a spokesman for the Labour Department said the figures clearly showed that both the employment situation and the number of industrial establishments "are in a very healthy state", contrary to some recent reports.

While the percentage increase in the industrial labour force appeared small, it more than made up for the three per cent down turn recorded in the previous January-March quarter, he said.

The biggest expansion in employment occurred in the electronics industry which went up by 5,134. The next highest was the plastics industry with an increase of 2,303, followed by metal products, up by 1,496, and cotton weaving, up by 1,014.

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However, the rubber footwear and wigs industries continued to decline, registering decreases in manpower of 2,037 and 1,970, respectively.

The four largest industries, in terms of employment, remained the manufacture of textiles and textile made-ups (266,330), plastic products (74,312), electrical products and machinery (66,960), and metal products other than machinery (50,613).

During the survey, a total of 15,368 vacancies were recorded in 1,147 establishments. The main vacancies fell within the garments industry (4,590), electronics (3,246), plastics (1,333) and cotton spinning and weaving (793).

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AIRPORT SECURITY

Note to Editors: The Airport Security Committee has advised the Director of Civil Aviation that access to the aircraft parking apron should be restricted only to those people who are essential to the operation of aircraft, carriage of freight, passengers and mail, etc., and to no others. This recommendation has been accepted.

It follows from this that press photographers will no longer be allowed onto the tarmac or in any other restricted areas of Kai Tak Airport, and the two G.I.S. officers who have been posted to Kai Tak will now be withdrawn.

Some committee members of the Hong Kong Journalist Association have already been informed of this decision and the reasons for it have been explained to them. Any inconvenience this may cause to journalists is much regretted but the whole question of airport security is, of course, of paramount importance.

Special arrangements will, of course, be made for special circumstances, but as a general rule it will be no longer possible for photographers to cover arrivals or departures in any restricted part of the airport.

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MUTUAL AID AS SAFEGUARD AGAINST CRIME

Resident associations can play a special role in the **fight against crime**, the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr. Jack Cater, said this (Thursday) evening.

With their experience in self-help, he said, they could be of "great assistance in spreading the idea of mutual aid as a safeguard against criminal elements."

Mr. Cater was speaking at the inauguration of the new board of directors of the Kiangsu and Chekiang (Hong Kong) Residents Association in the Kiangsu-Chekiang College.

He again underlined the importance of good neighbourliness and urged the people of Hong Kong to use their "strong and tenacious tradition of mutual enterprise" and apply it to new problems and situations to meet the challenge of "our new society."

In this connection, he cited as an example the mutual aid committees and neighbourhood associations which brought together people of varying backgrounds to discuss common problems and possible solutions.

"Crime, and what to do about preventing it, is their main concern at the moment. And rightly so," he said. "But there is so much more they can achieve from this beginning -- not least of all the comfort gained from trust and from friendship itself."

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Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of Mr. Cater's speech are available for collection in the G.I.S. press boxes.

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TAXI DRIVING LICENCES

The Transport Department will again accept applications for taxi driving licences as from August 15, after a break of nearly a year.

No application had been accepted since October 23 last year because the waiting list was overlong and there was no point in adding to it, a spokesman explained.

Since then, however, additional premises have become available in Kowloon and the testing rate has been increased.

Appointments are now made for about 276 applicants a day, but some fail to appear for appointments.

About 180 applicants a day pass the test and receive taxi driving licences.

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BETTER MANAGEMENT OF HOUSING ESTATES

Management of Hong Kong's older public housing estates will be much improved when the caretaker system presently adopted by the newer estates is expanded.

About 450 estate caretakers are to be recruited in the next few months to strengthen the present force of 220.

At present, only former Housing Authority estates, government low-cost estates and the newer resettlement estates adopt the caretaker system.

It will be extended to all former Mark III to VI resettlement blocks and enable a 24-hour service when the caretaker force is expanded.

Mr. Frank Carroll, Director of Estates Management, today described the move as a big step forward in bringing the management of older and newer public housing estates to the same level.

"Experience teaches that estates could be more efficiently managed and tenants better looked after with caretakers attached to housing blocks," he said.

"At the same time, the introduction of caretakers to older estates would considerably improve the level of security and should have a deterrent effect on criminals."

The duty of estate caretakers is to keep their estate in order. They are required to patrol their estates and deal with emergencies, such as lift breakdowns. They are especially useful outside office hours when the estate offices are closed.

Mr. Carroll said tenants could report to caretakers at any hour of the day and immediate action would be taken.

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MEET THE MEDIA

Note to Editors: Another session of the "Meet the Media" series will be held tomorrow (Friday) at 12 noon.

The panel will comprise Mr. A. de O. Sales, Chairman of the Urban Council; Mr. Hilton Cheong-leen, Vice-Chairman, Mr. D.R.W. Alexander, Director of the Urban Services Department; and Mr. H.H. Ross, Secretary of the Urban Council.

You are invited to send representatives to attend the meeting, which will be held in the G.I.S. 35 mm theatre, 5th floor, Beaconsfield House.

Television crews are requested to have their equipment set up before the start of the meeting.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.