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GOVERNOR SEES DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN ACTION
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, TODAY HAD A FIRST HAND LOOK OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN ACTION.

IN HIS FIRST OUTING TO SEE FOR HIMSELF PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENTS ON THE GROUND, THE GOVERNOR ATTENDED A MEETING OF THE MONG KOK DISTRICT BOARD AND TOURED THE HAWKER PERMITTED PLACE IN TUNG CHOI STREET.

SIR EDWARD ASSURED DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT TOOK THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SERIOUSLY.

+THE STRONG TEAMS OF SENIOR DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS WHO SIT ON DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES ARE AN INDICATION TO YOU THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION TO WORK, AND WORK WELL,+ HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR NOTED THAT SOLUTIONS WOULD NOT ALWAYS BE EASY TO FIND AS THE BOARDS GET TO GRIPS WITH THE MORE INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS OF STREET AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT, SHORTAGE OF FACILITIES AND URBAN DECAY, AND MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE MAN IN THE STREET.

+BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE BOARDS, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT, CAN AND WILL MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIVES AND WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE OF THEIR DISTRICTS,+ SIR EDWARD SAID.

THE GOVERNOR ARRIVED AT THE YAU MA TEI CITY DISTRICT OFFICE SHORTLY BEFORE 3 PM WITH LADY YOUDE AND THE SECRETARY FOR CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES.

HE WAS MET BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR GRAHAM BARNES, AND THE DEPUTY REGIONAL SECRETARY, MR ALBERT LAM.

AT THE DISTRICT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM, THE MONG KOK CITY DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, MR WILFRED WONG, INTRODUCED MEMBERS OF THE BOARD TO SIR EDWARD.

THE GOVERNOR THEN ADDRESSED THE BOARD BEFORE HE SAT DOWN AND LISTENED TO BOARD MEMBERS DISCUSSING THE SAI YEE STREET MARKET BUILDING PROJECT.

AFTER SOME DEBATE AND AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, THE BOARD DECIDED THAT THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND THE LANDS DEPARTMENT WOULD CONSIDER A PROPOSAL THAT THE PROJECT SHOULD INCLUDE A CARPARK TO BE RUN BY A PRIVATE DEVELOPER.

MEANWHILE, LADY YOUDE MET STAFF MEMBERS AT THE PUBLIC ENQUIRY COUNTER AND CONSUMER COUNCIL DESK. SHE ALSO SPOKE TO SOME MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WERE MAKING ENQUIRIES AT THE COUNTERS.

/LADY YOUDE .....

LADY YOUDE WAS LATER BRIEFED BY THE MONG KOK CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR K.C. LAU.

FOLLOWING A 30-MINUTE STAY AT THE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING, SIR EDWARD SAID, JUST BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE: +I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED AND ENCOURAGED TO SEE THE DISTRICT BOARD IN ACTION AND HEAR THE HIGH QUALITY OF DEBATE.

+I AM SURE THE DEBATE WILL BE VALUABLE IN ASSISTING THE BOARD TO COME TO A BETTER DECISION.+

THE PARTY THEN PROCEEDED TO THE JUNCTION OF SOY STREET AND PORTLAND STREET WHERE SIR EDWARD HAD A LOOK AT THE TRAFFIC PROBLEM, WHICH HAD BEEN AGGRAVATED BY THE PRESENCE OF SEVERAL COOKED-FOOD STALLS.

HERE, THE GOVERNOR WAS BRIEFED ON PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT MEASURES WHICH INCLUDED THE REGULATION OF PUBLIC LIGHT BUS ACTIVITIES AND THE MOVING OF THE COOKED-FOOD STALLS TO A NEARBY SITE.

SIR EDWARD AND LADY YOUDE, THEN CROSSED NATHAN ROAD TO TUNG CHOI STREET, WHERE THEY WERE GREETED BY HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE.

THE PARTY WALKED THROUGH THE CROWD IN THE HAWKER PERMITTED PLACE ON TUNG CHOI STREET WHICH HAD BEEN DECORATED WITH WELCOME BANNERS. BOTH SIR EDWARD AND LADY YOUDE PAUSED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO SHAKE HANDS WITH THE PEOPLE AND TO SPEAK TO HAWKERS ABOUT THEIR BUSINESSES.

AT THE END OF THE TOUR, THE GOVERNOR COMMENTED: :I HAVE BEEN VERY, VERY MOVED BY THE WARM WELCOME I HAD TODAY. A LOT OF PEOPLE CAME OUT TO WELCOME ME AND THIS HAS GIVEN ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE WHAT LIFE IS LIKE IN MONG KOK.+

QUESTIONED ABOUT THE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING, HE SAID: +I FOUND IT VERY ENCOURAGING.

+THERE WAS A VALUABLE EXCHANGE BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THERE, AND I'M SURE THEY WILL COME TO A BETTER DECISION AS A RESULT OF THIS.

+IT'S VERY INTERESTING TO SEE IT IN ACTION. I THINK THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT FOR HONG KONG. CERTAINLY TODAY IS A VERY ENCOURAGING DAY.+

THE PARTY THEN LEFT THE HAWKER PERMITTED PLACE FOR THE JORDAN STATION AND TOOK AN MTR TRAIN ACROSS THE HARBOUR, ALIGHTING AT ADMIRALTY STATION.

DURING THE TRIP, THE GOVERNOR SPOKE TO A NUMBER OF PASSENGERS, INCLUDING ONE IN PUTONGHUA.

/NOTE TO EDITORS: .....

NOTE TO EDITORS:

FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH:

MR CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE MONG KOK DISTRICT BOARD, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

+I AM VERY GLAD TO ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE MONG KOK DISTRICT BOARD THIS AFTERNOON. I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MEET YOU ALL, AND TO SEE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN ACTION.

+I WILL NOT REPEAT TODAY THE REASON FOR INTRODUCING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WHICH WAS SET OUT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER IN JANUARY 1981. BUT I SHOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT I HAVE BEEN MOST IMPRESSED BY THE ENTHUSIASM WITH WHICH THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAVE GREETED THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT.

+IN TURN I WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT TAKES THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SERIOUSLY. THE STRONG TEAMS OF SENIOR DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS WHO SIT ON DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES ARE AN INDICATION TO YOU THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION TO WORK, AND WORK WELL. THEY GIVE SUPPORT TO DISTRICT BOARDS, AND WILL SEE TO IT THAT, WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, THE BOARDS' ADVICE IS ACTED UPON PROMPTLY, WITH IMAGINATION AND WITH DUE REGARD TO THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT.

+IN A SHORT SPACE OF TIME THE SCHEME HAS MADE EXCELLENT PROGRESS. THIS IS SHOWN BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND STUDIES OF GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN INITIATED OR COMPLETED.

+SOLUTIONS WILL NOT ALWAYS BE EASY TO FIND AS YOU GET TO GRIPS WITH THE MORE INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS OF STREET AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT, SHORTAGE OF FACILITIES AND URBAN DECAY, AND MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE MAN IN THE STREET. BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE BOARDS, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT, CAN AND WILL MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIVES AND WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE OF THEIR DISTRICTS.

+I WISH THE MONG KOK DISTRICT BOARD EVERY SUCCESS IN ITS WORK.

+THANK YOU.+

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LORD MACLEHOSE OF BEOCH

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THE LIFE BARONY CONFERRED ON SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE HAS BEEN GAZETTED IN THE UK BY THE NAME, STYLE AND TITLE OF BARON MACLEHOSE OF BEOCH, OF MAYBOLE IN THE DISTRICT OF KYLE AND CARRICK, AND OF VICTORIA IN HONG KONG.

EDITORS ARE ADVISED THAT HE SHOULD NOW BE REFERRED TO AS LORD MACLEHOSE OF BEOCH, OR SIMPLY AS LORD MACLEHOSE.

THE TERM +BARON+ AND THE REST OF THE TITLE ARE ONLY USED IN CERTAIN FORMAL DOCUMENTS.

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TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS UNIT REPORT

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THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT KMB SERVICES MADE TO THE TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS UNIT, ACCORDING TO THE TCU'S LATEST QUARTERLY REPORT PUBLISHED TODAY.

AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURES COMPILED FOR A SIX-MONTH PERIOD SHOWED THAT THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS DROPPED FROM 153 LAST OCTOBER TO 93 IN MARCH THIS YEAR.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT CMB SERVICES, HOWEVER, SHOWED A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN MARCH FROM 58 IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH TO 112, MAKING IT THE FIRST TIME THE COMPANY RECEIVED MORE COMPLAINTS THAN KMB.

+BEARING IN MIND THAT THE TOTAL PASSENGERS CARRIED BY CMB ARE ONLY ABOUT 32 PER CENT OF THOSE CARRIED BY KMB, IT IS APPARENT THAT THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC ARE GETTING MORE DISSATISFIED WITH CMB SERVICES,+ THE TCU REPORT NOTED.

THE REPORT ALSO POINTED OUT THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE 1 257 COMPLAINTS MADE IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR WERE STILL ABOUT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES.

WHILE THE TWO BUS COMPANIES ACCOUNTED FOR 448 OF THE 670 COMPLAINTS, THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATEI FERRY COMPANY HAD 61, TAXIS 46 AND MAXICABS 40 COMPLAINTS.

ROAD CONGESTIONS WERE ANOTHER SOURCE OF COMPLAINT AND THE NUMBER ROSE FROM 165 IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF 1981 TO 194 IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR.

UNEXPECTED CONGESTION AT REPULSE BAY ROAD FOLLOWING THE INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS RESULTED IN 20 COMPLAINTS WITHIN FIVE DAYS IN MARCH. THE PROBLEM WAS RESOLVED AS SOON AS THE COMPLAINTS WERE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE TRAFFIC ENGINEERS, THE TCU REPORT SAID.

THE TCU'S SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT FOR 1981-82 WAS ENDORSED BY THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING YESTERDAY (TUESDAY).

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HONG KONG'S ECONOMY ADJUSTING TO MAINTAIN COMPETITIVENESS

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ACCORDING TO THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT 1982 PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT TODAY, THERE WAS NOT MUCH INCREASE IN ACTIVITY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982, AND NO GROWTH WAS RECORDED IN DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN REAL TERMS IN VIEW OF THE DIFFICULTIES THE ECONOMIES OF HONG KONG'S MAIN MARKETS ARE EXPERIENCING.

THE REPORT, HOWEVER, EMPHASISES THAT THE EXPORT SECTOR APPEARS WELL POISED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY RECOVERY IN DEMAND FROM HONG KONG'S MAIN MARKETS BECAUSE THE PRESSURE OF DOMESTIC PRICES ON MANUFACTURING COSTS HAS EASED AND THE PRICES OF HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS HAVE REMAINED STABLE IN RECENT MONTHS.

THE REPORT UPDATES THE ANALYSES OF 1981 IN THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND DOCUMENT PUBLISHED ON BUDGET DAY, AND ASSESSES DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982, USING SUCH STATISTICS AS ARE AVAILABLE.

IN ITS OVERALL VIEW OF THE ECONOMY, THE REPORT POINTS OUT THAT THE GROWTH RATE OF DOMESTIC DEMAND HAS SLOWED DOWN AS EVIDENCED BY THE CONTINUED DECELERATION IN THE GROWTH RATE OF RETAINED IMPORTS OF CONSUMER GOODS IN THE FIRST QUARTER. NEVERTHELESS, DOMESTIC DEMAND CONTINUED TO PROVIDE THE IMPETUS TO ECONOMIC GROWTH DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982.

AS REGARDS INFLATION, THE REPORT SUGGESTS THAT AS NO SERIOUS IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE DEMAND FOR DOMESTIC RESOURCES AND THE SUPPLY OF THEM WAS OBSERVED IN THE FIRST QUARTER, THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE RATE OF INCREASE IN PRICES MUST BE NEUTRAL. IN ADDITION, THE EASING OF INFLATION ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, THE STRENGTHENING OF THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR AND THE STABLE LOCAL INTEREST RATES ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO THE EASING OF DOMESTIC PRICES.

AS REGARDS MONEY SUPPLY, THE REPORT POINTS OUT THAT HK$M3 FELL SLIGHTLY DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982, BUT THE GROWTH RATE OF LOANS AND ADVANCES FOR USE IN HONG KONG REMAINED HIGH. THERE WAS ALSO A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS IN THE LAST MONTH OF THE FIRST QUARTER CONSEQUENT UPON THE ABOLITION OF THE WITHHOLDING TAX ON INTEREST ON SUCH DEPOSITS. THE REPORT, HOWEVER, CAUTIONS THAT THE STATISTICS FOR THE FIRST QUARTER SHOULD BE INTERPRETED WITH CARE BECAUSE OF THE EFFECTS OF SEASONAL FLUCTUATIONS AROUND THE LUNAR NEW YEAR AND OF THE EFFECTS OF THE RECENT STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR.

APART FROM GIVING AN OVERALL VIEW, THE REPORT ALSO CONTAINS INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS ON THE EXTERNAL SECTOR, THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, THE LABOUR SECTOR, ACTIVITY IN SELECTED SECTORS AND PRICES.

/ON THE EXTERNAL .....

ON THE EXTERNAL SECTOR, THE REPORT POINTS OUT THAT AS EXPECTED, GIVEN THAT THE YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE OF RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES IN REAL TERMS FELL IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1981, DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN VALUE TERMS GREW SLOWLY DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982. BUT, IN VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN HONG KONG'S MAIN MARKETS, THE ZERO GROWTH RATE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN REAL TERMS WAS NOT TOO DISCOURAGING. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, NO CONCRETE SIGNS YET OF ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN EXPORT PERFORMANCE: MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE INCREASED DURING THE FIRST QUARTER, AND THE RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES AS WELL AS OF CAPITAL GOODS CONTINUED TO DECLINE FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE QUARTER. FURTHER, DOMESTIC EXPORT PERFORMANCE RELIES VERY MUCH ON THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN HONG KONG'S MAIN MARKETS, PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES, BUT THE LATEST VIEWS ARE THAT RECOVERY IN THE UNITED STATES WILL COME LATER THAN PREVIOUSLY EXPECTED.

THERE WAS A DECLINE IN THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS: THE GROWTH RATES OF IMPORTS SUBSEQUENTLY RE-EXPORTED AND OF IMPORTS RETAINED IN HONG KONG BOTH SLOWED DOWN SUBSTANTIALLY. HOWEVER, SINCE THE SLOW DOWN IN THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS WAS FASTER THAN THAT OF TOTAL EXPORTS (DOMESTIC EXPORTS PLUS RE-EXPORTS), THE VISIBLE TRADE +GAP+ (THAT IS, THE PROPORTION OF THE VALUE OF IMPORTS NOT COVERED BY THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS) IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982 NARROWED WHEN COMPARED WITH THAT IN THE CORRESPONDING QUARTER OF 1981.

ON THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, THE REPORT OBSERVES THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS. FIRST, THE ABOLITION OF THE WITHHOLDING TAX ON INTEREST ON FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS, ANNOUNCED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH ON FEBRUARY 24, HAS RESULTED IN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN SUCH DEPOSITS. IN CONSEQUENCE, TOTAL M3 GREW WHILE HK$M3 FELL SLIGHTLY DURING THE FIRST QUARTER. SECOND, THE AMENDMENT TO THE INTEREST RATE RULES WITH EFFECT FROM MARCH 1 BY THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS ENABLES BANKS TO COMPETE FREELY IN TERMS OF THE INTEREST RATES THEY OFFER FOR DEPOSITS OF HK$500 000 OR MORE, WITH AN ORIGINAL TERM TO MATURITY OR PERIOD OF CALL OR NOTICE OF LESS THAN THREE MONTHS. THIS CHANGE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO A SHIFT OF DEPOSITS FROM DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES TO BANKS, WITH THE RESULT THAT M2 GREW FASTER THAN M3 DURING THE FIRST QUARTER. THE REPORT ALSO NOTES THAT THE INTEREST RATES IN HONG KONG REMAINED GENERALLY STABLE THROUGHOUT THE FIRST QUARTER, AND THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, AS MEASURED BY THE TRADE-WEIGHTED EXCHANGE RATE INDEX, HELD UP WELL.

ON THE LABOUR SECTOR, THE REPORT POINTS OUT THAT OVERALL EMPLOYMENT GREW FAIRLY RAPIDLY IN 1981 ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SOME SLOWING DOWN IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE YEAR. AS THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FELL DURING THE YEAR, MANUFACTURING WAGE RATES STARTED TO RISE IN REAL TERMS. THE TERTIARY SERVICES SECTOR CONTINUED TO REGISTER THE FASTEST RATE OF GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT.

THE REPORT INDICATES THAT THE GROWTH RATE OF THE SUPPLY OF LABOUR IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982 CONTINUED TO SLOW DOWN AS A RESULT OF LESS NET IMMIGRATION AND FALLING LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE. THIS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A SLOWING DOWN IN THE GROWTH RATE OF DEMAND FOR LABOUR DUE TO A GENERAL FALL IN THE GROWTH RATES OF CONSUMER DEMAND AND OF EXPORT DEMAND.

/ON ACTIVITY .....

ON ACTIVITY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR, THE REPORT SAYS THAT ACCORDING TO STATISTICS ON THE QUANTITY OF ELECTRICITY CONSUMED, THERE WAS PROBABLY NOT MUCH INCREASE IN ACTIVITY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN THE FIRST QUARTER, ESPECIALLY IN THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY. THIS VIEW WAS CONFIRMED BY THE PERFORMANCE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN THE SAME PERIOD.

ON THE PROPERTY SECTOR, THE REPORT NOTES THAT THE TOTAL FLOOR AREA COMPLETED IN THE FIRST QUARTER WAS STILL SUBSTANTIAL, ALTHOUGH IT WAS RELATIVELY LOW BY RECENT EXPERIENCE. THE DECREASE IN THE ADDITIONAL SUPPLY OF NEW BUILDINGS, IN TERMS OF TOTAL USABLE FLOOR AREA COMPLETED, WAS WIDESPREAD AMONG ALL MAJOR TYPES OF BUILDING, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS. THE PROPERTY MARKET REMAINED SLUGGISH AS A RESULT OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN 1981, OF THE HIGH MORTGAGE AND INTEREST RATES AND OF THE PREVIOUS RAPID INCREASES IN PRICES. WHILST THE PRICES AND RENTALS OF PROPERTY CONTINUED TO DECLINE, PRICES HAVE FALLEN MORE SUBSTANTIALLY AND ON A MORE WIDESPREAD BASIS THAN HAVE RENTALS. THE MAGNITUDES OF THE REDUCTIONS IN PRICES AND RENTALS HAVE BEEN MOST MARKED FOR SHOPS, OFFICES OTHER THAN THOSE IN PRIME LOCATIONS AND RESIDENTIAL PREMISES. THE REDUCTIONS WERE LESS FOR INDUSTRIAL PREMISES, WHILE OFFICES IN PRIME LOCATIONS WERE THE LEAST AFFECTED.

ON PRICES, THE REPORT OBSERVES THAT DOMESTIC INFLATION CONTINUED TO EASE IN THE FIRST QUARTER: THE AVERAGE RATE OF INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICES AS MEASURED BY THE VARIOUS CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES IN THE FIRST QUARTER SHOWED A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION ON THOSE RECORDED DURING 1981. THE REPORT ATTRIBUTES THIS ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO THE CONTINUAL SLOWING DOWN IN CONSUMER DEMAND, THE FALL IN PRICES AND RENTALS OF PROPERTY AND THE ABSENCE OF A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE MONEY SUPPLY.

THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT 1982 IS NOW ON SALE AT $5 A COPY.

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KENYAN MINISTER LOOKS OVER SPORTS FACILITIES HERE

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THE KENYAN MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND SOCIAL SERVICES, MR MOSES MUDAVADI, WHO IS VISITING HONG KONG TO LOOK INTO SPORTS FACILITIES AND SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES, CALLED THIS MORNING ON THE COMMISSIONER FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM.

MR MUDAVADI HAD JUST BEEN TO MALAYSIA TO ATTEND THE COMMONWEALTH YOUTH AFFAIRS MEETING, AND WAS ACCOMPANIED BY TWO OTHER KENYAN OFFICIALS.

DURING HIS VISIT TO MR WIGGHAM, MR MUDAVADI EXPLAINED THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS PLANNING TO BUILD MANY SPORTS COMPLEXES IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

HE WAS PRESENTED WITH A MEMENTO BY MR WIGGHAM, AFTER WHICH HE WAS TAKEN ON A TOUR AND SHOWN VARIOUS SPORTS COMPLEXES, INCLUDING THE QUEEN ELIZABETH STADIUM, AS WELL AS THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE IN SHA TIN.

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LABOUR LAW OFFENCES

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OF THE 745 PROSECUTIONS TAKEN OUT BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT LAST MONTH FOR BREACHES OF LABOUR LAWS, 726 RESULTED IN CONVICTION, WITH FINES TOTALLING $660 000.

MOST OF THE CASES CONCERNED BREACHES OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE AND ITS VARIOUS SUBSIDIARY REGULATIONS, THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE AND THE WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS (INDUSTRY) REGULATIONS.

THERE WERE 217 CASES CONCERNING VIOLATIONS OF SAFETY REGULATIONS, RESULTING IN $314 250 IN FINES. THESE INCLUDED 130 CASES (WITH $166 400 IN FINES) FOR BREACH OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (GUARDING AND OPERATION OF MACHINERY) REGULATIONS AND 29 CASES (WITH $73 100 IN FINES) FOR BREACH OF THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS.

THERE WERE 410 CASES RELATING TO BREACHES OF THE WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS (INDUSTRY) REGULATIONS, WITH $207 550 IN FINES.

OF THE OTHER PROSECUTIONS, 21 CASES CONCERNED FAILURE TO KEEP RECORDS OF EMPLOYEES, LEADING TO $17 250 IN FINES.

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ROAD SAFETY DAY FUN PROGRAMME

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AN ENTERTAINMENT-PACKED ROAD SAFETY DAY WILL BE HELD IN THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT IN CENTRAL ON SUNDAY (MAY 30) TO LAUNCH THIS YEAR'S ROAD SAFETY PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN PUBLICITY COMMITTEE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY), +THIS TERRITORY-WIDE EVENT IS ONE OF THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AIMED AT DELIVERING THE ROAD SAFETY MESSAGES TO THE PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNGSTERS.

+ACCORDING TO STATISTICS RECENTLY RELEASED BY THE ROAD SAFETY DIVISION OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, AMONG THE 24 080 ROAD ACCIDENT VICTIMS OF 1981, 9 536 WERE PEDESTRIANS.

+CONSIDERING THE STRIKINGLY HIGH PROPORTION OF PEDESTRIANS INVOLVED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS AND THE FACT THAT THE NUMBER IS ON THE INCREASE, THE CAMPAIGN PUBLICITY COMMITTEE PLANS THIS YEAR TO REMIND ALL ROAD USERS, WHO ARE INCIDENTALLY PEDESTRIANS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.

+IN MOST CASES, PEOPLE WERE KILLED OR INJURED ON THE ROAD BECAUSE THEY DISOBEYED THE SIMPLE CROSSING CODES. THEY WERE EITHER BEING CARELESS OR BEING IMPATIENT,+ HE ADDED.

/STATISTICS ALSO .....

STATISTICS ALSO REVEALED THAT YOUNG CHILDREN WERE MORE ACCIDENT PRONE THAN ADULTS.

THE ROAD SAFETY DAY'S PROGRAMME WILL BE OPENED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR ALAN SCOTT.

FOLLOWING A DRAGON DANCE ON MOTORCYCLES STAGED BY THE ROYAL CORPS OF TRANSPORT, THERE WILL BE A PROCESSION OF 478 CHILDREN REPRESENTING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCIDENT VICTIMS KILLED ON THE ROADS LAST YEAR, TO REMIND THE PUBLIC OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION.

IN ADDITION, THERE WILL BE A VARIETY OF DISPLAYS ILLUSTRATING THE ROAD ACCIDENT STATISTICAL FIGURES OF 1981 AND OTHER FEATURES OF THE SUBJECT.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY'S ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMME WILL BE A PRESENTATION OF THE RTHK PROGRAMME 'THE NEW GENERATION QUINTET' FEATURING FAMOUS SINGERS, SUCH AS ALBERT AU AND KEN CHOI WHO WILL HELP TO SPREAD THE ROAD SAFETY MESSAGES WHILE ENTERTAINING THE PUBLIC.

YOUNG CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO HAVE FUN AND LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT THE HIGHWAY SAFETY RULES BY VISITING THE SPECIALLY DESIGNED ROAD SAFETY TOWN OR BY TAKING PART IN THE CHESS BOARD GAME OR THE EYE TEST GAME.

A DEMONSTRATION SHOWING THE ADVANTAGES OF WEARING SEAT BELTS WILL TAKE PLACE AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO TEST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS SAFETY FEATURE.

CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY LTD. AND KOWLOON MOTOR BUS LTD. TOGETHER WITH FIVE MOTOR TRADING COMPANIES WILL DISPLAY THEIR LATEST BUS OR CAR MODELS AND INTRODUCE TO THE PUBLIC THE SPECIAL SAFETY FEATURES OF THE VEHICLES.

ADMISSION TO THE ROAD SAFETY DAY WHICH COMMENCES AT 2 PM WILL BE FREE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE 1982 ROAD SAFETY DAY TO BE HELD IN THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT IN CENTRAL ON SUNDAY (MAY 30). MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD ARRIVE AT THE MAIN STAGE ARENA IN CHATER ROAD AT 1.50 PM WHERE THEY WILL BE ASSISTED BY GIS STAFF.

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TREE-PLANTING FOR NATURAL BEAUTY

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GIVEN THE PROPER CARE MILLIONS OF YOUNG TREES AND SHRUBS PLANTED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES DURING THE CURRENT MEI FA PHASE OF THE CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN, WILL IN TIME GREATLY ENHANCE THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, SAID MR LIU CHING-LEUNG, CHAIRMAN OF THE SHEUNG SHUI RURAL COMMITTEE TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS SPEAKING AT A CEREMONY MARKING THE LAUNCHING OF THE NORTH DISTRICT TREE PLANTING DAY, AT AN OPEN SPACE ADJACENT TO SHEK WU PUBLIC SCHOOL IN FANLING.

MR LIU SAID THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE SPENDING MANY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO PLANT FIVE MILLION TREES AND SHRUBS DURING THE BEAUTIFICATION SCHEME. A LARGE NUMBER OF THE TREES WILL BE PLANTED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

HE URGED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NOT TO VANDALISE THE YOUNG TREES PLANTED ON THE ROADSIDE AND THE COUNTRYSIDE.

HE ALSO CALLED FOR GREATER ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST VANDALISM TO HELP MAKE THE BEAUTIFICATION SCHEME A SUCCESS.

IN TODAY'S TREE-PLANTING ACTIVITIES, MORE THAN 100 STUDENTS FROM FOUR LOCAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS PLANTED SOME 60 EVERGREEN TREES TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NEW TOWN.

AS A GESTURE OF APPRECIATION, THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (NORTH REGION) OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR BOWEN LEUNG, PRESENTED SOUVENIR BANNERS TO SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES AFTER THE EVENT.

ALSO TAKING PART IN THE TREE PLANTING WERE THE DISTRICT OFFICER, NORTH, MR PETER JOHNSON; THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF HEUNG YEE KUK, MR LIU YUN-SUM; AND THE URBAN SERVICES OFFICER, MR LAW WAI-MING.

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KWAI CHUNG URBAN CLEARWAYS

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A SECTION OF THE NORTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY ON HING FONG ROAD NEAR ITS JUNCTION WITH WING FONG ROAD, KWAI CHUNG, WILL BE DESIGNATED AS AN URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 28).

VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM STOPPING WITHIN THE SECTION FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS FROM 7 AM TO 12 MIDNIGHT DAILY.

THIS WILL ALSO APPLY TO A SECTION OF THE SOUTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY ON HING FONG ROAD NEAR ITS JUNCTION WITH KWAI FUK ROAD.

HOWEVER, THE URBAN CLEARWAY RESTRICTION IN THE MIDDLE SECTION OF KWAI FOO ROAD WILL BE RESCINDED.

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN CAUSEWAY BAY

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SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED IN CAUSEWAY BAY FROM 11 PM ON FRIDAY (MAY 28) TO 6 AM ON SATURDAY (MAY 29) FOR MTR CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

UNDER THE ARRANGEMENTS, THE WESTERN END OF KAI CHIU ROAD WILL BE CLOSED. VEHICLES ON KAI CHIU ROAD SHOULD HEAD EASTWARD AND TURN LEFT INTO HENNESSY ROAD.

YUN PING ROAD BETWEEN KAI CHIU ROAD AND LAN FONG ROAD WILL BE A PROHIBITED ZONE FOR VEHICLES OVER TWO TONS.

THIS WILL ALSO APPLY TO PAK SHA ROAD BETWEEN LEE GARDEN ROAD AND YUN PING ROAD.

AT THE SAME TIME, PARKING SPACES IN RUSSELL STREET EAST OF PERCIVAL STREET AND IN LEE GARDEN ROAD NORTH OF PAK SHA ROAD WILL BE SUSPENDED.

SIGNS WILL BE PUT UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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TRAM ONLY LANE IN SHEUNG WAN

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A SECTION OF THE EASTBOUND TRAM TRACK ON CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST OUTSIDE MACAU FERRY WHARF WILL BE DESIGNATED AS A TRAM ONLY LANE FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 28).

UNDER THE ARRANGEMENT, ALL OTHER VEHICLES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THIS PART OF THE ROAD.

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WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW +LETTER B+ SYSTEM

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A MEETING WAS HELD TODAY BETWEEN THE REGIONAL SECRETARY (NEW TERRITORIES), MR IAN MACPHERSON; THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS, MR JOHN TODD AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK.

DURING THE MEETING, THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO CEASE ISSUING LAND EXCHANGE ENTITLEMENTS (LETTERS B) LATER THIS YEAR WAS DISCUSSED.

IT WAS AGREED THAT A WORKING GROUP COMPRISING THE REGIONAL SECRETARY (NEW TERRITORIES), DIRECTOR OF LANDS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK, WOULD BE CONVENED TO STUDY THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGE AND DETAILS OF AN ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM.

NO DATE HAS BEEN FIXED BUT THE WORKING GROUP IS EXPECTED TO MEET IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

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