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**Major Prison Disturbances:  
Causes and Responses**

Correctional Services Department  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

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## ***Executive Summary***

*This paper presents Hong Kong experience in the handling of major prison disturbances. The nature of prison disorder, factors possibly leading to unrest, and outlining of contingency plans for the control and handling of prison disorder is examined.*

*Understandingly, a person once imprisoned, encounters both social and physical isolation which may result in various forms of perceived deprivations, including movement, association, and communication. Feeling frustrated, and if not appropriately addressed, these prisoners are apt to strike back at the perceived source of their discontent. Prisoners may take various forms to expressing their disgruntlement, through formalized channels of grievances-addressing mechanisms, or a direct protest against prison authority through physical manifestations – sometimes amounting to a major disturbance when prison order and discipline is seriously jeopardized.*

*Prison disorder took many forms. Although the content, direction, and organization of prisoner turmoil may vary from one jurisdiction to another, two major sources of discontent could be identified. Firstly, and prevailingly in the past, prisoners protested and rioted over the quality of food, living conditions, medical care, recreational facilities, and prison regulations and conditions that have been in place for decades. Secondly, in recent years, it is increasingly common for prisoners to question the legitimacy of incarceration, and to claim that they are political prisoners of an unjust and corrupt political system. Many work related or operational incidents which, though routine, must be attended to immediately by deployment of resources, which if not resolved or effectively contained, may develop and directly threaten security, order, life or property.*

*In general, prison disorder may be classified into **mass disorder** and **individual disorder**, depending on the scale and number of prisoners involved. The former normally involves a number of prisoners participating in an incident that disrupts the order and routine of the entire prison, for example, riots, mass escapes, hostage-taking, erection of barricades, gang fights, sit down protests and hunger strikes. An individual disorder is normally confined to individual prisoners, in much smaller magnitude like one-against-one fighting, refusal of food, roof-climbing, barricade erection in cell, escape and assault on staff.*

*Mass disorder arouses public concern in view of the resulting damages, injury or even loss of human life. Every correctional administrator will realize the impact of prison riots on staff morale. Depending on how well prepared the department was and the effectiveness of the actions taken during such commotion, prison disorder does not necessarily hamper staff morale. When handled properly, prison disorders can bolster morale. A new sense of unity may emerge on a shared crucial experience. When handled improperly, both the department's internal integrity and its public image can be damaged. While prison disorder can be tragic events, they also challenge decision-makers to rethink policies and procedures. The same process applies in Hong Kong after the Hei Ling disturbance that took place in the year 2000. The incident was carefully studied, and many recommendations implemented into modified practices to ever improving the department to prepare for prison disorder of any scale.*

*Over the years, the Correctional Services Department has devised an **Emergency Organization Handbook**, an operational manual promulgating strategies, and inter-departmental coordination when necessary, to respond to emergent situations. Base on local experience in view of the nature of violence involved, emergency situations are classified into two broad categories. Those of a **non-violent nature** may include mass refusal of food, strike, protest,*

*natural or man-made disaster, and major fire. Emergency situations may be classified as **violent nature** if they involve hostage-taking, riot/disturbance, break in, mass break-out and other internal disorders. The Hei Ling disturbance can be classified as an emergency situation of violent nature.*

*Regarding the Hei Ling disturbance, investigation confirms that the disturbance is not pre-planned. A number of factors contribute to the escalation of the gang fight between local and Vietnamese inmates into a commotion, and obviously the perceived preferential treatment of the Vietnamese inmates over a series of minor incidents have added to the consolidation of aggregate unrest within a short period, including unfair disciplinary adjudication, labour assignment, dormitory accommodation, quality of food, etc. The commotion soon escalated into a disturbance, with fire set on the premises and staff being attacked. Police reinforcement was summoned and the disturbance was eventually suppressed within seven hours since its onset.*

*The effective restoration of order illustrated that both negotiation and emergency response tactics are essential. Nonetheless, correctional administrators may learn from this case the importance of early identification of conditions that may pave way for the staging of mass unrest, and to manage these factors before they gradually evolve to become a “bomb waiting to be exploded”.*

*Currently, CSD’s policy on emergency response is shaped by the Principles of Graded Response Capability. It entails a Three Level Emergency Response System (三層緊急事件應變系統) relating to modes of response and emergency mobilization of resources and manpower.*

*It aims at keeping emergency command and communication system as simple as possible and providing an effective, efficient and speedy response to emergencies. This is achieved by formulating pre-planned modes of response to*

*ensure a state of preparedness to gear towards all emergencies and defining the roles of involved personnel and resources. At the institutional level, which is the first and instant response to all incidents that may take place in the institution, Heads of Institutions promulgate specific plans for different nature of emergencies and arrange training and regular exercises to be conducted to familiarize all staff of the relevant procedures and tactics in managing critical situations.*

*The second tier of the Response System, at the regional level, involves the mobilization of additional resources and manpower from institutions of the same region to deal an emergency taking place in an institution that cannot be contained at the institutional level. If an emergency cannot be contained at the regional level, the Departmental Level Emergency Response will be activated. It comprises the mobilization of the Escort and Support Group, reserves from other institutions, co-ordination of outside assistance / reinforcements from other departments.*

*To forestalling future unrest, it is suggested that simple, clear, and easy-to-understand disciplinary, grievance, and classification appeal processes at allowing prisoners to “vent” their frustrations must be set. Meanwhile, planning and training are important parts of riot control, which includes a predetermined use-of-force policy as well as clear lines of authority in case of loss of commanders.*

*Apart from the Emergency Organization Handbook, the department also devises a Hostage Negotiation Handbook to provide a set of guidelines on handling hostage-taking situations at institutions. The ultimate goal is to secure a quick and safe release of hostages, avoid or reduce the number of casualties and minimize the concessions to demands from the hostage-takers. The department maintains a pool of well-trained negotiators and regular training is provided with the assistance of the Police’s Negotiation Cadre.*

*In planning tactical solution, that is, retaking by force, it depends on the preparedness of the Escort and Support Group. Sufficient numbers of personnel to forming an anti-riot platoon are arranged to “stand-by” round-the-clock to make ready for immediate response within hours. Members of this group require exceptional physical fitness and regular anti-riot and weaponry training is provided to ensure a high state of preparedness.*

*To conclude, this paper is about the understanding of prison unrest; the emergence of disturbances; taking action to prevent small incident from expanding into a full scale riot; and strategies to restoring order. It is probably true to say that prison disorders, though appearing how peaceful they are now, may well re-occur when the situational factors aggregate to amounting an outburst of grievance. The most obvious long-term approach to preventing prison disorders is to do everything possible to remove systemic or structural causes of grievances. Experienced correctional administrators would agree on training and contingency planning, and to always maintain a discipline service of high state of preparedness to encountering any emergencies.*

## **Introduction: Prison Disorders in Hong Kong**

Prison unrest is virtually as old as prisons themselves. Although the content, direction, and organization of prisoner turmoil may vary from one jurisdiction to another, as well as over time and place, it is no different, in common, that two major sources of unrest could be identified. Firstly, and prevailing in the past, prisoners protested and rioted over the quality of food, living conditions, medical care, recreational facilities, and prison regulations and conditions that have been in place for decades. Secondly, in recent years, it is increasingly common for prisoners to question the legitimacy of their incarceration, and to claim that they are political prisoners of an unjust and corrupt political system (Atkins and Glick, 1972; Beetham, 1991; Useem, Camp and Camp, 1996).

2. Setting up its first prison in 1841, prison administration in Hong Kong all along faces similar prisoner demands, for medical, recreational and educational improvement, and contemporary claims for civil rights against deprivation of human rights, discrimination, and equal opportunities. Striving conscientiously to serve the society as part of the criminal justice jurisdiction, to protect the society, punish the wrongdoers and mediate their reentry into society as law-abiding and industrious citizens, correctional administrators nowadays are not immune against frustrated hopes and demands, though many times, unjustifiable, unreasonable and excessive. Bearing this in mind, correctional administrators in Hong Kong adopt every precautionary measure and strategy to forestall the emergence of any prison disorder, the manifestation of prison unrest, and to resolve any signs of grievances, the forerunners of potential disorder. To date, there has only been a handful of reports of major prison disorders in Hong Kong. As Vagg records,

“(Prisons Department) *Annual Reports between 1970 and 1973 mention a mass barricade and hostage-taking in Tong Fuk Centre; the*



*murder of a wardress by five escaping inmates at Tai Lam Centre; disturbances in three training centres; and the killing of four inmates at Stanley Prison by other prisoners. A flashpoint was the latter incident when a prison riot occurred in 'A' Block of Stanley Prison on 19 April 1973 with three officers taken hostage. Despite of the official reports mentioning a series of causes: ..the growth of young violent offenders, overcrowding, staff shortages, and crackdowns against drug trafficking within the prison, it subsequently appeared that the riot was the outcome of an attempt by staff to regain the control of an institution largely run by inmates and certain corrupt staff.” (Vagg, 1994: 146).*

3. Thereafter, the then Inspectorate Section (now renamed as the Quality Assurance Division) was established not only to monitor the quality of prison management, a security networking section was also introduced to collate intelligence, against both prisoners and staff. The system works effectively. Except for a few scattered reports of collective behaviour like hunger strike and gang fights, prison disorders have remained almost tacit in Hong Kong, not until the latest disturbance on 4 June 2000, at Hei Ling Chau Addiction Treatment Centre situated on a distant island.

4. That evening, a trivial dispute between a group of Vietnamese and local inmates escalated into a major prison disturbance. Within minutes after an unplanned attack of a local inmate by a small group of Vietnamese inmates, the conflict soared into a group fight. Emotions were stirred up and quickly deteriorated into racial rivalry. The ten odd Vietnamese inmates retreated into their dormitory and hundreds of local inmates set fire on it. Responding staff tried to contain the situation, but were soon outnumbered by over 400 angry inmates who turned their hostility to the management for preferential treatment and over-protection of the Vietnamese inmates. Stones were thrown into the Communication Room, responding firemen and police were attacked, and inmates set up barricades with liquid petroleum gas cylinders. The island was

on fire and rampaged, within two hours since the onset of the commotion. Negotiation commences ...

5. After midnight, six platoons of Police Tactical Units and two platoons of Correctional Services staff, in full gear, charged at the rioters after the final round of negotiation broke up. Fortunately, resistance was minimal and order was restored within 30 minutes. The strategic planning behind the coordination and mobilization of armed forces was the leading factor to curbing the commotion, with not a single life lost. To address public concern and committing towards accountability in effective management and administration of correctional facilities, a thorough investigation was conducted to study its causes, and where applicable, to strengthen the contingency planning against prison disorder in future. The report was submitted to the Legislative Council, accepted and thereafter laid down revised principles and policies in the understanding and handling of prison disorder.

6. Based on the Hei Ling disturbance, this paper examines the nature of prison disorder as it appears nowadays, factors possibly leading to unrest, and outlines contingency plans for the control and handling of prison disorder.

### **Nature of Prison Disorder**

7. Understandingly, people are locked behind bars for different reasons, which however share one commonality, having contravened the laws, therefore sanctioned by the society. One way or another, prisoners may be conceived as despised members of society whose behaviour has resulted in their being removed from routine interaction with others. Thus isolated and institutionalized, the impersonality of prison life and the physical, social, and psychological deprivations that prisoners experience all contribute to the volatile atmosphere of prison life. Prisoners are apt to strike back at the

perceived source of their discontent (Atkins and Glick, 1972). Prisoners may take various forms to express their discontent, through formalized channels of grievances-addressing mechanisms, or a direct protest against prison authority through physical manifestations.

8. In general, prison disorder may be classified into two types in accordance with the scale and number of prisoners involved, namely, mass disorder and individual disorder. The former normally involves a number of prisoners participating in an incident that disrupts the order and routine of the entire prison, for example, riots, mass escapes, hostage-taking, erection of barricades, gang fights, sit down protests and hunger strikes. An individual disorder is normally confined to individual prisoners, in much smaller magnitude like one-against-one fighting, refusal of food, roof-climbing, barricade erection in cell, escape and assault on staff. It may be handled by staff as a matter of operational routine without attracting much public attention (YING, 1996). In every aspect, the Hei Ling disturbance is a mass disorder.

9. In accordance with the Emergency Organization Handbook (hereinafter referred to as the handbook) compiled by the Correctional Services Department, emergency situations are classified into two broad categories. Work related incidents which, though routine, must be attended to immediately by deployment of resources. Another category is incidents which, if not resolved or effectively contained, may develop and directly threaten security, order, life or property. Emergencies may also be classified by their nature of violence involved. Those of a non-violent nature may include mass refusal of food, strike, protest, natural or man-made disaster, and major fire. Emergency situations may be classified as violent nature if they involve hostage-taking, riot/disturbance, break in, mass break-out and other internal disorders. The Hei Ling disturbance can be classified as an emergency situation of a violent nature.

10. Mass disorder, in particular those of a violent nature and when control

of the prison has to be withdrawn or lost, arouses public concern, in view of the resulting damage, injury or even loss of human life. Physical damage can be repaired within months, but psychological damage lasts for years, if not forever. Every correctional administrator will realize the impact of prison riots on staff morale. By staff morale it means identification with the management, respect for leadership, and commitment to the goals of the department. Major prison disturbance may undermine these attachments, but they may also strengthen them. Much depends on how well prepared the department was and the effectiveness of the actions taken during such commotion. After a mass disorder, staff often ask, "Did management act to take control of the situation, or was it indecisive? Were the staff adequately trained, or were they allowed to drift into the situation unprepared, without reinforcement?"

11. When handled properly, prison disorder can bolster morale. A new sense of unity may emerge on a shared crucial experience. When handled improperly, both the department's internal integrity and its public image can be damaged. While prison disorder can be tragic events, it also challenges decision-makers to rethink policies, procedures, organization, and commitments (Useem, Camp and Camp, 1996). The same process applies in Hong Kong after the Hei Ling disturbance. The tragic experience was assiduously and carefully studied, and many recommendations implemented into modified practices to ever better the department to prepare for prison disorder of any scale. Based on the Hei Ling experience, the local context of prison disorder, causes and precautionary measures, the modes of emergency response and mobilization of reserves in handling prison disorder are explored in the following chapters.

**Prison Disorder: Causes**

12. As early as the 1950s, Clemmer (1958) finds that occasionally a prison commotion will be planned and staged, but more often than not, it is spontaneous. Sykes (1958) also points out that prison riots are the culmination of a series of minor crises, each of which sets in motion forces for the generation of a new and more serious crisis. The investigation into the Hei Ling disturbance also finds that the incident is unplanned. The trivial dispute among the inmates quickly turned into a group rivalry, but none of the rioters have any preplanned plot to mount attacks on the Vietnamese inmates and staff. There are a number of factors that contribute to the escalation of the gang fight into a commotion, and obviously the perceived preferential treatment of the Vietnamese inmates over a series of minor incidents have added to the consolidation of aggregate unrest within a short period, including unfair disciplinary adjudication, labour assignment, dormitory accommodation, quality of food, etc. These accusations were thoroughly investigated, though found unsubstantiated, still the management has every opportunity to improve to ensure that fairness and justice are done, and seen to be done. Perceived unfairness over living conditions is always the major underlying cause of unrest, in the present case, preferential treatment of one group of inmates.

13. As regards the effective restoration of order within 30 minutes upon commencement of tactical action, there are four possible explanations. First, the tumult is unplanned. Second, unrest is stemmed from frustration on perceived favouritism, centering on alleged operational mis-arrangement and not against the legitimacy of incarceration. Third, negotiation works in regaining trust among the sensible inmates. Four, the emergency response tactics is effective. The four factors contributed to the successful downplay of the mob. The legitimacy of the authority has not been challenged, and the rioters soon gave up their resistance as they lacked organization and consensus on what should be done next.

14. Logan's conceptual model (1993) in analyzing prison riots may be used as a reference point for discussion (similar standards are adopted by the American Correctional Association (ACA, 1996)). Logan purports that there are six conditions that may contribute to prison disturbances.

- (a) *Environmental conditions* – predisposing or preconditioning factors such as deprivation of physical facilities, racial discrimination, unfair treatment, etc. may gradually turn the prison into “a bomb waiting to explode”. Local inmates in the Hei Ling disturbance felt aggrieved at the preferential treatment that was given to the Vietnamese inmates through better living accommodation and food. Their perceived discrimination, unnoticed, became an environmental condition ready for ignition.
- (b) *Spontaneity* – precipitating factor may appear that ignites the explosion. In the Hei Ling disturbance, the fighting between two groups of inmates sparked off the tension among inmates.
- (c) *Conflict* – perception of a repressive power regime with perceived limited options available for conflict resolution will attract conflict. The grudges with the Vietnamese inmates, as perceived by local inmates, became an attracting factor to disturbance as the latter perceived limited options to resolve their continual conflict.
- (d) *Social Control* – the perception that “something's broke” and needs fixing will attract action. In the Hei Ling disturbance, local inmates perceived that the management over-protected the Vietnamese inmates (“something's broke”) and something needs to be done, including the revenge on the Vietnamese inmates and resistance to management.
- (e) *Power Vacuum* – the perception that there is nobody in charge will attract further reaction. One of the major findings in the Hei Ling disturbance found that despite the initial commotion was

effectively controlled within the first hour, the field commander did not effectively reorganize the available staff. He concentrated himself in negotiating with several inmates. There is a power vacuum in the interim period, resulting in the regrouping of inmates and a series of re-staging of attacks. The situation eventually went out of control.

- (f) *Rising Expectations* – the perception of relative deprivation serves as a predisposing factor to prisoners’ unrest. In the Hei Ling disturbance, local inmates perceived that they were relatively deprived of the privileges that were given to the Vietnamese inmates.

15. Based on Logan’s analytical framework, it is not without reason why a trivial dispute between the Vietnamese and local inmates could have escalated into a major disturbance. All the precipitating, attracting and predisposing factors were present. They interacted with each other to form a platform where prisoners’ unrest will be staged. Correctional administrators may learn from the present case and introduce measures to identify and to manage these factors before they gradually evolve to become a “bomb waiting to be exploded”.

16. Penologists also follow this line of thinking and suggest that there are signs and symptoms correctional administrators may identify. Accordingly, simple, clear, and easy-to-understand disciplinary, grievance, and classification appeal processes go a long way to allow prisoners to “vent” their frustration. There should always be at least the perception of fairness no matter how arbitrary and bureaucratic the grievance / appeal process actually is. Data collected from the prisoner grievance process is also more valuable information than that collected from a snitch system. Management of information should include establishing channels of communication to both staff and prisoners to eliminate misinformation and quell destructive rumors (Logan, 1993).

17. Planning is an important part of riot control. A riot plan should exist which includes a predetermined use-of-force policy as well as clear lines of authority in case of loss of commanders. Training is also essential, and simulated riot exercises make the best training. Hostage negotiation training is also helpful. A riot can always be put out, of course, by overwhelming force, but the aftermath is always damaging. The Hei Ling disturbance attests, possibly that overwhelming force as a tactic works best if done soon after the disturbance breaks out (as in the initial restoration of order in the present case). Failure to do so, or inability to contain the situation to regain command (as in the Hei Ling disturbance), allow prisoners to fashion weapons and fortify positions. The department learns a lesson from the Hei Ling experience and has thence re-structured and strengthened its emergency organization strategies. More important is the increasing emphasis on training to better equip correctional administrators with the necessary knowledge and skills to forestall emergency situations.

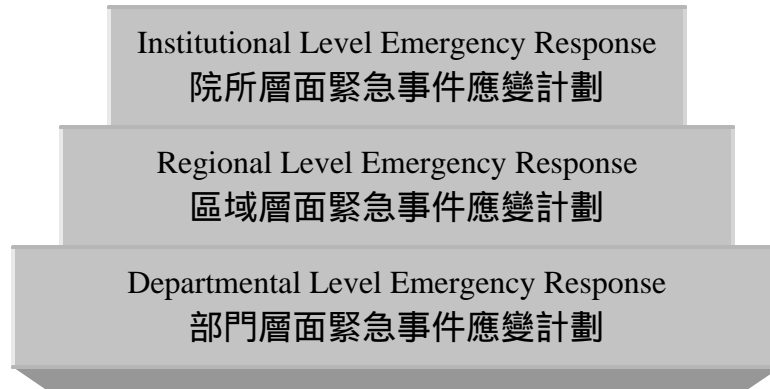
### **Prison Disorder: Responses**

18. The department's policy on emergency response is shaped by the Principles of Graded Response Capability (Graded Response Principles) which have underlined the following philosophy of graded emergency response capability:

- (a) prevention, deterrence and pre-emptive action
- (b) early resolution
- (c) containment
- (d) massive intervention and neutralization



19. Under the Graded Response Principles, a Three Level Emergency Response System (三層緊急事件應變系統) relating to modes of response and emergency mobilization of resources and manpower is developed:



20. The Three Level Emergency Response System is aimed at keeping the emergency command and communication system as simple as possible and providing an effective, efficient and speedy response to emergencies. This is achieved by formulating pre-planned modes of response to ensure a state of preparedness to gear towards all emergencies and defining the roles of involved personnel and resources. Currently, each institution will draw up its internal Emergency Control Plan to formulate preparatory hierarchical commanding structure and delineate the roles and responsibilities of involved personnel in case of emergence of internal disorder of various types and nature. At this institutional level, which is the first and instant response to all incidents that may take place in the institution, Heads of Institutions promulgate specific plans for different nature of emergencies and arrange training and regular exercises to be conducted to familiarize all staff with the relevant procedures and tactics in managing critical situations.

21. The second tier of the Three Level Emergency Response System, at the regional level, involves the mobilization of additional resources and manpower from institutions of the same region to deal with an emergency taking place in an institution that cannot be contained at the institutional level.

All institutions under the control and management of the department are currently grouped into seven regions in accordance with their geographical location. Aiming at a mutual aid approach, regional commanding officers will devise Regional Emergency Response Plans which will include detailed mobilization plans on both manpower and resources to provide backup / reserves in an emergency that cannot be contained at the institutional level.

22. If an emergency cannot be contained at the regional level, the Departmental Level Emergency Response will be activated. It comprises the mobilization of the Escort and Support Group, reserves from other institutions, co-ordination of outside assistance / reinforcements from other departments. The Hei Ling disturbance activated the regional level within 20 minutes, and the departmental level after an hour. As a general practice, in determining the appropriate level of response to an emergency, the following circumstances will be considered:

- (a) complexity and gravity of the incident
- (b) number and hostility of the target
- (c) constraint of resources and logistic support
- (d) extent of casualties
- (e) duration of the incident

23. The Hei Ling disturbance met all the above criteria. Over 400 inmates were involved in launching a fierce attack on some ten Vietnamese inmates. Staff, including reinforcing firemen and policemen were attacked and casualties were anticipated. External assistance, backup by Police Tactical Units, flew in in full gear within four hours ready to regain control of the situation. In considering the mobilization of reinforcement at different levels, commanders always bear in mind the need to call upon external assistance and reinforcement. While readily available, external reinforcement is characterized by the need of detailed briefing, clear delineation of responsibilities and close

co-ordination throughout the operation. To this effect, the department runs an annual mock exercise with various disciplined forces to test out and reformulate pre-planned modes of response to ensure a state of preparedness to gear towards all emergencies.

### **Prison Disorder: Ways to Prevent**

24. To recapitulate the fundamental principles and practices in handling prison disorders, three separate phases can be distinguished:

#### *Before the Disorder*

25. The importance of advance preparation in all its guises cannot be overlooked. Rapid response in executing a riot-control plan can be crucial in minimizing harm to staff and prisoners. If key places or vantagepoints can be occupied in force shortly after the beginning of a disturbance, it can often be kept small and brief. When no quick response is available, or breaks down, the prison may be engulfed in rapid succession. Resolution strategy is thus essential as to who must take action, how and when. Command officers must be well trained to handle these potential risks. The Emergency Organization Handbook devises clear guidelines as to what, how, and when to respond to different levels of emergencies as the case may be.

26. Successful resolution requires a controlled and measured response. Important are an orderly command post, clear lines of authority, effective communication, and a sense among correctional officers that their skills and training are adequate to meet the challenge at hand. In recent years, the department is keen to provide relevant training to senior officers to enable them to familiarize with the principles and practices as promulgated in the Emergency Organization Handbook.

*During the Disorder*

27. During the disorder, correctional administrators in command have three options to end a disorder. They may order the forcible retaking of the situation (the tactical solution). They may end the disorder through talking (the negotiation solution). Or they may let the disorder die of its own accord (the waiting solution). The common background of these resolutions is twofold: a negotiating component and the tactical means to retake the situation. The department reaps past experiences and has all along maintained these two essential elements in dealing with emergencies: the establishment of the Department's Hostage Negotiation Team and the round-the-clock stand-by of the Escort and Support Group.

28. Apart from the Emergency Organization Handbook, the department also devises a Hostage Negotiation Handbook to provide a set of guidelines on handling hostage-taking situations at institutions. The ultimate goal is to secure a quick and safe release of hostages, avoid or reduce the number of casualties and minimize the concessions to demands from the hostage-takers. Another primary objective of the setting up of the negotiation team is to "buy time" in the negotiation process to enable the commanders to better comprehend the situation as it develops over time, and in particular, to open dialogue with the prisoners at times of turmoil. The engagement of communication is a viable resolution of conflict by talking. The department maintains a pool of well-trained negotiators and regular training is provided with the assistance of the Police Negotiation Cadre.

29. Retaking by force, the tactical solution, depends on the preparedness of the Escort and Support Group. Sufficient numbers of personnel to form an anti-riot platoon are arranged to "stand-by" round-the-clock to make ready for immediate response within hours. If further reinforcement is to be mobilized,

another platoon can be made ready within short notice. Members of this group require exceptional physical fitness and regular anti-riot and weaponry training is provided to ensure a high state of preparedness.

### *After the Disorder*

30. This period encompasses short-term problems associated with returning the prison to order, medium-term problems with repairing the damage and reestablishing work schedules, and long-term problems related to restoration and change. As afore mentioned, action during this stage may be crucial as there is an impact on staff morale and the issue of the legitimacy of incarceration. Lofgreen purports a model of the life cycle of inmate-staff power relationships (Lofgreen, 1991). He asserts that if handled inappropriately, prisoners after riots may become dominant and challenge the legitimacy of the authority by pressing for more privileges and rights. After the Hei Ling disturbance, the department well recognizes this delicate balance and every measure was taken to strengthen staff morale and governance of the institution. To combat inmates' dominance, some 80 rioters were arrested and prosecuted; and removed from normal association for segregation. A number of areas have been identified for management improvements. They include tightening up of internal movements of inmates by installing partition fences; the provision of mobile communication and command systems; the fortification of Control Rooms and most importantly, a review of operational guidelines and training of senior correctional administrators in the handling of major emergencies. To this effect, joint exercises are conducted with other disciplined services.

### **Conclusion**

31. This paper is about the understanding of prison unrest; the emergence

of disturbances; taking action to prevent small incidents from expanding into a full scale riot; and strategies to restore order. It is probably true to say that prison disorder, though appearing unlikely now, may well re-occur when the situational factors aggregate amounting to an outburst of grievance. The most obvious long-term approach to preventing prison disorder is to do everything possible to remove systemic or structural causes of grievances. Experienced correctional administrators would agree on training and contingency planning, and to always maintain a discipline service of high state of preparedness to encounter any emergencies.

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