



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Friday, July 6, 1973

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IMPROVED SECURITY MEASURES FOR STANLEY PRISON

Extensive alterations are to be carried out to Stanley Prison to improve security and other aspects of the 36-year-old prison.

Announcing this today, a government spokesman made it clear that much work has been put in hand since the recent disturbances and that more is planned.

Improvements to security will include the provision of an internal circular road running around the perimeter. This will be separated from the prison area by a fence which will allow ready access for control purposes and provide an additional barrier against attempted escapes.

Young offenders, who will be provided with their own workshop, will be segregated from older inmates by a new fence which is to be built around their cell block.

The main gate lodge will be redesigned to ensure more efficient control over those entering and leaving the prison enclosure and to provide better facilities for visiting. A metal detector will be installed in the gate lodge to guard against the introduction of weapons and other articles.

Work is already well advanced on the conversion of accommodation to house a visiting room, which will facilitate much closer supervision of visits than has been possible in the past.

Proposed improvements to the general amenities of the prison include complete renovation of kitchen equipment, installation of separate bathing facilities for each cell block, and modification to the sewerage disposal systems.

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Included in the overall longer term development programme for the Prisons Department is a project for an annexe to Stanley Prison, which will accommodate some 250 short-sentence prisoners who have served prison sentences before.

Completely self-contained, this annexe will segregate these prisoners from other inmates and enable them to be more effectively employed in outside work, such as cleansing duties, maintenance of roads and buildings.

He added that not all the proposals for improvement were of a structural nature. An all-out effort would be made to recruit more staff and relieve the burden on existing personnel.

It was hoped that this, in turn, would enable the administration to embark on a greatly expanded recreation programme for inmates, both at Stanley and other institutions.

He disclosed that some staff members were already undergoing training to provide a proper programme of physical education, which it was hoped to implement shortly.

Commenting on the findings of the Board of Inquiry, set up to investigate the disturbances in April, the spokesman said the report had identified the following causes:

- * The introduction of a new type of violent offender, particularly in the younger age group.
- * Increasing resentment at the stricter controls to prevent traffic in unauthorised articles, including narcotics.

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- * The heavy burden on staff, resulting from the general staff shortage.
- * Overcrowding of accommodation and the general inadequacy of facilities.

"The rapidly changing pattern of crime in Hong Kong has naturally had its effect on the type of offender we are dealing with," said the spokesman. "The new type of younger offender, committed for crimes of violence, is much more aggressive and calls for a different method of approach to ensure proper discipline.

"We believe this can be more effectively organised if we segregate these offenders from the older, less aggressive inmates.

"We intend to maintain our strict search operations and other measures to guard against illicit trafficking, and already there are indications that these have had their desired effect. Any enforcement of stricter disciplines is naturally (the more) resented until it becomes part of the routine.

"Because of the shortage of staff experienced throughout the department, those prison officers at Stanley have been under severe pressure. This has meant cutting down on the time-table and has allowed little opportunity for recreation or any of the other additional amenities that might help to keep inmates usefully occupied outside normal working hours.

"With the recruitment of additional staff, we would hope to correct this situation and introduce not only more effective supervision but also better organised recreational programmes.

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"But it is the design of the prison itself which is in most need of attention. Stanley was built in 1937, and it says much for the imagination and foresight of its planners that it has been able to cope for so long with the demands made upon it.

"However, its shortcomings have become more pronounced over the years - particularly because many more prisoners have had to be housed there than was envisaged in the original plan.

"Accommodation was provided for 1,500, but the actual occupancy now stands at about 2,700."

The spokesman said that as a result of the departmental inquiry into the causes of the disturbances expert advice had been sought from Britain on prison design and administration.

Two experts in these fields recently visited Hong Kong and some of their proposals are already being **implemented**, together with some emerging from the departmental inquiry.

Other proposals are being examined in greater detail and will be implemented wherever practicable.

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NEW MOVE TO IMPROVE TV RECEPTION

People in Hong Kong will soon be able to improve the television reception in their homes by erecting aerial distribution systems on the roofs of the buildings in which they live.

This is the purpose of an amendment to the Telecommunication Ordinance which is published in the gazette today.

If this amending bill is passed into law it will enable single receiving aerials designed to serve all the television sets in a building to be erected on single blocks or adjoining blocks under one ownership, subject to certain safeguards in respect of public safety and technical standards, without any formal licensing procedure.

The amending legislation proposed also provides for the exemption from licensing of closed circuit television systems in private buildings such as hotels, banks and department stores.

The purpose of this section of the amending bill is to provide for internal information and security television systems in such private buildings without recourse to an unwieldy system of licensing.

Commenting on the bill a government spokesman said today that this proposed freedom from licensing is subject to such installations, both for aerial distribution systems and closed circuit television systems, complying with certain prescribed conditions.

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In the case of aerial distribution systems on single buildings, it is intended that the system should be no more than an efficient extension of an existing receiving aerial. No equipment other than boost amplifiers can be inserted in the system and no interference with incoming signals will be allowed.

It is proposed that regulations now being drafted will provide certain limitations on the use of closed circuit television systems.

Such installations will, in general, be limited to single buildings and will enable hotels, banks, department stores and similar organisations to install internal wired television systems for information and security functions.

Paid advertising will not be allowed to be introduced into the systems since it is not intended at this stage that additional commercial television networks, even on limited closed circuit wired systems, should operate in competition with the proposed three commercial wireless television stations.

The spokesman said that the government is also proposing the licensing of more extensive wired television reception systems to meet those circumstances when aerial distribution systems on single buildings fail to provide an adequate or economic service.

It is intended that licences for extended reception by wire, to be known as broadcast relay licences, will be issued on a non-monopolistic basis to any installation company capable of meeting the basic technical conditions.

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These conditions which form part of the new licences will be included in regulations which, subject to approval, will be published shortly.

Under these proposed conditions relay operators will be required to provide a simultaneous and uninterrupted service of all wireless television channels being broadcast in Hong Kong. In addition, relay operators will be permitted to relay any sound broadcasting channels.

This amending legislation and the associated regulations, will not be brought into operation until Rediffusion's wired television service licence expires.

It will be recalled that the licence was extended earlier this year to 'bridge the gap' pending the coming on air of the first of the two new wireless television stations.

With this new legislation the government will be ready to issue licences for alternative wired television and sound distribution services as soon as the present Rediffusion wired distribution monopoly ceases.

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VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE COUNCIL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Concern for young people has led to a number of schools and welfare agencies in north west Kowloon setting up a district children and youth guidance council.

The council is made up of representatives of 76 schools, social service agencies and churches in the Tai Hang Tung, Tai Hang Sai, Shek Kip Mei and Yau Yat Chuen areas.

The formation of the council followed a meeting of these organisations arranged by Miss Lilian Wong, the warden of the Social Welfare Department's community centre in Tai Hang Tung.

"The meeting was unanimous in its views that a co-ordinating body was needed to study the problems facing young people in the light of their crowded living conditions and the lack of proper family education," Miss Wong said.

"The council aims to pool together expertise and resources in all four areas to find out the actual needs of young people so that it can provide solutions or long term guidance wherever and whenever possible.

"The council hopes that by doing this it would be helping young people, and their parents as well, to fully develop their characters, potentialities and sense of social concern," she said.

It also plans to co-ordinate children and youth services within the areas and actively involve the people in solving their own problems and those of the community as a whole.

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Miss Wong said this venture of community work at agency level was the first of its kind in the district.

"It was organised to get the voluntary agencies and other organisations to take the lead in the affairs of their districts," she explained.

The council and committee will use the Tai Hang Tung Community Centre as its base. Staff of the centre, including Miss Wong, will play dual roles, providing secretarial services to the council, the committee and its sub-committees as well as acting as advisors.

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GRADUATION CEREMONY

Note to Editors: The Sir Robert Black College of Education will hold its graduation ceremony on Monday (July 9), in the Concert Hall, City Hall.

Mr. P.C. Woo, C.B.E., J.P., Senior Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council, will address the gathering and distribute certificates and prizes at the ceremony, which begins at 4.30 p.m.

You are invited to send a reporter and photographer to cover the event.

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ANOTHER ELEVATED ROAD FOR KOWLOON

A \$24 million elevated road will be built from Prince Edward Road to Lai Chi Kok Road to cater for the increasing volume of east-west traffic across Kowloon Peninsula.

The 2,300-foot road will begin in Prince Edward Road near Yuen Ngai Street and end in Lai Chi Kok Road near the junction with Tong Mi Road and Poplar Street.

It will span the busy signal controlled junctions at Sai Yee Street, Nathan Road and Lai Chi Kok Road.

A spokesman for the Public Works Department said that traffic at these junctions was nearing saturation level, and the elevated road would provide smoother flow for west bound traffic.

Construction is expected to begin in September, and will take about 20 months to complete.

The 24-foot two-lane elevated road is ultimately intended for one-way operation, but in the major re-routing during the construction of the mass transit railway along Cheung Sha Wan Road, it will be used for two-way traffic.

The overall project also provides for associated alterations to adjacent ground-level roads, sewage works and a foundation for the mass transit railway.

Tung Choi Street will be developed as an alternative north bound route to Nathan Road.

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The section of Sai Yee Street running from Prince Edward Road to Playing Field Road will be widened to 32 feet to improve traffic flow in the area.

The widening will enable more cars to be accommodated at the Sai Yee Street/Prince Edward Road signals, and provide better access for premises adjacent to Flower Market Road.

The carriageway will be flanked by 24-foot verges comprising 9-foot wide footbridges and 15-foot wide amenity areas.

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LIGHTENING THE COMMISSIONER'S BURDEN

A new bill will soon be introduced to the Legislative Council seeking to relieve the Commissioner of Police from the duty of personally dealing with applications for certain permits under the Gambling Ordinance.

These applications comprise the issue of permits for the provision of amusements with prizes at licensed places of public entertainment; permission for a lottery incidental to an entertainment and not for private gain; and permission for certain societies to promote tombola.

Cited as the Gambling (Amendment) Bill 1973, it is published in today's gazette for general information.

At present, about 350 applications for such permits are received annually and they impose an excessively high demand on the time of the Commissioner.

When the bill is passed into law, the authority to approve or reject these applications would be delegated to the officer in charge of the Police Licensing Office who is normally a police superintendent.

Another section of the bill will enable a society which is exempted from registration under the Societies Ordinance to be granted a tombola permit.

The societies which may be exempted from registration are mainly those established solely for religious, charitable, social and recreational purposes.

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FINES FOR HARBOUR OBSTRUCTION

A Central Magistrate has warned that he may impose heavier fines on masters of vessels who are found guilty of obstructing the fairways in Aberdeen harbour.

The warning was given by Mr. P.M. Corfe in Central Magistracy yesterday (Thursday) when he fined a fisherman \$300 for obstructing the passage of other vessels in Aberdeen typhoon shelter on May 21.

In passing sentence, Mr. Corfe inquired whether the Marine Department gave warnings to the fishing population as to the seriousness of the offence and the probable fines.

A Marine Department Officer advised Mr. Corfe that reference to these offences were issued through the news media and through the fishermen's broadcast service of Radio Hong Kong.

Staff of the department also gave on the spot advice and distributed appropriate literature with charts indicating areas prohibited for berthing.

In a similar case earlier this week, Mr. Corfe had drawn the defendant's attention to the seriousness of the offence and of the problems created for the department in exercising control in Aberdeen harbour.

He pointed out that any obstruction of the fairways during the typhoon season would reduce manoeuvring space for vessels seeking shelter as well as increase fire risks.

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MESSAGE FOR SUMMER YOUTH ORGANISERS

Encourage young people, support their quest for knowledge and give them all the understanding you can.

This was the message Mr. Thomas C.Y. Lee, Deputy Director of Social Welfare had today for organisers of summer youth activities when he spoke at the opening of the Yuen Long district's programme.

"The youth of today would not merely be satisfied with taking part in recreational activities. They have vitality, high ideals, enthusiasm and are eager to work.

"What they want is new knowledge, new experiences, understanding of the society in which they live and the society's concern for them.

"What they lack is experience and they need the community's support and encouragement in this respect," Mr. Lee said.

He recalled that there are 15 youth recreation co-ordinating committees in Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the New Territories.

Mr. Lee said he was aware there was a large number of young people in Yuen Long district and said they had the same needs as young people elsewhere in Hong Kong.

Speaking of his department's involvement, he said the Social Welfare Department conducts various activities directly through its 20 odd working units in various districts. It also helps voluntary youth work agencies to conduct summer programmes by providing financial assistance, counselling, co-ordinating work and training of volunteers.

Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of Mr. Lee's speech in Chinese are boxed this evening.

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DECLINE IN NUMBER OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

The number of industrial disputes in Hong Kong has fallen in the first five months of this year compared to the same period last year.

The Deputy Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Ian Price, said today: "This downward trend in the number of disputes is particularly pleasing in view of the big increase in the number of factories and the number of industrial workers this year as against last year."

Mr. Price said that 1,953 industrial disputes were reported to the Labour Relations Service of the Labour Department in the five months up to the end of May, compared with 2,076 in the same period in 1972.

"Our figures for the first quarter of this year showed that 1,104 new factories opened while 895 either closed down or moved to another site," he said. "This means a net gain of some 209 factories during the period - a reversal of the previous (December) quarter, when there was a net loss of 128 factories.

"The latest monthly figure we have - that for May - shows a net gain of 120 factories in that month alone, so the upward trend is obviously continuing."

"The March quarterly survey - our most recent - shows a total of 21,795 industrial undertakings, which is well-up on the figure for March last year of 19,474, and even on the December figure of 21,386.

"The same survey showed that there are also more people employed in industry now than ever before. The March total was 616,609 as against 598,555 for the corresponding period in 1972.

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"At the same time there were 21,832 vacancies reported in industry."

Mr. Price added: "It is worth pointing out that during this same quarter of increased employment, increased openings of factories and decreased labour disputes, the real wage index -- the scale showing average income taking into account price increases - went up by three points.

"At the end of March it stood at 159 points, after remaining static at 156 points for a year."

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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE DAY

Note to Editors: Over 400 members of the Local Co-operative Movement, mainly farmers and fishermen, will be celebrating the 51st International Co-operative Day at a Chinese dinner party tomorrow (Saturday) evening starting at 7 p.m. in the Good Dates Restaurant, 86 Waterloo Road, 1st floor, Kowloon.

Mr. J.M. Riddell-Swan, the acting Director of Agriculture and Fisheries will address the gathering and will officiate at the distribution of prizes.

At the request of the celebration committee, Radio Hong Kong has arranged for a band and three popular singers to be present to provide entertainment.

You are invited to cover the event and join the dinner.

Copies of Mr. Riddell-Swan's speech, in both English and Chinese, will be available at the celebration party and G.I.S. press room.

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.