



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Monday, October 22, 1973

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SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSIONER APPOINTED

Mr. Trevor Bedford, at present Deputy Secretary for Security in the Colonial Secretariat, has been appointed Special Assistant to the Commissioner for Anti-Corruption, Mr. Jack Cater.

He will head a special planning group set up to consider the organisation of the new Anti-Corruption Commission, it was announced today.

Mr. Bedford, 39, studied law at university. He joined the Hong Kong civil service in August 1960 as an administrative officer, and has since held a number of responsible posts in various government departments.

He was District Officer of Taipo from 1966 to 1967. The following year he attended the Joint Services Staff College and on his return from leave was appointed Police Civil Secretary until 1972. Mr. Bedford recently returned from a year's study at the Royal College of Defence Studies in London.

He was awarded the M.B.E. last year.

Note to Editors: Copies of Mr. Bedford's photograph will be available for collection in the G.I.S. Press boxes later this evening.

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DIPHTHERIA NOW ALMOST ERADICATED IN HONG KONG

Medical Spokesman Reports Success Thanks To Public Co-Operation

Diphtheria, one of the main causes of death among children, has virtually ceased to pose a threat to Hong Kong after years of concerted effort by the Medical and Health Department to eradicate it.

The last diphtheria case was recorded in September 1972 and since then none has been reported.

Giving the reasons for the present effective control of the disease, a spokesman for the department said today this was the outcome of a preventive programme to which the public had responded well.

An anti-diphtheria campaign providing free inoculation has been maintained in the last quarter of every year since 1959. In that year, a diphtheria epidemic had taken a toll of 116 deaths out of 2,087 notifications.

"It has taken Hong Kong 14 years to virtually eradicate diphtheria, and this is roughly the same time that it has taken other countries to do the same," the spokesman said.

Credit for the success should go to both the department for having left no stone unturned in the anti-diphtheria fight, and the general public, without whose acceptance of the need for inoculation the annual reminder drives would have made little headway.

The spokesman saw in Hong Kong's battle against diphtheria a number of special features which made its success unusual by international standards.

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"Up till recently each child who had a diphtheria shot received a specially wrapped sweet. These sweets were very popular with children and took away their fear of injections," he explained.

The spokesman said the way in which the campaign was conducted was also unusual. Door-to-door visits were carried out in crowded tenement blocks, housing estates and squatter areas by inoculators and health visitors to ensure that infants and pre-school children were immunised.

In addition, mobile inoculation teams visited schools and other congregations of young people.

At times, medical staff and equipment were flown by helicopter to outlying islands and inaccessible spots to make certain that infants there were not left out of the general inoculation programme.

"There are currently 60 inoculators attached to various health offices. They also make up mobile inoculation teams which set up temporary inoculation posts in such places as street-corners," the spokesman said.

He emphasised that "no effort is spared to ensure that children in every part of Hong Kong are immunised against the disease."

But despite the successful containment of diphtheria in Hong Kong, he cautioned that there was no room for complacency or a relaxation of continuous measures against the disease, because "any failure to take preventive action can lead to its return."

He urged parents to get their children immunised during this year's routine campaign now under way.

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Since these annual drives were begun in 1959, more than 10 million doses of anti-diphtheria vaccine -- comprising first doses, second doses and boosters -- had been administered.

"Anti-diphtheria inoculation is available free throughout the year at all the department's maternal and child health centres, inoculation centres and clinics. It is a service that parents should fully use. It exists for them," the spokesman stressed.

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RISE IN TRAVEL TO AND FROM HONG KONG

More than 4.8 million travellers were cleared by the Immigration Department during the six-month period from April to September this year.

According to statistics released by the department today, a total of 4,821,114 people -- 2,425,173 arriving in Hong Kong and 2,395,941 departing -- passed through immigration clearance during those months.

This represents an increase of 23.86 per cent over the same period last year, when 1,951,273 arrivals and 1,940,991 departures, or a total of 3,892,264 clearances was recorded.

The figures do not include travellers on transit or people refused permission to enter Hong Kong.

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TRAINING THE DISABLED BEFORE EMPLOYMENT

The Job Placement Unit of the Social Welfare Department will arrange special training for disabled persons if any prospective employers wish to have them equipped with certain skills before employing them.

Mr. Chan Shiu-wing, Officer-in-charge of the Unit said today, whenever possible disabled persons are given some basic training, depending on disability, to prepare them for employment in factory jobs or other types of work such as telephone operators.

"But if some employers need people with specific skills and are willing to take in disabled persons, we will certainly help to arrange their training."

Citing an example, he said eight blind persons were at present receiving training on knotting fishing hooks at Wong Tai Sin Blind Welfare Centre. "This was arranged by the Unit so that they will be employed by a factory making fishing accessories."

The firm, Winpull Fishing Accessories Co. Ltd., has already taken on four disabled persons - a mentally retarded girl, a cured TB patient and two formerly mentally ill persons.

These four were among 28 whom the Unit had placed in jobs during September. They comprised seven cripples, four deaf, eight formerly mentally ill patients, six mentally retarded and three cured TB patients.

One was given a job as a storekeeper, one as an ironing worker, one as a telephone operator, one as a lift-operator, one as a watchman, one as a machine sewing worker, two as polishing workers, three as packers, eight as assemblers and nine as general workers.

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GOVERNOR TO OPEN YAN CHAI HOSPITAL

First Of Its Kind To Be Set Up By Industrialists

The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, will open the new Yan Chai Hospital in Tsuen Wan on Wednesday (October 24).

This acute hospital is the first of its kind to be built in an expanding industrial area by the district's own community leaders, and is designed to operate in close liaison with the facilities of the Medical and Health Department.

It is already receiving patients. There are 100 beds, an out-patient clinic, an X-ray examination room and an operation theatre. Another 250 beds are likely to be added at a later stage.

The hospital is providing such services as general medicine, general surgery, obstetrics and paediatrics to residents of Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and nearby districts.

Specialist teams from the Medical and Health Department are expected to be sent to the hospital for specialist services in the future when the need for these facilities has been assessed.

Charges in the hospital are in line with government fees -- \$2 a day for in-patients in the general wards, a charge that includes medicine, laboratory examination and operation. Out-patients pay \$1 a visit, which includes medicine. The operating cost of the hospital is mainly subvented by the government.

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Since the hospital began operating on August 28 this year, it has appreciably supplemented medical facilities for district residents.

The hospital cost about \$5.5 million of which the government contributed \$1.7 million. The site was granted by the government while the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club contributed \$400,000 to meet part of the cost for furniture and equipment.

The rest of the cost was met by a group of Tsuen Wan community and industrial leaders, headed by Mr. Deacon Chiu, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the hospital.

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Note to Editors: The Board of Directors of Yan Chai Hospital invite the media to attend the opening ceremony on Wednesday (October 24) at 11.30 a.m. at the hospital in Tsuen Wan, New Territories.

Reporters and photographers assigned to cover the ceremony are requested to assemble, not later than 10.15 a.m. at the corner of Hankow Road (between the Peninsula Hotel and the YMCA) where a special bus, BB6025, will be waiting to take them to the hospital.

A G.I.S. officer will be on hand to assist representatives of the media.

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LRS HELPS SETTLE 863 LABOUR DISPUTES

The Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department helped settle 863 of the 1,201 disputes in the third quarter of this year. During the same period, 268 disputes were referred to the Labour Tribunal.

The remainder of the disputes were either withdrawn by the applicants or settled by direct negotiation.

The head of the Labour Relations Service, Mr. T.F. Tsui, said that as a result of agreements reached in meetings conducted by conciliation officers, 4,125 workers received a sum of \$2,738,287 as arrears of wages, payment in lieu of notice, and ex-gratia severance pay.

"Severance pay for the workers in the Gilda Fashions dispute alone accounted for \$390,000," he said.

He noted that most labour disputes during the quarter had arisen out of disagreement over wage rates, changes in conditions of employment, dismissals, prolonged lay-offs, insolvency on the part of the employers, or mutual misunderstanding.

In settling 21 of the 25 major labour disputes, he said, officers of the Service conducted a total of 92 lengthy joint meetings, and made 41 visits to the sites of disputes.

"In addition, they handled 4,766 consultations and enquiries from both workers and management," he added.

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STATISTICAL GUIDE ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Census and Statistics Department has published a handbook setting out in simple form certain statistics illustrating the main trends of social and economic development in Hong Kong during the five-year period 1968-1972.

Entitled Hong Kong Social and Economic Trends 1968-1972, it consists of 72 tables, with graphs, covering the main social and economic statistics most descriptive of Hong Kong with explanatory notes on sources and coverage at the end of the volume.

The last work of this kind was the compendium "Hong Kong Statistics 1947-67" issued in 1969, and the new handbook should be read in conjunction with that publication.

A spokesman for the department said it was hoped to produce the handbook on an annual basis to provide an up-to-date picture of Hong Kong's development.

The publication is now on sale at \$5.50 a copy at the Government Publications Centre at the Star Ferry Concourse, Hong Kong.

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THREE BUILDINGS IN CENTRAL CONDEMNED

The Building Authority today declared No. 16 Lan Kwai Fong and Nos. 58 and 60 D'Aguilar Street, Central, to be in a dangerous condition.

Referring to No. 16 Lan Kwai Fong, the Principal Government Building Surveyor said that despite extensive shoring there was evidence of continuing movement in the load bearing brick walls. This was causing severe fractures and bulging of the brickwork which could lead to a collapse.

Nos. 58 and 60 D'Aguilar Street were inspected in conjunction with No. 16 Lan Kwai Fong, he said, and fractures and bulges in the brick walls indicate a risk of failure and possible collapse.

Notices of intention to apply for closure orders of these buildings were posted today. The application will be heard in Victoria District Court at 9.30 a.m. on November 7.

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WATER CUT IN NORTH POINT

Water supply to a number of premises in North Point will be interrupted for five hours, starting from 1 a.m. on Wednesday (October 24) to enable a test for night leakage in the area to be made.

The area affected extends from House No. 865 to 1021, and from 992 to 1054 King's Road and includes North Point Model Housing, Finnie Street, Hoi Tai Street, Hoi Wan Street, Tong Chong Street, Hoi Kwong Street, Pan Hoi Street, and Mt. Parker Road.

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QUIZ COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Radio Hong Kong, in conjunction with the Social Welfare Department, has organized a weekly series of quiz programmes for young people in community and youth centres.

The first programme will be held tomorrow (Tuesday) evening at Tai Hang Tung Community Centre to be followed by a second one on Thursday evening at the Kwun Tong Community Centre.

The two programmes will be broadcast over the station's Chinese Channel at 9.30 p.m. on Monday (October 29) and Monday (November 5) respectively.

"These quiz programmes have been planned to arouse young people's interest and social consciousness in general knowledge and current news," said Mr. S.S. Yeung, Producer of Radio Hong Kong's youth programmes.

Young people below the age of 25 can participate.

An AM/FM portable radio will be awarded to the winner of each competition and all who answer three questions or more will receive \$30 as a consolation prize.

Representatives of the community centres will act as the judges of the competition.

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GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR PUPILS OF FISHERMEN'S SCHOOLS

One thousand children and 150 teachers from 14 schools operated by the Fish Marketing Organisation will attend a joint graduation ceremony on Wednesday (October 24) in the City Hall Concert Hall.

Mr. Wilfred S.B. Wong, an unofficial Member of the Legislative Council will present certificates to graduates from Primary VI Classes, and to Form III students of the F.M.O.'s Secondary Practical School at Aberdeen.

Prizes to pupils for "Excellent Application" will be presented by Mrs. Wong.

This is the fourth time that the F.M.O. has brought together pupils from all its widely scattered district schools, to attend a single joint graduation ceremony.

Following the speeches and formal presentations, folk dances and other musical items will be performed by pupils of the F.M.O. schools.

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Note to Editors: Reporters and photographers are invited to cover this event. Seats will be reserved for press representatives. They are requested to take their seats by 11.15 a.m.

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CHILDREN'S MUSEUM COMPETITION WINNERS

The prize presentation of the Children's Museum Competition will be held in the City Museum and Art Gallery on Thursday (October 25).

Over 1,900 children from 219 schools entered the competition.

The participants had to complete a questionnaire on the museum exhibition which covered the major art forms throughout the history of China.

The competition was the second of its kind organised by the Urban Council, and closed on September 30.

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Note to Editors: A full list of the winners is distributed separately in the G.I.S. Press boxes.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.