



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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PORNOGRAPHY BILL REFLECTS WISHES OF COMMUNITY  
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THE CONTROL OF OBSCENE AND INDECENT ARTICLES BILL 1986, WHICH SEEKS TO CONTROL THE PUBLICATION AND DISPLAY OF OBSCENE AND INDECENT ARTICLES AND TO ESTABLISH AN OBSCENE ARTICLES TRIBUNAL, WAS IN GENERAL FAVOURABLY RECEIVED BY THE PUBLIC, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID FORD, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR FORD SAID THAT SINCE PUBLICATION OF A DRAFT BILL IN AUGUST LAST YEAR THE MOST FREQUENT COMMENT WAS A CALL FOR ITS EARLY IMPLEMENTATION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL'S PROVISIONS WOULD GREATLY REDUCE ACCESS BY JUVENILES TO INDECENT MATERIAL, THUS PROVIDING A DEGREE OF PROTECTION FOR THE WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE, WHILE STILL ALLOWING ADULTS THE FREEDOM TO PURCHASE THEM.

+JUDGING FROM THE WIDE RANGE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED, IT IS CLEAR THAT THESE RESTRICTIONS REFLECT THE WISHES OF THE GREAT MAJORITY OF OUR COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

MR FORD NOTED THE BILL PROPOSED THAT MEMBERS OF THE TRIBUNAL WOULD BE REQUIRED TO BE PROFICIENT IN EITHER WRITTEN CHINESE OR WRITTEN ENGLISH.

A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE COMMUNITY, WHO WERE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING, WOULD HENCE BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICE ON THE TRIBUNALS, HE SAID.

AS TO WHETHER THE SYSTEM OF VOLUNTARY SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES PRIOR TO THEIR PUBLICATION MIGHT SUPPRESS MATERIAL ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN OBSCENITY OR INDECENCY, MR FORD SAID, +THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION EMPOWERS THE TRIBUNAL TO RULE ONLY ON MATTERS OF OBSCENITY AND INDECENCY (INCLUDING VIOLENCE, DEPRAVITY AND REPULSIVENESS). ANY ATTEMPT TO RULE ON OTHER MATTERS WILL BE ULTRA VIRES.+

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE NUMBER OF ARTICLES, LIKELY TO BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED, WOULD REPRESENT ONLY A FRACTION OF ALL THE PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE IN HONG KONG.

ON THE PRECISE DEFINITIONS OF +OBSCENITY+ AND +INDECENCY+, MR FORD SAID IT WAS NEITHER PRACTICAL NOR DESIRABLE TO ATTEMPT TO STIPULATE IN LAW IN SPECIFIC TERMS WHAT WAS DEEMED TO BE UNACCEPTABLE ON MATTERS OF PROPRIETY.

/+THE ACCEPTED .....

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+THE ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF PROPRIETY IN ANY COMMUNITY CHANGE AND DEVELOP WITH TIME. IF PRECISE DEFINITIONS OF THESE TERMS WERE ENSHRINED IN LAW, REGULAR LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

MEMBERS OF THE PROPOSED TRIBUNAL, BY VIRTUE OF THEIR STATUS AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC, WOULD BE CAPABLE OF ASSESSING WHAT WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE COMMUNITY.

MR FORD ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WAS A RISK OF INCONSISTENCY WHEN MORE THAN ONE PERSON SAT, OR DIFFERENT PERSONS SAT AT DIFFERENT TIMES, ON THE TRIBUNAL.

+NEVERTHELESS, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE JUDICIAL PROCESS ON MATTERS OF PROPRIETY IS PREFERABLE TO RELIANCE, AS AT PRESENT, ON THE JUDGMENT OF A SINGLE MAGISTRATE,+ HE SAID.

IF ANY PARTY TO TRIBUNAL PROCEEDINGS FELT THAT THERE WAS INCONSISTENCY, IT MIGHT SEEK A FULL HEARING IN WHICH PARTIES MIGHT BE LEGALLY REPRESENTED, EXPERT OPINION MIGHT BE SOUGHT AND, IF DEEMED NECESSARY, THE SERVICES OF ADDITIONAL ADJUDICATORS ENLISTED.

+THE PROBLEM OF INCONSISTENCY WILL BE FURTHER REDUCED AS THE REPOSITORY BUILDS UP ITS STOCK OF ARTICLES CLASSIFIED WHICH WILL PROVIDE A SOURCE OF REFERENCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE TRIBUNAL AND THOSE WHO INTEND TO PUBLISH MATERIAL OF THIS KIND,+ HE SAID.

+A PANEL OF UP TO 80 ADJUDICATORS WILL BE DRAWN WITH CARE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND INTERESTS AND REPRESENTING A BROAD CROSS-SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY.+

HE SAID THAT ONLY EXPERIENCE WOULD CONFIRM THE SUCCESS OR OTHERWISE OF THE PROCESS. HE ASSURED COUNCIL MEMBERS THAT THE SITUATION WOULD BE CAREFULLY WATCHED AND ASSESSED.

MR FORD ADDED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONTINUE TO ACCEPT COMPLAINTS FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC AND CONSIDER, ON LEGAL ADVICE, WHETHER THE SUBJECT ARTICLE JUSTIFIED A SUBMISSION TO THE TRIBUNAL.

+THESE COMPLAINTS SHOULD BE CHANNELLED TO THE NEWSPAPERS REGISTRATION UNIT OF THE TELEVISION AND ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING AUTHORITY OR THROUGH ANY DISTRICT OFFICE,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL AIMS TO BRIDGE PROBATION ORDER PROCEDURAL GAP

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THE OBJECTS OF THE PROBATION OF OFFENDERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 ARE TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BREACHES OF PROBATION ORDERS AND TO EMPOWER THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE TO SPECIFY RECORD FORMS PRESCRIBED UNDER THE ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR CHAMBERS SAID CLAUSE 2 OF THE BILL WAS DESIGNED TO BRIDGE THE PROCEDURAL GAP IN THE EXISTING LEGISLATION WHICH DID NOT MAKE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO A PERSON IN BREACH OF AN ORDER MADE BY THE COURT OF APPEAL, OR THOSE WHO HAD COMMITTED A FURTHER OFFENCE DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD, TO BE REFERRED BACK TO THAT COURT.

UNDER SECTIONS 5 AND 6 OF THE PROBATION OF OFFENDERS ORDINANCE, HE SAID, A PERSON WHO WAS IN BREACH OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF A PROBATION ORDER OR WHO HAD COMMITTED A FURTHER OFFENCE, WAS BROUGHT BEFORE AND DEALT WITH BY THE COURT WHICH MADE THE ORIGINAL ORDER.

CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL WOULD DELETE THE EXISTING PROVISION WHICH STIPULATED THAT THE AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE THE RECORD FORMS ON PROBATIONERS BY THEIR PROBATION INSTITUTIONS WAS VESTED IN THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL UNDER SECTION 12(E) OF THE ORDINANCE, HE ADDED.

INSTEAD, +CLAUSE 4 PROVIDES THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE WITH THE AUTHORITY TO SPECIFY THE FORM OF RECORDS TO BE KEPT UNDER THE ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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DISCRETION FOR MAGISTRATES TO AMEND SUMMONS PROPOSED

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A BILL SEEKING TO GIVE A MAGISTRATE DISCRETION TO AMEND A COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS WHERE A DEFECT OR VARIANCE BETWEEN THE CHARGE AND THE EVIDENCE IS NOT IN HIS VIEW MATERIAL OR WHERE NO IRREMIABLE INJUSTICE WOULD RESULT, WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID THE NEW SECTION CONTAINED IN THE BILL ALSO PRESCRIBED THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED WHERE AN AMENDMENT HAD TO BE MADE.

/MR THOMAS .....

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MR THOMAS POINTED OUT THAT IN A MAGISTRATES COURT, THE COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS MUST SET OUT THE OFFENCE ALLEGED AGAINST A DEFENDANT, BUT THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE DID NOT ALLOW ANY OBJECTION TO BE TAKEN TO ANY DEFECT IN THE SUBSTANCE OR FORM OF A COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS.

+AS THE LAW STANDS, THE MAGISTRATE MUST GIVE JUDGEMENT ON THE SUBSTANTIAL MERITS AND FACTS OF THE CASE, AND MAKE ANY NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS,+ HE SAID.

+THE MAGISTRATE HAS NO DISCRETION IN THE MATTER.+

HE SAID THAT THE RIGIDITY OF THIS PROCEDURE HAD, FROM TIME TO TIME, BEEN CRITICISED BY BOTH PRACTITIONERS AND MAGISTRATES.

+THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE MAGISTRATE MUST HAVE A DISCRETION TO AVOID INJUSTICE AND THAT THE LAW SHOULD GIVE SOME GUIDELINES UPON WHICH TO EXERCISE THAT DISCRETION WHEN THE CASE THAT EMERGES AT THE TRIAL DOES NOT ESTABLISH THE OFFENCE ALLEGED IN THE INFORMATION, COMPLAINT OR SUMMONS, BUT DOES DISCLOSE SOME OTHER OFFENCE,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS ADDED THAT THE BAR ASSOCIATION, THE LAW SOCIETY AND THE JUDICIARY HAD INDICATED SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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ROAD WORKS BILL ENSURES DELEGATION OF POWERS  
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THE OBJECT OF THE ROADS (WORKS, USE AND COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 IS TO ENABLE THE POWERS RELATING TO THE CLOSURE OF ROADS AND RECLAMATION OF CROWN FORESHORE OR SEA-BED TO BE DELEGATED TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON DAVID LAN, SAID THAT +ON MAY 30, 1986, PROVISION WAS MADE FOR THE DELEGATION OF THE GOVERNOR'S POWERS UNDER THE ROADS (WORKS, USE AND COMPENSATION) ORDINANCE TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT.

/+HOWEVER, .....

+HOWEVER, DUE TO THE PARTICULAR FORM OF WORDS USED IN SECTION 17 SUBSECTION (1) OF THE ORDINANCE, LEGAL ADVICE HAS BEEN THAT THE POWERS UNDER THAT SUBSECTION MUST BE EXERCISED BY THE GOVERNOR PERSONALLY.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT THESE POWERS RELATED TO THE CLOSURE OF ROADS AND RECLAMATION OF CROWN FORESHORE OR SEA-BED WHICH WERE AFFECTED BY ROAD WORKS.

+SUCH MATTERS ARE LARGELY ROUTINE, AND THERE IS NO PRACTICAL REASON WHY THESE POWERS HAVE TO BE EXERCISED BY THE GOVERNOR,+ HE SAID.

MR LAN SAID THE BILL WAS THEREFORE AIMED AT DELEGATING THE POWERS CONCERNED TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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DAMAGE TO ECONOMY LIKELY WITH INTERVENTION  
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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON ERIC HO, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT BECAUSE OF THE EXTERNAL ORIENTATION OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY AND THE NEED TO PROTECT ITS ABILITY TO ADJUST EFFICIENTLY, THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ECONOMY WOULD BE DAMAGED IF THE GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTED TO FRUSTRATE MARKET FORCES OR PLAN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.

WINDING UP THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR HO SAID THAT WHILE THIS DID NOT RULE OUT INTERVENTION, IT CLEARLY MEANT THAT INTERVENTION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN ONLY WHEN IT WAS IN THE LONG-TERM INTEREST OF THE ECONOMY.

+DIRECT SUBSIDIES TO BUSINESS ARE AVOIDED AND MARKET FORCES ARE ALLOWED TO BE THE DETERMINANTS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL DECISIONS,+ HE SAID.

+OUR OBJECTIVE AT ALL TIMES IS TO FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF OUR INDUSTRIES BY FOSTERING THEIR COMPETITIVE STRENGTH ON THE ONE HAND AND BY REMOVING IDENTIFIABLE OBSTACLES ON THE OTHER.

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+THE FIRST CYCLE OF THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC CONSULTANCY STUDIES UNDERTAKEN ON THE ADVICE OF THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD (IDB) IS NEARING COMPLETION. AS A RESULT, AN OVERALL PICTURE OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE MAJOR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES IS BEGINNING TO EMERGE,+ HE ADDED.

IN THE CASE OF MANPOWER TRAINING, MR HO SAID THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE (UPGC) HAD AGREED TO DEVOTE PRIORITY TO A LARGER OUTPUT OF ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS IN THE NEXT TRIENNium AND THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS TO MODIFY THEIR CURRICULA, WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THAT THEIR GRADUATES BECAME MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN COMPUTER AND MICROPROCESSOR TECHNOLOGIES.

+THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAD ALSO APPROVED A COMMITMENT OF \$6 MILLION LAST NOVEMBER FOR A PILOT TRAINING SCHEME TO ENABLE PRACTISING ENGINEERS TO LEARN CIRCUITRY DESIGN ABROAD, WITH A VIEW TO RETURNING TO HONG KONG FOR WORK WITH SEMICONDUCTOR FIRMS.

+FUNDS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR TO ENABLE THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL TO INTRODUCE NEW PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SERVICES.+

TURNING TO INWARD INVESTMENT PROMOTION, MR HO SAID STEPS WERE BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE MACHANISM FOR TARGETING FOREIGN MANUFACTURING FIRMS, TO DEVELOP CONTACTS WITH FOREIGN INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS WITH A VIEW TO FACILITATING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TRANSACTIONS, AND TO REINFORCE INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION OFFICES LOCATED OVERSEAS.

TURNING TO INDUSTRIAL ACCOMMODATION, MR HO POINTED OUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS NOW CONSIDERING WHETHER THERE WAS SUFFICIENT DEMAND IN HONG KONG TO ESTABLISH A TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, POSSIBLY IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL.

+THESE TECHNOLOGY CENTRES TYPICALLY PROVIDE CLEAN, DUST-FREE, NOISE-FREE AND VIBRATION-FREE ACCOMMODATION FOR COMPANIES ENGAGED IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PROTOTYPE PRODUCTION.

+MEANWHILE, PLANNING IS NOW UNDER WAY IN THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT TO EXAMINE WHETHER A PART OF THE YUEN LONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE COULD BE USED FOR SUPPORTING OR LINKAGE INDUSTRIES.

+IT IS ALSO ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT A WORKING PARTY SET UP BY THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS IS ASSESSING THE DEMAND FOR VENTURE CAPITAL AS A SOURCE OF INVESTMENT FUNDS ALTERNATIVE TO BANK LOANS.

/+THIS WORKING .....

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+THIS WORKING PARTY -- ON WHICH THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT, THE MONETARY AFFAIRS BRANCH AND THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL ARE REPRESENTED -- IS MAKING GOOD PROGRESS,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE DELIVERY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES, PARTICULARLY TO SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS, HE SAID THE IDB HAD ENDORSED THE NEED FOR A FURTHER EXAMINATION OF HOW THE MARKETING OF SUCH SERVICES MIGHT BE IMPROVED.

+THE IDB CONSIDER THAT WHILE THE QUALITY OF THE SERVICES AVAILABLE IS GOOD, MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE TO ENCOURAGE WIDER USE OF THESE SERVICES.+

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#### CONTINUED VIABILITY OF INDUSTRY VITAL

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ENSURING THE CONTINUED VIABILITY OF THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR WILL BE A TOP PRIORITY IN THE YEARS TO COME, THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

LEADING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, AS CONVENER OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP STUDYING THE ISSUE, MR CHEONG STRESSED THAT THE DEBATE WAS NOT INTENDED TO SEEK AN IMMEDIATE COMMITMENT FROM GOVERNMENT TO DEPART FROM OR TO MODIFY SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF CURRENT POLICIES.

RATHER, IT WAS HOPED THAT THE DEBATE WOULD SERVE TO FOCUS ATTENTION AS WELL AS TO STIMULATE THOUGHTS ON FUTURE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

MR CHEONG SAID THAT FROM THE ANGLE OF PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THERE WAS NO DOUBT THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR WAS STILL THE KEYSTONE OF STABILITY.

THE MAINTENANCE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE ADAPTATION OF CONSISTENT YET PRAGMATIC POLICIES THAT FACILITATED TRADE.

HE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE IT A POLICY TO CONDUCT PERIODIC REVIEWS OF ALL THE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS COMPRISING THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

/SUCH REVIEWS .....

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SUCH REVIEWS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED EVERY THREE TO FIVE YEARS AND SHOULD BE DETAILED, OBJECTIVE AND COVER AREAS SUCH AS PERFORMANCE TO DATE, FUTURE PROSPECTS AS WELL AS IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM AREAS NEEDED TO BE ADDRESSED.

+ARMED WITH RESULTS FROM SUCH REVIEWS, I BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE POLICIES DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EACH COMPONENT OF THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR,+ HE SAID.

AS HONG KONG PROGRESSED ECONOMICALLY, EDUCATIONALLY AND SOCIALLY, THE QUALITY OF THE FUTURE WORKFORCE WOULD MOST LIKELY BE BETTER SUITED FOR HIGHER TECHNOLOGICAL INDUSTRIES.

MR CHEONG SAID THAT HAVING ANALYSED THE STATE OF MOST COMPONENTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, HE BELIEVED FURTHER EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL SECTOR WOULD BE CRUCIAL IN MEETING FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITY DEMANDS IN HONG KONG.

THIS SECTOR HAD IN THE PAST CONCENTRATED ON ASSEMBLY TYPE OPERATIONS AND HAD BEEN HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON ASIAN COUNTRIES FOR BASIC COMPONENTS SUPPORT.

IF THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS CONTINUED THE SECTOR'S GROWTH POTENTIAL WOULD MOST LIKELY BE CONSTRAINED OR HAMPERED.

THEREFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE BASIC ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS INDUSTRY SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED IN HONG KONG.

+THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD LOSE NO TIME IN REVIVING, DEVISING AND IMPLEMENTING POLICIES THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS LAYING A GOOD FOUNDATION TO OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO MODERNISATION POLICIES OF CHINA, MR CHEONG SAID HONG KONG WAS WELL PLACED AS A BASE FROM WHICH TO EFFECT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

+THE GOVERNMENT MUST START FORGING CLOSER LINKS WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN CHINA SO AS TO IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE CLOSER CO-OPERATION WILL BRING MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO BOTH COMMUNITIES,+ HE SUGGESTED.

SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO CHINA AND HONG KONG WOULD GAIN THROUGH CREATION OF MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

MR CHEONG ALSO SAID THAT AS HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR WAS TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL MARKETS IT WAS VITAL THE EFFECTIVE COMPETITIVENESS OF INDUSTRY WAS MAINTAINED.

/HOWEVER, .....

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HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED THE GOVERNMENT AGAINST INTRODUCING ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES THAT WOULD GIVE RISE TO INCREASED COSTS IN MANUFACTURING.

HE SAID THAT MANUFACTURERS HAD NEVER BEEN AGAINST PROVIDING REASONABLE BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES OR OBSTRUCTING ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES FOR OBSTRUCTION'S SAKE.

+HOWEVER, WE ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT LEGISLATION IN THESE AREAS MIGHT HAVE BEEN PLANNED AND PUSHED THROUGH ON A PIECEMEAL BASIS SO THAT THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON COST HAD NEVER BEEN PROPERLY EVALUATED.+

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEEDED TO BOOST ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY  
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HONG KONG NEEDS AN URGENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WHICH WOULD PROVIDE WAYS AND MEANS TO ENHANCE BOTH THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF PRODUCTS OF THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY, THE HON HU FA-KUANG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR HU SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO UNDERTAKE A MORE POSITIVE ROLE IN THIS RESPECT IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS.

HE SAID ONE WAY WAS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP A SPECIAL SECTION TO DEAL WITH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

+THIS SECTION SHOULD CARRY OUT DETAILED STUDY AND RESEARCH TO FIND OUT THE PRESENT WEAKNESS OF OUR ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY WHERE WE HAVE TO RELY HEAVILY ON OTHER COUNTRIES FOR SUPPORT NOW AND POSSIBLE IN THE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

AS HONG KONG HAD NO DIFFICULTY IN FINDING INVESTORS WHO WERE LOOKING FOR INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, THIS SECTION MIGHT STIMULATE THE INTEREST OF SUCH INVESTORS IN NEW PROJECTS OR JOINT VENTURES WHICH HAD GOOD PROSPECTS AND WERE PROFITABLE, HE SAID.

+THIS SECTION CAN THEN TURN TO OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS JAPAN AND THE U.S. WITH THE INTENTION TO LOOK FOR SUITABLE FIRMS WHICH HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY WE REQUIRE AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONSIDER TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, WITH OR WITHOUT INVESTMENT, TO THE INTERESTED HONGKONG PARTIES ON TERMS BENEFICIAL TO BOTH PARTIES.+

/MR HU SAID .....

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MR HU SAID THAT DUE TO THE WEAKNESS IN HONG KONG'S PRODUCTION OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE AND ITS RELATIVELY HIGH LABOUR COST IN THIS REGION, THERE WAS A TENDENCY FOR LOCAL MANUFACTURERS TO MOVE PART OF THEIR PRODUCTION LINES TO CHINA OR TO SET UP NEW PRODUCTION PLANTS THERE.

+I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WILL BE GREAT INCREASE IN AUTOMATED PRODUCTION LINES IN SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN, TO PRODUCE MORE COMPLICATED AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS FOR EXPORT TO THE U.S., OUR BIGGEST EXPORT MARKET. THIS DEVELOPMENT WILL SERIOUSLY AFFECT OUR EXPORT BUSINESS.+

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY MUST JOINTLY CONSIDER THESE DEVELOPMENTS SERIOUSLY IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE.

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CHINA'S TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS USEFUL TO HK INDUSTRY  
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THE EXTENSIVE RESEARCH ON TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS CONDUCTED BY MANY UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN CHINA COULD BE APPLIED PRACTICALLY TO IMPROVE THE PRODUCTIVITY OF HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY, THE HON WONG PO-YAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR WONG SAID THAT CHINA MIGHT BE READY SOURCE TO FULFIL HONG KONG'S TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS.

+IN FACT, SOME OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA ARE OF A VERY HIGH STANDARD, BUT THE DEVELOPMENT COST IS MUCH LOWER THAN WHAT WE HAVE TO INCUR TO CONDUCT OUR OWN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENTS,+ HE SAID.

CITING AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THERE WERE MANY TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN CHINA WHICH, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, WERE NOT WELL PUBLICISED. BUT IF THESE INNOVATIONS WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO INDUSTRIALISTS IN HONG KONG, IT COULD PROVE TO BE A REAL ASSET TO INDUSTRY.

/MR WONG SAID .....

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MR WONG SAID THAT CHINA HAD THE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THAT COULD BE OF BENEFIT TO HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIALISTS. HE SAID EVEN A NUMBER OF MAJOR INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES HAD CONFIDENCE IN CERTAIN AREAS OF CHINESE TECHNOLOGY, WHICH WERE AVAILABLE AT A COST VERY COMPETITIVE INTERNATIONALLY.

HE SUGGESTED HOWEVER, THAT RATHER THAN ACCEPTING THE END-PRODUCTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA AS A PACKAGE, HONG KONG COULD ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH BY PUTTING UP ITS OWN REQUIREMENTS TO THE RELEVANT RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN CHINA SO THAT SPECIALLY-DESIGNED DEVICES COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE ACCORDING TO ITS OWN SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.

IN ADDITION, HE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LARGE POOL OF RESOURCES IN SOME FACTORIES IN CHINA.

+I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE SPARE CAPACITIES IN SOME FACTORIES IN CHINA WHICH ARE NOT RUN TO THEIR FULL CAPACITIES IN THE PRODUCTION OF CONSUMER GOODS.

+MANY FACTORIES HAVE EXPENSIVE AND HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENTS WHICH COULD BE USED IN TURN TO PRODUCE ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL MACHINERIES OR SPARE PARTS FOR USE BY ENTREPRENEURS IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

HE ADVISED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD ASSIST AND CO-ORDINATE INDIVIDUAL ENQUIRIES WITH ORGANISATIONS IN CHINA IN ORDER TO BETTER THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION.

MR WONG SAID THE SEMINAR TO BE ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, WITH AN AIM TO ENCOURAGE CHINESE UNIVERSITIES TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH HONG KONG INDUSTRIES, WAS A GOOD START.

HE SAID IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO TAKE FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON THIS SEMINAR BY ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL. IT COULD WORK IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE FEDERATION OF INDUSTRIES AND THE CHINESE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION TO INVESTIGATE IN DETAIL THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUCH TECHNOLOGICAL COLLABORATIONS.

THESE INSTITUTIONS COULD AT THE SAME TIME IDENTIFY AND COLLATE HONG KONG'S OWN NEEDS BEFORE MAKING A FORMAL APPROACH TO INSTITUTIONS IN CHINA.

FINALLY, MR WONG SAID HE HOPED THOSE ACTIVITIES WOULD FOSTER A STRONGER LIAISON BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA, AND THAT SOME CONCRETE RESULTS MIGHT BE PRODUCED IN THE FUTURE.

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CHANNEL VENTURE CAPITAL INTO MANUFACTURING  
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THERE IS A NEED TO CHANNEL VENTURE CAPITAL INTO THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR TO ENABLE INDUSTRIES TO SPREAD THEIR RISK CAPACITIES IN RETURN FOR TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT.

THE HON KIM CHAM SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY.

HE GAVE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW VENTURE CAPITAL COULD REALISE BOTH COMMERCIALISATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCT IMPROVEMENTS BY TRANSFERRING RISKS TO INVESTORS WHO COULD AFFORD HIGH RISKS FOR HIGH RETURNS.

WITH GROWING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTIONISM, MR CHAM BELIEVED HONG KONG MUST SEEK TO INCREASE ITS DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY DIVERSIFYING THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENT OR PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT.

IT COULD NOT RELY ON DUPLICATING ESTABLISHED PRODUCTS AND MARKETING GOODS THROUGH LOW COSTS AND CUT-THROAT COMPETITION.

HE SAID VENTURE CAPITAL SUITED THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG AS MANY INDUSTRIES WERE MEDIUM-SIZED AND FAMILY-OWNED.

+FURTHERMORE, VENTURE CAPITAL MAY PROVIDE MANAGERIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL OR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT WHICH MAY BE LACKING IN A BUSINESS CONSISTING ONLY OF FAMILY MEMBERS.

+FOR THESE COMPANIES IN HONG KONG, VENTURE CAPITAL WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO GROW AND EXPAND FOR A RETURN WHICH IS COMMENSURATE WITH THE RISKS INVOLVED,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE FINANCING REQUIREMENTS IN A VENTURE CAPITAL ASSESSMENT, DR CHAM NOTED THAT THE MOST DIFFICULT FINANCING WAS FOR A NEW COMPANY AT ITS SEEDING STAGE WHEN EQUITY INVESTMENT WAS USUALLY NEEDED.

FOR START-UP FINANCING IT WOULD NOT BE EASY FOR A COMPANY TO BE LISTED EVEN ON AN OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) MARKET AS THE PUBLIC WAS NOT ABLE TO ANALYSE THE INVESTMENT RISKS INVOLVED.

MR CHAM SUGGESTED THAT A NEW CATEGORY OF INVESTMENT DEALERS, KNOWN AS VENTURE CAPITAL INVESTMENT DEALERS (VCID), SHOULD BE CREATED.

+WITH KNOWLEDGE OF VENTURE INVESTORS' PROFILES AND CAPABILITIES, THESE DEALERS WILL ACT AS MEDIA TO PUT COMPANIES IN NEED OF VENTURE CAPITAL IN TOUCH WITH WILLING TAKERS.

/+THEY SHOULD .....

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+THEY SHOULD ALSO BE REGISTERED WITH THE SECURITIES COMMISSION AS LICENSED DEALERS, OPERATING UNDER SUPERVISION TO ORGANISE VENTURE CAPITAL FOR SMALL BUSINESS AS WELL AS TO PROVIDE ADVICE TO INTERESTED INVESTORS,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAM SAID THAT NATURALLY THE RISK OF INVESTING IN THESE COMPANIES WOULD BE HIGH BUT THE JUDGEMENT OF WHETHER IT WAS AN APPROPRIATE INVESTMENT SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE INVESTORS WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL ADVICE FROM VCID'S.

AS FOR COMPANIES WHICH REQUIRED PUBLIC OFFERING FINANCING, MR CHAM SAID THE FUNCTIONS OF AN OTC MARKET WOULD HELP TO TRANSFER RISK TO THE MARKET PLACE AND WAS A PROVEN MECHANISM ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED THAT THE RISK INVOLVED IN INVESTING IN THESE STOCKS MIGHT BE HIGH EVEN THOUGH THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT MIGHT BE SUBSTANTIAL.

THE INVESTING PUBLIC SHOULD BE UNDER NO IMPRESSION THAT IT WOULD BE LIKE INVESTING IN BLUE CHIP STOCKS.

+THUS, THE INVESTOR MUST ACT WITHIN HIS OWN CAPACITY AND NOT TAKE RISKS WHICH HE CANNOT AFFORD,+ HE ADDED.

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+FINE TUNE+ NON-INTERVENTION POLICY  
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THERE IS STILL MUCH ROOM FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO +FINE TUNE+ ITS POLICY OF POSITIVE NON-INTERVENTION IN INDUSTRY WHICH HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC SUCCESS.

THIS WAS SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY.

MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID THE POLICY HAD ENABLED MANUFACTURERS TO ADAPT MORE QUICKLY THAN THEIR REGIONAL COMPETITORS TO CHANGES IN EXPORT MARKETS.

HOWEVER, THERE WERE AREAS WHERE +FINE TUNING+ OR STRENGTHENING COULD BE CONSIDERED.

/FOR EXAMPLE, .....

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FOR EXAMPLE, HE SUGGESTED THAT MORE BACK-UP SUPPORT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED INDUSTRIAL FIRMS WHICH REPRESENTED NEARLY 97 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS IN HONG KONG.

COUNTRIES SUCH AS SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN AND SINGAPORE HAD ALREADY SET UP OFFICIALLY SPONSORED ORGANISATIONS TO GIVE SUPPORT TO SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED FACTORIES BUT IN HONG KONG THERE WAS NO SIMILAR ORGANISATION, HE SAID.

HE FELT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SETTING UP A SIMILAR ORGANISATION THAT WOULD SUIT HONG KONG CIRCUMSTANCES.

MR CHEONG-LEEN ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT MORE POSITIVELY IN STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING THE TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENABLE INDUSTRY TO MOVE AHEAD AND UP-MARKET WITH GREATER MOMENTUM.

IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID HONG KONG SHOULD MOVE AHEAD WITH ALL SPEED TO ESTABLISH A PROPOSED TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OR SCIENCE PARK FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING INNOVATION, FACILITATING THE APPLICATION OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, AND ATTRACTING MORE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OR INVESTMENTS FROM OVERSEAS TO HONG KONG. IT WOULD ALSO IMPROVE HONG KONG'S IMAGE AS AN IMPORTANT CENTRE OF TECHNOLOGY.

IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THE COMMITTEE COULD MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT ON POLICY TOWARDS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

IT COULD ALSO ADVISE ON THE OUTLINE OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, ESPECIALLY IN MANPOWER TRAINING AND WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS A WHOLE, AND ALSO ON THE LIKELY FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS.

MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STEP UP THE MOMENTUM IN ENCOURAGING BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO EXTEND LONGER TERM LOANS AT COMPETITIVE INTEREST RATES TO INDUSTRY FOR INSTALLATION OF UP-TO-DATE MACHINERY AND OTHER CAPITAL EQUIPMENT.

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE SEEN TO BE MORE POSITIVELY STIMULATING SUCH A TREND ON THE PART OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HE ADDED.

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CALL TO HELP INDUSTRY THROUGH DEVELOPMENT FUND  
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THE SETTING UP OF A + HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND+ WOULD HELP IN THE MOVE TOWARDS SERVICE AND TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS PROVIDE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEDIUM AND SMALL-SIZED FACTORIES, THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SUGGESTED TWO METHODS ON HOW THE FUND COULD BE SET UP WHEN SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG.

HE SAID A LUMP SUM SHOULD BE TAKEN OUT FROM THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES TO FORM THE FUND WHICH WOULD BE RUN AND MANAGED BY A +HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND COMMITTEE+.

A LEVY COULD BE CHARGED ON EXPORT GOODS TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES FOR THIS FUND WHICH COULD OFFER MONEY-LENDING SERVICES TO LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS.

THE FUND COULD ALSO BE SET UP BY ISSUING PREFERENTIAL SHARES AND RUN JOINTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSMEN UNDER THE BOARD OF A LIMITED COMPANY. THE MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY COULD BE MADE UP OF CIVIL SERVANTS, BANKERS, AS WELL AS BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS.

ON THE BUSINESS OPERATED BY THE FUND, MR CHUNG SAID IT MIGHT BE DIVERSIFIED:

- \* TO OFFER LOANS TO MEDIUM AND SMALL-SIZED FACTORIES AT A PREFERENTIAL RATE FOR THE PURCHASE OF PLANTS, MACHINERY AND EXPORT FACILITIES ;
- \* TO MAKE TAKE-OVER ARRANGEMENTS OR ARRANGEMENTS FOR MERGER OF INDUSTRIES ON A SUPPORTIVE CAUSE AS WELL AS OFFERING TRANSFER SERVICE;
- \* UNDER FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS, THE FUND MAY BE FLEXIBLY UTILISED FOR OTHER CAPITAL INVESTMENTS.
- \* BASED ON REASONABLE COMMERCIAL TERMS, THE FUND MIGHT BE USED TO ENCOURAGE INDUSTRIAL INVESTORS BY GIVING OUT AWARDS AS WELL AS FINANCE OR ACQUIRE INDUSTRIAL INVENTIONS.

MR CHUNG SAID HE BELIEVED THAT MORE INDIRECT SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND WOULD STIMULATE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS TO INVEST IN NEW TECHNOLOGY, NEW PRODUCTS AND NEW MARKETS.

+THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO HELP MIDDLE AND SMALL-SIZED FACTORIES WIDEN THEIR SCOPE OF BUSINESS AND ASSIST THEM TO ACQUIRE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS,+ HE SAID.

/MR CHUNG .....

MR CHUNG ALSO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FOSTER THE LINK BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING COLLEGES AND FACTORIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH PRACTICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO JOIN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR AFTER GRADUATION.

HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD INTRODUCE A +FACTORY OWNERSHIP SCHEME+ TO ENCOURAGE INVESTORS TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN FACTORIES BY PAYING AN AMOUNT WHICH WAS MORE OR LESS EQUIVALENT TO THE RENTAL FOR THE FACTORIES.

ON THE SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL, MR CHUNG SAID HE FELT THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT AND THE COUNCIL SHOULD WORK HAND IN HAND AND TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO APPROACH MEDIUM AND SMALL-SIZED FACTORIES TO MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF ACQUIRING UP-TO-DATE KNOWLEDGE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS IMPROVING EFFICIENCY IN PRODUCTION.

AT THE SAME TIME, THESE ORGANISATIONS SHOULD ALSO GIVE AN IMPETUS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE MOVE TOWARDS DIVERSIFICATION.

FINALLY, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONDUCT STUDIES INTO THE TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY FACTORY OPERATORS AND PUBLISH THE RESULT IN A BULLETIN.

IN GENERAL, HE SAID, THERE WAS A NEED TO INTRODUCE A MORE PRACTICAL AND COMPREHENSIVE INDUSTRIAL GUIDANCE SCHEME. HE SAID HE CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY FOR INDUSTRIAL REFORMS AND INNOVATIONS TO BE GRADUALLY INTRODUCED ON THE BASIS OF THE ORIGINAL SYSTEM.

+WHENEVER DIFFICULTIES ARE ENCOUNTERED, GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE OFFERED SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE ANTICIPATED AIM THROUGH A NORMAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE,+ HE SAID.

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BETTER MONITORING OF MANUFACTURING SECTOR ADVOCATED  
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IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ABLE TO MONITOR THE DEVELOPMENT, THE STRENGTH, THE WEAKNESS AND THE PROBLEMS OF THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, THE HON THOMAS CLYDESDALE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR CLYDESDALE SAID THAT NO OTHER SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT CAME CLOSE TO MANUFACTURING IN ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE OVERALL WELL-BEING OF HONG KONG.

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY WAS ALREADY EXPERIENCING CONSTANT AND INCREASING PRESSURE FROM COMPETITORS WHO SOUGHT ALL MEANS TO EXPAND THEIR SHARE OF THE SAME FOREIGN MARKETS HONG KONG WAS SELLING TO.

HE NOTED THAT A NUMBER OF THE COUNTRIES WHICH COMPETED MOST EFFECTIVELY AGAINST HONG KONG FOLLOWED VERY DIFFERENT INDUSTRIAL POLICIES TO THOSE OF HONG KONG'S. SOME HAD BEEN PREPARED TO SPEND LARGE SUMS OF PUBLIC MONEY TO ASSIST THEIR INDUSTRIES, INCLUDING TECHNICAL TRAINING.

HONG KONG, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN SLOW TO REACT TO THE NEED FOR EXPANDING TERTIARY EDUCATION FACILITIES WHICH WERE ESSENTIAL TO ITS LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

+I BELIEVE THAT A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF OUR PRODUCTIVITY TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO SEE WHETHER THE EXISTING SERVICES ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE SIZE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHARACTER OF OUR INDUSTRY+, HE SAID.

MR CLYDESDALE NOTED THAT MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN HONG KONG WAS LARGELY PROVIDED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR ITSELF WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HONG KONG MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION.

+IT SEEMS THAT WE HAVE NOT RECOGNISED QUICKLY ENOUGH THE NEED FOR MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE BY OUR YOUNG MANAGERS. THERE SHOULD SURELY BE MANAGEMENT TRAINING FACILITIES IN ALL MAIN DISTRICTS OF HONG KONG ORGANISED OR COORDINATED BY THE HKMA,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID A VERY SMALL EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC FUNDS WAS UNWILLINGLY ALLOCATED TO THIS IMPORTANT ORGANISATION. IN 1986, ONLY \$100 000 WAS PROVIDED TO THE HKMA.

MR CLYDESDALE NOTED THAT HONG KONG HAD TENDED TO TAKE AN AD HOC VIEW OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MANY YEARS, DEALING WITH PROBLEMS AND NEEDS AS THEY BECAME IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE.

+WE TAKE PRIDE IN REFLECTING THAT WE DO NOT HAVE AN INDUSTRIAL POLICY AS SUCH,+ HE SAID.

+BUT TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND IF WE ACCEPT THAT INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO BE VITALLY IMPORTANT TO OUR ECONOMY, THEN WE MUST HAVE MUCH MORE INFORMATION ON ITS PERFORMANCE AND ITS POTENTIAL THAN WE HAVE NOW.+

/HE SAID THAT .....

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HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOW BEGIN THE PROCESS OF UPDATING THE 1979 REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A PROFESSIONAL STUDY WHICH WOULD HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANT TRENDS, ACHIEVEMENTS, NEEDS, PROBLEMS AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES RELEVANT TO THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF AN AGGRESSIVE AND EFFICIENT MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

+THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD SHOULD CLEARLY CONSIDER THIS MATTER AND I WOULD HOPE THAT THIS CAN BE DONE QUICKLY,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT, IF NECESSARY, INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS SHOULD BE EMPLOYED TO ASSIST IN THE STUDY SINCE THE LOCAL INDUSTRY WAS OBVIOUSLY INTERNATIONALLY ORIENTED AND SUBJECT TO INTERNATIONAL MARKET AND TECHNOLOGY INFLUENCES.

IN CLOSING, MR CLYDESDALE SAID THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD APPEARED TO MEET AND CARRY OUT ITS IMPORTANT WORK IN A RATHER PRIVATE MANNER AND DID NOT AT PRESENT APPEAR TO HAVE ANY FORMAL LINK WITH MAJOR ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WHICH REPRESENTED A LARGE NUMBER OF MANUFACTURERS.

+THIS IS A STRANGE STATE OF AFFAIRS AND SHOULD BE SWIFTLY EXAMINED,+ HE SAID.

+THE PRINCIPLE OF DIRECT REPRESENTATION FOR THE MAJOR ORGANISATIONS ON GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COUNCILS WHICH HAVE THE TASK OF ADVISING THE GOVERNMENT ON ESSENTIAL AND FUNDAMENTAL POLICIES ON TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPEMT IS SURELY THE RIGHT ONE TO FOLLOW,+ HE ADDED.

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DIRECT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT URGED  
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO PARTICIPATE IN ESTABLISHING THE NECESSARY INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE SO THAT INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG MAY DEVELOP WITH PURPOSE, DIRECTION AND RENEWED ENERGY.

THE CALL WAS MADE BY THE HON RICHARD LAI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY.

MR LAI SAID THE TRADITIONAL ATTITUDE OF NON-INTERFERENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE ECONOMY MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST POLICY IN THIS PERIOD OF FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURAL CHANGE.

/+ACTIVE ASSISTANCE .....

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+ACTIVE ASSISTANCE IN HELPING THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES AS WELL AS DEVELOPING NEW, TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED ONES SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS CONTRADICTIONARY TO THE CONVICTION THAT HONG KONG IS A FREE ECONOMY AND SHOULD REMAIN ONE, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CONFIDENCE OF INVESTORS, HERE AND ABROAD,+ HE SAID.

+THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO PROVIDING A STABLE AND FREE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT FOR INVESTORS; THE SCOPE OF INVOLVEMENT SHOULD ENCOMPASS THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY SUPPORT MEASURES IN HUMAN RESOURCES AND IN AN INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IS INSTRUMENTAL AND CONDUCIVE TO THE TRANSFER AND EXPLOITATION OF TECHNOLOGY.+

ON IMPROVING INDUSTRIAL GROWTH, MR LAI SAID HE BELIEVED THE MASSIVE CAPITAL COMMITMENT WITH HIGH RISK AND LONG PAY BACK PERIOD THAT CAME WITH HIGH TECHNOLOGY VENTURES DID NOT SUIT HONG KONG INDUSTRIALISTS' CRAVING FOR QUICK RETURNS AND PROFITS.

POINTING OUT THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO ASK AN AVERAGE FIRM TO TAKE UP RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN ANY FIELD, HE SAID THE STRATEGY SHOULD BE TO UTILISE EXISTING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES INSTEAD OF ALLOCATING RESOURCES TO RESEARCH INTO UNTRIED INNOVATIONS.

HE BELIEVED THAT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WOULD ENABLE LOCAL INDUSTRIES TO APPLY LATEST TECHNOLOGIES TO THEIR NEEDS AND SO IMPROVE THEIR VALUE-ADDED PERFORMANCE.

ONE WAY OF IMPROVING HONG KONG'S WELL ESTABLISHED, TRADITIONAL INDUSTRY WAS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE A FIELD FORCE, HE SUGGESTED.

+THE FIELD FORCE SHOULD COMPRISE EXPERIENCED INDUSTRIAL WORKERS WHO CAN RELATE TO THE DAILY RUNNING OF AN AVERAGE FACTORY AND THE PROBLEMS IT MAY ENCOUNTER,+ HE SAID.

THE FIELD FORCE COULD APPROACH FACTORIES AND FIND OUT AREAS IN WHICH IMPROVEMENT IN WORK PROCESSES WAS NEEDED AND OF WHICH THE FACTORY OWNERS OR MANAGERS MIGHT NOT BE AWARE OR KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH.

IT COULD ALSO PROMOTE THE SERVICES OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL, THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT AND OTHER INDUSTRY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS.

THE TARGET OF THE FIELD FORCE SHOULD BE MEDIUM SIZE FACTORIES WHICH HAD THE WILLINGNESS AND RESOURCES TO UNDERTAKE IMPROVEMENTS BUT HAD NOT A SPECIAL DEPARTMENT FOR THE TASK.

/DRAWING FROM .....

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DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING NATIONS IN THIS REGION, HE BELIEVED THAT THIS KIND OF INDUSTRY SUPPORT SYSTEM WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO INDUSTRY.

MR LAI SAID ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF INDUSTRY CONCERNED IMPROVEMENT OF DESIGN CAPABILITY AND THE QUALITY OF PERSONNEL.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUMAN FACTOR IN THE INDUSTRIAL EQUATION CALLED FOR CONSIDERABLE COMMITMENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT RESEARCH INSTITUTE WITH FUNDING FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATION FACILITIES SHOULD BE LOOKED INTO.

AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL, MR LAI PRAISED THE COUNCIL FOR FACILITATING THE APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES TO VARIOUS ENTERPRISES.

BUT HE SAID HE REGRETTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT AGREED TO UPGRADE THE TERMS OF SERVICES OF THE COUNCIL'S STAFF TO A LEVEL COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF OTHER SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS.

+WITHOUT ACTIVE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL REMAIN ENTRENCHED IN STAFF DIFFICULTIES, WHICH WILL IN TURN AFFECT ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

MR LAI CALLED ON INDUSTRIALISTS TO BE READY TO FACE PROTECTIONIST LEGISLATION OVERSEAS.

+DIVERSIFICATIONS IN MARKET AND PRODUCT SEEM TO BE ACTIVE MEASURES FOR RIDING OUT THE STORM,+ HE SAID.

LASTLY, HE SAID VENTURE CAPITAL WOULD BE OF VALUABLE ASSISTANCE TO THE APPLICATION OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS IN INDUSTRIAL ENDEAVOUR, AND CALLED ON THE FINANCIAL SECTOR TO GIVE THE CONCEPT A THOROUGH EXAMINATION.

+THE WELL-BEING OF OUR INDUSTRY IS A CONCERN OF EACH SECTOR OF OUR SOCIETY AND EVERY MEANS OF EFFECTING ITS PROGRESS AND REFORMATION MUST BE ATTEMPTED,+ HE ADDED.

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/21 .....

GOVERNMENT MUST MAINTAIN INDUSTRIAL VITALITY  
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REVENUES FROM INDUSTRIES WILL REMAIN HONG KONG'S MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME AND IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN THE VITALITY OF THESE INDUSTRIES, THE HON HO SAI-CHU SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY, MR HO SAID THAT ACCORDING TO THE FINDINGS OF A SURVEY PRODUCTION COSTS IN HONG KONG HAD INCREASED BY 4.4 PER CENT DURING 1977-83 DUE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF VARIOUS ITEMS OF LABOUR LEGISLATION.

HE ENVISAGED THAT FURTHER INCREASES IN PRODUCTION COSTS WERE LIKELY FOLLOWING THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION.

MR HO SAID HE DID NOT OBJECT TO THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD WORKERS' INTERESTS AND ALSO AGREED THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO PAY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL AND ECOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT.

HOWEVER, HE FEARED THAT THESE WOULD INEVITABLY INCREASE THE BURDEN BORNE BY THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR.

+IF THE GOVERNMENT IMPOSED ALL SORTS OF RESTRICTIONS WITHOUT CONCURRENTLY GIVING ACTIVE SUPPORT, HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIES, ESPECIALLY THE SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED FACTORIES, WILL FACE MORE DIFFICULTIES,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO URGE ENTREPRENEURS TO MAKE FURTHER INVESTMENTS IF THEY FELT THAT THEIR PROFITS WERE AT STAKE.

+WHEN THE DESIRE OF ENTREPRENEURS FOR INVESTMENT SUBSIDIES AND PEOPLE ARE UNDEREMPLOYED, OUR PROSPERITY WILL BE HARD HIT AND ALL WELL-INTENTIONED IDEAS WILL TURN OUT TO BE DETRIMENTAL TO HONG KONG'S OVERALL INTEREST,+ HE SAID.

MR HO SAID HE DISAGREED WITH SOME VIEWS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS INDIFFERENT TO THE NEEDS OF THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD IN FACT PROVIDED VARIOUS BACK-UP SERVICES THROUGH THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT, THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL AND TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

HOWEVER, HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THESE EFFORTS WERE SUFFICIENT AND WHETHER THE OTHER MEASURES TAKEN WERE EFFECTIVE ENOUGH.

MR HO SAID THAT CURRENT RESEARCH STUDIES AND EXISTING SUPPORT FACILITIES RELATED MAINLY TO ESTABLISHED INDUSTRIES.

HE FELT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT TAKING POSITIVE MEASURES TO INTRODUCE NEW INDUSTRIAL ITEMS AND TO EXPAND THE INDUSTRIAL BASE SO AS TO DEVELOP INDUSTRY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IF THE SITUATION DID NOT CHANGE, THE ECONOMY OF HONG KONG WOULD CONTINUE TO DEPEND ON THE PERFORMANCE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH WOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE DEMANDS OF OVERSEAS MARKETS, MEANING THAT HONG KONG WOULD CONSTANTLY HAVE TO COMPETE FOR THESE MARKETS.

+HOWEVER, AS WE ALL KNOW, WE ARE GRADUALLY LOSING OUR ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION BOTH TO OUR COMPETITORS IN THE ASIAN REGION AND IN TERMS OF PRODUCTION COST, FOUNDATION FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE, LEADING HONG KONG TO AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT SITUATION,+ HE SAID.

MR HO SAID THAT NOW WAS THE TIME TO REVIEW EXISTING POLICY ON INDUSTRY.

HE FELT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ANNOUNCE WHAT MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN OVER THE YEARS AND APPRAISE THE EFFECTS OF THOSE MEASURES TO SEE WHETHER THEY WERE STILL APPLICABLE IN THE FUTURE.

IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT NEW DEVELOPMENTS WHEN REVIEWING EXISTING POLICIES AND FORMULATING NEW ONES, HE ADDED.

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NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICIES ESSENTIAL  
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NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICIES AND NEW SUPPORTING FACILITIES ARE INDISPENSABLE IF INDUSTRY IS TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP, THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY, MR NGAI SAID THAT TECHNOLOGY INTENSIVE PRODUCTION, PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION AND HIGHER QUALITY PRODUCTION WERE ESSENTIAL PHASES IN THE COURSE OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH.

+IN ORDER THAT OUR INDUSTRY MIGHT BREAK THROUGH ITS PRESENT CONVENTIONAL STRUCTURE AND SUCCESSFULLY ADVANCE ON TO THIS IMPORTANT STAGE AT AN EARLY DATE, I CONSIDER THAT NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICIES AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES ARE JUST INDISPENSABLE,+ HE SAID.

MR NGAI URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP AN INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE.

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID THE CENTRE COULD DEVISE A SYSTEMATIC WORKING PROGRAMME UNDER WHICH IT WOULD GIVE TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE TO MANUFACTURERS IN PRODUCT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN INNOVATION, AS WELL AS IN THE INTRODUCTION AND APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY.

AS MOST SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED FACTORIES WERE LIMITED BY THEIR SCALE OF OPERATION AND THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES, IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PERFORM A CO-ORDINATING AND SUPPORTING ROLE TO HELP INDUSTRY MAKE A START AND ACHIEVE SYSTEMATIC AND STEADY PROGRESS IN PRODUCT RESEARCH AND DESIGN INNOVATION.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD MAKE USE OF THIS CENTRE TO PROVIDE SYSTEMATIC AND SUBSTANTIVE SUPPORTING FACILITIES IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

MR NGAI ALSO SAID THAT CHINA'S OPEN ECONOMIC POLICY PROVIDED FAVOURABLE TERMS FOR CO-OPERATION WITH HONG KONG IN TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT.

+IN THE COURSE OF DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES, HONG KONG WILL LIKEWISE BE BENEFITTED IF IT SHOULD COME INTO CO-OPERATION WITH CHINA,+ HE SAID.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT SHOULD LIAISE, THROUGH PROPER CHANNELS, WITH MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN CHINA IN ORDER TO ASSESS WHETHER THE AREAS COVERED BY THEIR RESEARCH PROJECTS WERE APPLICABLE TO HONG KONG INDUSTRY.

THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER, AFTER HAVING SET UP THE LIAISON NETWORK, FORMING DELEGATIONS BY INTERESTED MANUFACTURERS SO THAT THEY COULD CONDUCT FEASIBILITY STUDIES ON THE SPOT TO DECIDE IF THE NEW TECHNOLOGY COULD BE APPLIED LOCALLY.

MR NGAI SAID THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT SHOULD GIVE POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO CHINESE-FUNDED ENTERPRISES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WORKING IN CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL MANUFACTURERS, IN TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

+HONG KONG CAN AT THE SAME TIME ACT AS THE BASE FOR SINO-HONG KONG JOINT VENTURE PROJECTS IN INTRODUCING FOREIGN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY,+ HE ADDED.

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STRENGTHEN HI-TECH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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AN IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY STEP HONG KONG SHOULD TAKE IN ORDER TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE WORLD MARKET IS TO STRENGTHEN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH TECHNOLOGY, PROFESSOR THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY, PROF POON SAID AT PRESENT HONG KONG'S ROLE IN DEALING WITH HIGH TECHNOLOGY WAS THAT OF A +MATCHMAKER+, WHICH MEANT THAT HIGH TECHNOLOGY WAS IMPORTED FOR APPLICATION IN INDUSTRY.

+ONE OF THE DISADVANTAGES FROM WHICH HONG KONG SUFFERS BADLY BY APPLYING BORROWED TECHNOLOGY BLINDLY IS THE LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, IF SUFFICIENT RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED PRIOR TO TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, THE TECHNOLOGY COULD BE COMPREHENDED AND WOULD NO LONGER BE A MYSTERIOUS +BLACKBOX+.

HE SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO LEARN THAT THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT INTENDED TO DEVELOP LINKS WITH FOREIGN INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS TO PROMOTE THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY ON A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL BASIS. ACTION IN THIS DIRECTION SHOULD BE EXPEDITED, HE ADDED.

THE MACHINERY SHOULD NOT ONLY PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY FROM VARIOUS SOURCES ABROAD, BUT SHOULD ALSO PROMOTE AND STRENGTHEN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG.

PROF POON SAID A CENTRAL BODY WAS REQUIRED TO CO-ORDINATE THE RELEVANT MARKET RESEARCH, TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND LOCAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND TO ACT AS A CENTRAL FUNDING AGENCY TO ENSURE THAT THE RESEARCH WAS ADEQUATELY FUNDED AND PRIORITIES WERE PROPERLY ESTABLISHED.

HE NOTED THAT THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD HAD IN FACT BEEN FUNCTIONING AS SUCH A CENTRAL BODY.

+HOWEVER, I HOPE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE BOARD TO CONDUCT MARKET RESEARCH MORE REGULARLY AND INTENSIFY ITS ACTIVITIES IN OTHER AREAS WHICH I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID HONG KONG SHOULD EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF CO-OPERATING WITH CHINA IN RESEARCH ON, AND MAKING THE BEST USE OF, HIGH TECHNOLOGY.

+THE VERSATILITY OF THE HONG KONG ENTREPRENEUR, THE ABUNDANT RESOURCES OF CHINA, AND THE COMMON GOAL OF USING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR ENSURING STEADY AND SUSTAINED INDUSTRIAL GROWTH, PROVIDE AVENUES FOR COLLABORATION WITH CHINA, WHICH SHOULD NOT ONLY BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL, BUT ALSO HELP IN LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA, IN AND AFTER 1997,+ HE SAID.

PROF POON ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SETTING UP TRAINING CENTRES TO TRAIN TECHNICIANS AND OTHER PERSONS TO COPE WITH THE INCREASE IN THE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN INDUSTRY.

+LOCAL TRAINING FACILITIES SHOULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY OVERSEAS TRAINING COURSES SPONSORED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS NECESSARY, ESPECIALLY WHERE NEW TECHNOLOGY IS INVOLVED,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S NON-INTERVENTION POLICY, HE SAID THE POLICY WAS JUSTIFIED ON MANY GROUNDS BUT NON-INTERVENTION MUST NOT BE INTERPRETED IN A NEGATIVE SENSE.

+AN EXAMPLE OF GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION COMPATIBLE WITH THE NON-INTERVENTION POLICY, IS, AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE IN THIS COUNCIL, THE SETTING UP OF A STERILISATION PLANT WHICH, I BELIEVE, WOULD FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF A NUMBER OF INDUSTRIES IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

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BETTER LABOUR RELATIONS COULD ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY  
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THE STRENGTHENING OF LABOUR-MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION WAS THE KEY TO BETTER LABOUR RELATIONS THAT COULD ENHANCE LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY, THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, MR TAM SAID ALTHOUGH GOOD LABOUR RELATIONS ALONE MIGHT NOT INCREASE LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY, BUT WITHOUT IT, LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY DEFINITELY COULD NOT BE IMPROVED, RATHER IT WOULD BE REDUCED.

+IF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES ARE NOT ON GOOD TERMS, EVEN THE PRESENCE OF NEW MACHINERY AND TECHNOLOGY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO FUNCTION AS EFFECTIVELY AS THEY SHOULD.

/+THE MOMENTUM .....

+THE MOMENTUM FOR IMPROVING LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY MUST BE INITIATED BY THE MANAGEMENT, BUT IF THIS MOMENTUM IS TO BE SUSTAINED, THE SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT OF EMPLOYEES IS REQUIRED - IN THIS RESPECT, HARMONIOUS LABOUR RELATIONS WITHIN AN ENTERPRISE WOULD BE A PREREQUISITE,+ HE SAID.

MR TAM SAID HE BELIEVED THE MAJOR CAUSE OF THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT WAS PERHAPS THAT SOME EMPLOYERS WERE STILL ADOPTING AN OUTDATED MANAGEMENT METHOD - RUNNING THEIR COMPANY IN A PATRIARCHAL STYLE, DECLINING TO HAVE DIRECT AND OPEN COMMUNICATION WITH THEIR EMPLOYEES, AND DISCOURAGING WORKERS FROM ORGANISING UNIONS.

+SOME EMPLOYERS MAY EVEN REFUSE TO RECOGNISE THE STATUS OF UNIONS IN NEGOTIATIONS.

+THEY REGARD WELFARE BENEFITS FOR WORKERS AS A KIND OF PRIVILEGE RATHER THAN A RIGHT.

+YET THEY ARE HIGHLY FLEXIBLE IN THEIR MANAGEMENT APPROACH- THEY WOULD ONLY GUARANTEE WELFARE BENEFITS TO THEIR WORKERS BY WORD OF MOUTH AND FEW THINGS ARE WRITTEN DOWN IN CONTRACTS.

+INSTANCES LIKE THESE WILL CERTAINLY WORSEN LABOUR RELATIONS.

+AS A RESULT, WORKERS CULTIVATE NO SENSE OF INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR WORK AND NO SENSE OF BELONGING TO THEIR COMPANY.

+LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IS THUS INDIRECTLY AFFECTED AS WELL,+ HE SAID.

MR TAM SAID THAT IN LINE WITH THEIR RISING LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS, WORKERS IN HONG KONG CHERISHED GREATER EXPECTATIONS IN LIFE AND BECAME MORE READY TO COME FORWARD TO DEFEND THEIR OWN RIGHTS.

MOREOVER, WITH A LIBERAL POLITICAL SYSTEM, HONG KONG'S SOCIETY WAS ATTACHING GREATER IMPORTANCE TO DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE.

HE SAID THAT MODERN MANAGEMENT SHOULD THEREFORE LAY MORE EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL LABOUR-MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION AND TAKE THE ROLE OF UNIONS MORE SERIOUSLY IN SUCH COMMUNICATION.

MR TAM SAID HE FELT THAT THE STRENGTHENING OF THE SENSE OF BELONGING AND INVOLVEMENT AMONG WORKERS REQUIRED LESS RESOURCES THAN IMPROVEMENT MEASURES ON THE TECHNICAL AND MANPOWER.

+BY GETTING BIG RETURNS WITH A SMALL INVESTMENT, IT IS CERTAINLY SOMETHING WORTH GOING AHEAD WITH,+ MR TAM SAID.

/EARLIER, .....

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EARLIER, MR TAM ALSO EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG.

HE SAID WE SHOULD NOT FOCUS ALL OUR ATTENTION ON PROTECTIONISM AS WE COULD STILL DEAL WITH IT BY EXPLORING NEW MARKETS OR DIVERSIFYING OUR PRODUCTS.

BUT IF OUR PRODUCTS THEMSELVES WERE SHORT OF COMPETITIVENESS, THE PROBLEM WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO SOLVE.

MR TAM POINTED OUT THAT WE SHOULD NOT MERELY THINK OF REDUCING LABOUR EXPENSE.

+ WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT IS TO FIND OUT HOW TO INCREASE PRODUCTION WITH THE SAME INPUT, I.E. HOW TO ENHANCE HONG KONG'S LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY.

+THIS WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS ALIKE,+ HE SAID.

THE GROWTH RATE OF HONG KONG'S LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY WAS SLOWER THAN THAT IN OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES AND REGIONS, MR TAM SAID, ADDING THAT HE BELIEVED THE CAUSES INCLUDED INSUFFICIENT INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS, THE SHORTAGE OF TRAINING AND RESEARCH FACILITIES, THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY BEING NOT QUICK ENOUGH, THE DESIGN AND QUALITY OF PRODUCTS STILL REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT AND THE LACK OF POSITIVE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY BY THE GOVERNMENT.

SINCE HONG KONG WAS SHORT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ITS ECONOMY WAS BASED ON EXPORTS, MR TAM SAID HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT THE BEST WAY OF IMPROVING LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY WAS TO RAISE THE WAGES OF EMPLOYEES WITHOUT AFFECTING THE INCOME OF EMPLOYERS.

+THE IMPROVEMENT OF LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY COULD BE ATTAINED THROUGH DIFFERENT EFFORTS, FOR EXAMPLE, ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE, BY MEANS OF ENHANCING THE DEGREE OF AUTOMATION= INCREASING THE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY-INTENSIVE PRODUCTION METHODS= SPEEDING UP TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS AND APPLICATION AND REINFORCING PRODUCT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

+ON THE MANPOWER SIDE VOCATIONAL AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING COULD BE ENHANCED TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION AND TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WORKERS,+ HE SAID.

HE ADMITTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE CERTAIN PROGRESS IN THESE ASPECTS BUT THERE WAS STILL MUCH ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT AND BETTERMENT OF LABOUR RELATION WAS ONE OF THE AREAS WE SHOULD LOOK INTO.

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CARPARK CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS UNDER SCRUTINY  
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THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND LANDS, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT, LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS, IS EXAMINING THE NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE CONTROLS ON VENTILATION IN UNDERGROUND CARPARKS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO THE QUESTION BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT NO REGULAR MONITORING OF CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS IN UNDERGROUND CARPARKS WAS UNDERTAKEN AT PRESENT.

HE SAID RELIANCE HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE SELF-REGULATION OF BUILDING DEVELOPERS TO INCORPORATE ADEQUATE VENTILATION SYSTEMS IN ENCLOSED CARPARKS. GUIDELINES TO THIS EFFECT WERE ISSUED BY PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE CHARTERED INSTITUTION OF BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEERS (CIBS).

MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT A STUDY OF CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS IN TWO UNDERGROUND CARPARKS HAD BEEN RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY.

THE CONCLUSION WAS THAT WHILE THERE WERE NO IMMEDIATE HEALTH HAZARDS TO THE PUBLIC USING THE CARPARKS, THE ATTENDANTS AND SECURITY GUARDS MIGHT BE EXPOSED TO A POTENTIAL HAZARD.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT WOULD UNDERTAKE PERIODIC MONITORING OF CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS IN ENCLOSED CARPARKS, HE ADDED.

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EFFICIENT SERVICE BEFORE ALTERNATE SATURDAY OFF  
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WHILE THE ALTERNATE SATURDAY-OFF SYSTEM MAINLY APPLIED TO OFFICE STAFF, OFFICES WHICH MAINLY PROVIDE DIRECT SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC FOR WHICH THERE WAS A CONSTANTLY HEAVY DEMAND WERE MANNED AT FULL STRENGTH ON SATURDAYS, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID FORD, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN HIS REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON KIM CHAM, MR FORD SAID THAT IN THE CIVIL SERVICE, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS OR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES HAD THE AUTHORITY TO DECIDE WHETHER TO ADOPT THE ALTERNATE SATURDAY-OFF SYSTEM IN RESPECT OF ANY OR ALL OF THEIR STAFF.

HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT IN CONSIDERING THE INTRODUCTION OF SUCH A SYSTEM, THE HEADS MUST ENSURE THAT THE EFFICIENCY OF THEIR ORGANISATIONS WAS NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED; THE HOURS OF WORK OF THE STAFF INVOLVED, AS STIPULATED IN THEIR CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, WERE NOT REDUCED; AND THAT SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC WERE NOT IMPAIRED.

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ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF FUEL ASH BEING ASSESSED  
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A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PULVERISED FUEL ASH (PFA) ON LAGOONS AT TSANG TSUI HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAI CHIN-WAH, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY LIMITED HAD MADE CLEAR STATEMENTS ON THIS IN VARIOUS PRESENTATIONS, PARTICULARLY AT TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS IN MAY, JUNE AND NOVEMBER LAST YEAR.

+OF PARTICULAR CONCERN HAS BEEN THE NEED TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF LOCAL RESIDENTS FROM THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF AERIAL EMISSIONS OF PFA DUST AND LIQUID EMISSIONS (OR LEACHATE) TOGETHER WITH THE SAFEGUARDING OF LOCAL MARICULTURE AND WILDLIFE,+ HE SAID.

ON THE CONTROL OF AERIAL EMISSIONS OF PFA DUST, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE FOLLOWING MEASURES WOULD BE ADOPTED:

- \* THE DELIVERY OF PFA IN SLURRY FORM MIXED WITH SEAWATER;
- \* MINIMISING THE AREA OF PFA EXPOSED TO THE WIND ;
- \* THE PROVISION OF PERMANENT FIXED WATER SPRAYING EQUIPMENT WITH A MOBILE BACK-UP SYSTEM ;
- \* THE CONTINUOUS SKIMMING OF THE LAGOON ; AND
- \* THE COVERING OF DRY PFA BY INERT MATERIAL AND SUBSEQUENT HYDROSEEDING.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT AIR QUALITY IN THE VICINITY WOULD BE CONTINUOUSLY MONITORED BY THREE SEPARATE MONITORING STATIONS TO ENSURE THAT WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION STANDARDS WERE NOT EXCEEDED.

ON THE CONTROL OF LIQUID EMISSIONS, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE LAGOONS WOULD BE LINED WITH AN IMPERMEABLE MEMBRANE AND THE LEACHATE WOULD BE PUMPED FROM THE LAGOONS BACK TO THE CASTLE PEAK POWER STATION TO PREVENT ANY OF THEM FROM ENTERING DEEP BAY.

+AS A CHECK ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE MEASURES, SEVEN MONITORING STATIONS ARE ALREADY OPERATING AND WILL CONTINUE IN OPERATION THROUGHOUT THE LIFE OF THE LAGOONS.+

/MR CHAMBERS .....

MR CHAMBERS SAID THERE WERE NUMEROUS REPORTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS COVERING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF CHINA LIGHT AND POWER'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PFA LAGOONS. TO PRESENT A FULL PICTURE IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO STUDY AT LEAST 11 DETAILED DOCUMENTS, REPRESENTING A VAST AMOUNT OF MATERIAL.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT HAD PRODUCED A SUMMARY REPORT WHICH CONTAINED THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY AND WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON REQUEST.

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DECLINE OF SOUTH CHINA PINES NOT TRAGIC  
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THE IMMINENT DECLINE OF THE SOUTH CHINA PINE FROM A SPECIES OF WOOD WORM MIGHT NOT BE AN ENTIRELY TRAGIC EVENT AS IT COULD GIVE WAY TO VEGETATION GROWTH THAT WOULD BE MORE RESISTANT TO FIRE AND PESTS, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR LIAO SAID: +SOME ONE-MILLION SOUTH CHINA PINES, REPRESENTING ABOUT 70 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL STOCK OF THIS SPECIES IN HONG KONG, HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE PINT-WILT NEMATODE SINCE ITS DISCOVERY IN THE LATE 1970'S+.

HE NOTED THAT ABOUT ONE THIRD OF THE AFFECTED TREES HAVE DIED AND THE REMAINDER WOULD PROBABLY DIE IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

+SO FAR, NO EFFECTIVE CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL METHOD OF CONTROLLING THIS PEST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, EITHER IN HONG KONG OR ELSEWHERE.

+THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN TRYING TO LIMIT OR DELAY THE SPREAD OF THE PEST BY CUTTING DOWN AND BURNING THE AFFECTED TREES,+ HE SAID.

MR LIAO SAID TENS OF THOUSANDS OF TREES HAD BEEN DEALT WITH THIS WAY SINCE 1980.

+THE GRADUAL DECLINE OF THE SOUTH CHINA PINE, WHICH WAS PLANTED AS A PIONEER SPECIES IN THE 1950'S, IS NOT AN ENTIRELY UNWELCOME EVENT SINCE IT WILL HAVE THE EFFECT OF OPENING UP THE FOREST CANOPY AND ENCOURAGING THE GROWTH OF NATIVE BROAD-LEAVED TREES AND SHRUBS,+ HE SAID.

+THE ENSUING MIXED BROAD-LEAVED VEGETATION WILL BE MORE RESISTANT TO FIRE AND PEST THAN THE SOUTH CHINA PINE,+ HE ADDED.

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COLLAPSE HIGHLIGHTS HAZARDS OF UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES  
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THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT AT KWAI CHUNG ON CHRISTMAS DAY, WHEN A CONCRETE CANOPY OF A BUILDING COLLAPSED KILLING ONE PERSON AND INJURING SEVERAL OTHERS, POINTED TO THE HAZARDS THAT CAN BE CAUSED BY UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES AND THE NEED FOR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON GRAHAM BARNES, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY),

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN, MR BARNES SAID THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE (BOO) ESTABLISHED A NEW DIVISION IN 1984 TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS.

IT WAS THEN ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE PROBABLY MORE THAN 25 000 REPORTED OR KNOWN CASES REQUIRING ATTENTION.

IN VIEW OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK A SELECTIVE APPROACH WAS ADOPTED AND THE PRESENT OPERATIONAL POLICIES MAY BE SUMMARISED AS FOLLOWS:

- \* PRIORITY FOR INVESTIGATION AND ENFORCEMENT WAS GIVEN TO ALL KNOWN CASES WHERE THERE APPEARED TO BE AN IMMINENT DANGER TO LIFE AND LIMB ;
- \* ALL COMPLAINTS RELATING TO NEW UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS WERE ALSO INVESTIGATED ;
- \* ALL NEW BUILDINGS WERE PATROLLED REGULARLY AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION TAKEN AGAINST ANY UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS ; AND
- \* THE DANGERS POSED BY UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS WERE PUBLICISED THROUGH ADVISORY POSTERS AND PAMPHLETS, BY TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTS, AND BY DISCUSSIONS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS AND SEMINARS.

+A LOT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SINCE 1984, BUT CLEARLY WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO IN WHAT IS VERY MUCH AN UPHILL TASK,+ MR BARNES SAID.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE BETTER AND QUICKER RESULTS, THE LANDS AND BUILDINGS ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAD RECENTLY ENDORSED A PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES IN LEGISLATION, POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES.

BRIEFLY, THESE CHANGES INCLUDED A REVISION OF PRIORITIES TO CONCENTRATE RESOURCES AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION ON DANGEROUS AND SIGNIFICANT NEW UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS; AMENDMENT OF THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE TO EMPOWER THE BOO IN APPROPRIATE CASES TO DEMOLISH IMMEDIATELY UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS; AND THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL STAFF TO UNDERTAKE DEMOLITION.

/+WE SHALL .....

+WE SHALL VERY SHORTLY BE CONSULTING DISTRICT BOARDS ON THESE PROPOSALS.

+I BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL ENABLE GOVERNMENT TO DEAL SOME MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH THE PROBLEM,+ HE SAID.

+I SHOULD LIKE TO EMPHASISE IN CONCLUSION THAT OUR FOREMOST CONCERN IN DEALING WITH UNAUTHORISED BUILDING WORKS HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND MUST CONTINUE TO BE THE REMOVAL OF ANY IMMINENT DANGER TO THE PUBLIC,+ HE SAID.

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EFFECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN TO PREVENT SQUATTER FIRES  
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GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO PREVENT SQUATTER FIRES HAVE BEEN HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AS SHOWN BY THE MARKED REDUCTION IN BOTH THE NUMBER OF LARGE-SCALE FIRES AND THE FIRE VICTIMS INVOLVED, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, MR LIAO SAID THE MEASURES INCLUDE FIRE WATCH TEAMS, PUBLICITY PROGRAMMES, CONTROL OF ILLEGAL TAPPING OF ELECTRICITY AND THE SQUATTER AREA IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME.

EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF CURRENT FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES WAS BEING ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CONTINUOUS EFFORT OF DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED INCLUDING FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT AND THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

+TO DATE, 187 FIRE WATCH TEAMS OF LOCAL VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN FORMED IN ALL MAJOR SQUATTER AREAS IN CONJUNCTION WITH DISTRICT BOARDS.

+THEIR PRIMARY ROLE IS TO INCREASE AWARENESS AMONG RESIDENTS, PROMOTE BETTER FIRE PRECAUTION MEASURES AND TO RAISE FIRE ALARMS ON DETECTION OF A FIRE,+ MR LIAO SAID.

HE SAID THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT MADE 1 213 VISITS TO SQUATTER AREAS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY AS PART OF ITS REGULAR PROGRAMME OF PUBLICISING FIRE PREVENTION METHODS.

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+THE DEPARTMENT ALSO CONDUCTED SEVEN LARGE-SCALE OPERATIONAL EXERCISES IN SELECTED SQUATTER AREAS TO FAMILIARISE ITS STAFF WITH FIRE-FIGHTING IN SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS, AND DISTRICT FIRE PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS ARE ALSO CONDUCTED REGULARLY IN EVERY DISTRICT,+ HE ADDED.

MR LIAO EXPLAINED THAT THE PROBLEM OF ILLEGAL TAPPING OF ELECTRICITY WAS BEING TACKLED ON TWO FRONTS, WITH THE AUTHORITIES STEPPING UP ENFORCEMENT ACTION.

+ON THE EDUCATION FRONT, THE AUTHORITIES AND THE DISTRICT BOARDS CONCERNED HAVE INTENSIFIED THEIR EFFORTS TO EDUCATE RESIDENTS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF TAPPING ELECTRICITY ILLEGALLY AND ADVISE THEM TO APPLY FOR A LEGAL CONNECTION,+ HE SAID.

+AS A RESULT OF THESE EFFORTS, THIS PROBLEM IS NOW GRADUALLY BEING CONTROLLED. IN 1986, A TOTAL OF 278 PERSONS INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL TAPPING OF ELECTRICITY WERE ARRESTED.

+THIS COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH THE 573 PERSONS PROSECUTED FOR THE SAME OFFENCE IN 1985,+ HE SAID.

MR LIAO NOTED THAT THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S FIVE-YEAR SQUATTER AREA IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME WHICH STARTED IN 1983 HAD PROVIDED A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF FIRE PREVENTION FACILITIES SUCH AS FIRE BREAKS AND FIRE HYDRANTS IN MAJOR URBAN SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS.

+ALTHOUGH THE PROGRAMME INITIALLY COVERS ONLY SQUATTER AREAS IN THE URBAN AREA AND TSUEN WAN, A NUMBER OF PILOT PROJECTS HAVE ALSO BEEN CONSTRUCTED IN THE RURAL SQUATTER AREAS.

+THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IS AT PRESENT CONDUCTING A REVIEW TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE PROGRAMME SHOULD BE CONTINUED AND EXPANDED TO COVER SMALLER SQUATTER AREAS AND THOSE IN THE RURAL AREAS,+ MR LIAO ADDED.

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#### EMPLOYERS NOT AVOIDING MATERNITY LEAVE LIABILITY

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ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS DEALT WITH BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ABOUT THE OPERATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE WHICH PROVIDES FOR PAID MATERNITY LEAVE TO FEMALE EMPLOYEES SHOWED NO EVIDENCE OF EXPLOITATION OF THE LEGISLATION BY EMPLOYERS TO AVOID LIABILITY, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI, MR BRIDGE SAID MOST OF THE COMPLAINTS, TOTALLING 129 IN 1986, AROSE FROM MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISIONS.

/HE POINTED .....

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HE POINTED OUT THAT THE LEGISLATION HAD BEEN REVIEWED FOUR TIMES SINCE IT CAME INTO EFFECT IN JUNE 1981.

THE FIRST OF THESE REVIEWS, MADE IN MAY 1982, CONCLUDED +THAT THE PROVISIONS WERE ACHIEVING THEIR OBJECTIVE, SUBJECT TO SOME MINOR AMENDMENTS TO REMOVE AMBIGUITIES CONCERNING CALCULATION OF MATERNITY LEAVE AND ENTITLEMENT TO STATUTORY HOLIDAY PAY DURING SUCH LEAVE+.

THESE AMENDMENTS WERE ENDORSED BY THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD AND WERE ENACTED IN JULY 1984.

+THE LEGISLATION WAS AGAIN REVIEWED IN 1983 AND 1985, AND THE MOST RECENT REVIEW WAS COMPLETED AT THE END OF 1986,+ MR BRIDGE SAID.

+THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THIS LAST REVIEW WAS TO CONSIDER WHETHER ADDITIONAL PROTECTION WAS NECESSARY AGAINST TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF PREGNANCY AND WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE PROVISION FOR EARLIER RESUMPTION OF WORK AFTER CONFINEMENT, IF THE EMPLOYEE HERSELF SO WISHES.

+THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL NOW CONSULT THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD ON PROPOSALS IN BOTH THESE AREAS.+

THE DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO REVIEW THIS LEGISLATION FROM TIME TO TIME, HE SAID.

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DEATH AT GAS PLANT BEING INVESTIGATED  
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THE DEATH OF A TECHNICAL OFFICER AT A GAS COMPANY'S WORK SITE IN TAI PO IS STILL BEING INVESTIGATED, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN, MR BRIDGE SAID A REPORT BY TWO INSPECTORS FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE CORONER'S OFFICE SHORTLY AND IT WAS LIKELY THAT AN INQUEST WOULD BE HELD. THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE INCIDENT WERE AT PRESENT UNCLEAR, HE ADDED.

/MR BRIDGE .....

MR BRIDGE SAID THE TWO OFFICERS FROM THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE ARRIVED ON THE SCENE WITHIN AN HOUR OF RECEIVING A REPORT OF THE INCIDENT AND HAD BEGUN A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION.

THE MAN WAS FOUND DEAD IN A NEUTRALISING TANK CONTAINING CORROSIVE LIQUIDS. MR BRIDGE SAID THE TANK WAS BELIEVED TO BE THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN HONG KONG.

+THE OPENING OF THE TANK WAS ALREADY WELL PROTECTED BY A RAISED WALL, RAILINGS AND TOE-BOARDS OF ADEQUATE HEIGHT AND COMPLIED WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 24 OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS REGULATIONS,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, ON THE INSPECTORS' ADVICE, THE GAS COMPANY HAD SEALED OFF THE OPENING WITH WOODEN PLANKS. THE COMPANY HAD ALSO BEEN ADVISED TO PLACE ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS ON SAFETY IN ITS IN-HOUSE TRAINING COURSES.

+IF AN INQUEST IS HELD, ANY SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE CORONER MAY MAKE WILL BE ENERGETICALLY FOLLOWED UP,+ MR BRIDGE ADDED.

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#### NEW ROADS ESTIMATED TO COST \$2 BILLION

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THE ESTIMATED COST OF PROVIDING NEW ROADS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS IS IN THE ORDER OF \$2 BILLION PER ANNUM, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON DAVID LAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PETER POON, MR LAN SAID THE OVERALL TRAFFIC GROWTH IN THE TERRITORY OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WAS ESTIMATED TO BE ABOUT 5 PER CENT PER ANNUM, WITH HIGHER GROWTH RATE FORECAST FOR GOODS VEHICLE TRIPS AND LOWER GROWTH FOR PRIVATE VEHICLE TRIPS.

+TO COPE WITH THIS AND ANTICIPATED TRAFFIC GROWTH BEYOND THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUMBER OF MAJOR HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS HAS EITHER STARTED OR IS AT THE DETAILED PLANNING STAGE,+ MR LAN SAID.

/+THESE INCLUDE, .....

+THESE INCLUDE, ROUTE 5 FROM SHA TIN TO TSUEN WAN, THE COMPLETION OF THE N.T. CIRCULAR ROAD IN THE WESTERN NEW TERRITORIES, THE REMAINING SECTION OF THE ISLAND EASTERN CORRIDOR, THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING, PRINCESS MARGARET ROAD FLYOVER IMPROVEMENT, CONNAUGHT ROAD UPGRADING AND DUALLING, AND TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL.+

HE ADDED THAT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES WOULD ALSO BE EXPANDED TO MEET THE GROWTH IN TRAVEL DEMAND.

+FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES ARE PREPARED BY EACH TRANSPORT OPERATOR EACH YEAR,+ HE SAID.

+THE OPERATOR WITH THE LARGEST EXPANSION PLANS IS THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY, WHICH IS PLANNING TO EXPAND ITS FLEET AT A RATE OF ABOUT 200 BUSES PER YEAR OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

+ALSO WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE MTR WILL BEGIN OPERATING SERVICES THROUGH THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING AND KCRC WILL BEGIN OPERATING THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM IN TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG,+ HE ADDED.

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CODE OF PRACTICE ON IVF BEING DRAWN UP  
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AN AD HOC COMMITTEE SET UP TO EXAMINE THE MEDICAL ASPECTS OF IN-VITRO FERTILISATION (IVF) RECOMMENDED THAT A CODE OF PRACTICE SHOULD BE ISSUED AS A GUIDE FOR BOTH CLINICAL PRACTICE AND RESEARCH ON IVF BY ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, CLINICS AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS TOLD THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON CONRAD LAM, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAD SET UP THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IN JANUARY LAST YEAR TO EXAMINE THE MEDICAL ASPECTS OF IVF AND TO IDENTIFY THE RELATED SOCIAL, ETHICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES.

THE COMMITTEE HAD RECENTLY COMPLETED ITS STUDY AND RECOMMENDED THAT A CODE OF PRACTICE SHOULD BE ISSUED IN ADDITION TO EXISTING LEGISLATION REGARDING HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS.

/THE CODE OF .....

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THE CODE OF PRACTICE WOULD INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR PERIODIC INSPECTION AND THE SUBMISSION OF STATISTICS TO THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT. IT WOULD ALSO SET STANDARDS ON CLINICAL PRACTICE AND RESEARCH, AS WELL AS ON HOW IVF LABORATORIES SHOULD BE EQUIPPED.

+CONSULTATION IS NOW BEING CARRIED OUT ON A DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE WHICH SHOULD BE READY FOR ISSUE WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS,+ HE SAID. +THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE CLINICAL AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH IVF.+

MR CHAMBERS EXPLAINED THAT IVF AND ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION REPRESENTED TWO TECHNOLOGIES DESIGNED TO HELP COUPLES WHO, FOR A VARIETY OF MEDICAL REASONS, COULD NOT HAVE CHILDREN THROUGH THE NATURAL PROCESS OF HUMAN CONCEPTION.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION, INCLUDING THE INSEMINATION OF SPERM FROM DONORS, WAS INTRODUCED BY THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION IN 1981. SO FAR IT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN A TOTAL OF 107 CASES. THE PROGRAMME HAD BEEN RUNNING SMOOTHLY AND THERE WERE NO PLANS TO IMPOSE CONTROL THROUGH LEGISLATION.

IN-VITRO FERTILISATION, WHICH WAS A NEWER TECHNIQUE, WAS BEING CARRIED OUT ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS BY THE TWO UNIVERSITIES AND IN ONE PRIVATE HOSPITAL. A BABY CONCEIVED BY THE USE OF IVF TECHNIQUES WAS SUCCESSFULLY DELIVERED RECENTLY.

CONCERNING RELATED SOCIAL, ETHICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES, MR CHAMBERS SAID EXPERIENCE IN OVERSEAS COUNTRIES INDICATED THAT COMPLEX QUESTIONS RELATING TO TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL OF EMBRYOS AND THE POSITION OF SURROGATE MOTHERS MIGHT ARISE.

HOWEVER, IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY WHETHER THE SAME PROBLEMS WOULD ARISE IN HONG KONG BECAUSE THE CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FAMILY CONCEPTS WERE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT.

MR CHAMBERS STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION, INCLUDING THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION IF THIS APPEARED TO BE REQUIRED.

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ORDINANCE ADEQUATE TO MEET TOWN PLANNING CONTROLS  
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THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE HAS ON THE WHOLE PROVED ADEQUATE, TOGETHER WITH OTHER STATUTORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS, TO MEET THE NEED FOR PLANNING CONTROLS IN HONG KONG, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON GRAHAM BARNES, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON POON CHI-FAI, MR BARNES SAID GOVERNMENT WAS STILL CONSIDERING WHETHER TO EXTEND STATUTORY PLANNING CONTROL TO RURAL AREAS, WHICH HAD BEEN AFFECTED BY HAPHAZARD DEVELOPMENT IN THE PAST.

HE SAID HE HOPED THAT A DECISION COULD BE MADE SHORTLY AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH INTERESTED PARTIES.

+IT IS ALSO CONSIDERING A NUMBER OF MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE BASED ON SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS AND OTHERS,+ HE ADDED.

THE ORDINANCE WAS UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW BY A WORKING GROUP OF THE LAND AND BUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE, +BUT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF AN INTENSELY DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT SCENE, AND CONSIDERABLE MANOEUVRE IN OUR LEASEHOLD AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTROLS, I DOUBT WHETHER MORE COMPREHENSIVE STATUTORY CONTROLS WOULD BE BENEFICIAL AT PRESENT,+ MR BARNES SAID.

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PROBLEM TRAFFIC SITES IDENTIFIED FOR PRIORITY INVESTIGATION  
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AMONG VARIOUS STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE SAFETY AT TRAFFIC +PROBLEM SPOTS+, A RANGE OF SITES WITH HIGH ACCIDENT RATES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND RANKED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY FOR INVESTIGATION BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON DAVID LAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO THE QUESTION BY THE HON LEE YU-TAI, MR LAN CLASSIFIED THESE PRIORITY SITES AS THOSE +WHICH HAVE, IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD, AT LEAST (A) SIX PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS; (B) 12 ACCIDENTS OF ANY CATEGORY; OR (C) NINE ACCIDENTS, OF WHICH AT LEAST 50 PER CENT ARE CLASSIFIED AS INVOLVING FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY+.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE CRITERIA WERE FREQUENTLY REVIEWED AND WERE ADJUSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCIDENT SITUATION AND STAFF RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

/+A DEGREE .....

+A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY IS MAINTAINED SO THAT LOCATIONS WHICH HAVE ATTRACTED SPECIAL INTEREST ARE ALSO INCLUDED FOR INVESTIGATION,+ HE ADDED.

MR LAN SAID THAT WITH THE INCREASING INVOLVEMENT OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS IN TRAFFIC MATTERS, THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN REQUESTS FROM DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS FOR SPECIAL INVESTIGATION OF LOCATION WHICH WERE BELIEVED TO BE HAZARDOUS TO ROAD USERS.

IN ADDITION, WHEN A SERIOUS ACCIDENT OCCURRED AT A SITE WITH A LOW ACCIDENT RECORD, AN IMMEDIATE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION WAS CARRIED OUT AND REMEDIAL ACTION WAS TAKEN IF NECESSARY.

REFERRING TO REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR TRAFFIC +PROBLEM SPOTS+, MR LAN SAID THEY WERE FORMULATED ON THE BASIS OF A WELL-DEFINED ACCIDENT PATTERN, FOR WHICH APPROPRIATE IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE IDENTIFIED.

HE SAID STANDARD ACCIDENT REDUCTION MEASURES, SUCH AS APPLICATION OF SKID-RESISTANT MATERIALS TO THE ROAD SURFACE IN WET WEATHER, WERE IMPLEMENTED ON A TERRITORY-WIDE BASIS.

ON ROAD DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, HE SAID THE SPECIFICATION OF AND ADHERENCE TO A HIGH DESIGN OF STANDARD SHOULD IN LONGER TERM REDUCE THE NUMBER OF +PROBLEM SPOTS+.

AS REGARDS EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY, HE SAID THAT PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS ON THEMES DERIVED FROM ACCIDENT ANALYSIS WERE ORGANISED EACH YEAR TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ROAD SAFETY AND THE CORRECT WAY OF USING ROADS.

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SUPERVISION RATIO FOR CASEWORKERS SATISFACTORY

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THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IS SATISFIED WITH THE EXISTING RATIO OF CASEWORK SUPERVISOR TO CASEWORKERS IN THE DEPARTMENT'S FAMILY SERVICES CENTRES, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HUI YIN-FAT, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD, HOWEVER, CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE WORKLOAD WHICH AVERAGED 99 CASES PER WORKER.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THAT AT PRESENT THE SUPERVISORY RATIO WAS ONE SUPERVISOR TO 10 SOCIAL WORKERS IN FAMILY SERVICES CENTRES.

CHILD ABUSE CASES WERE HANDLED BOTH BY FAMILY SERVICES CENTRES AND BY THE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE UNIT (CPSU), A SPECIAL UNIT SET UP TO DEAL WITH THE MORE SERIOUS ABUSE CASES.

HE SAID THAT IN THE CPSU THE AVERAGE CASELOAD PER CASEWORKER AT THE END OF DECEMBER LAST YEAR WAS 48.2. WITH THE ADDITION OF ONE SOCIAL WORKER TO THE UNIT EARLY THIS YEAR, THE AVERAGE CASELOAD HAD BEEN IMPROVED TO 40.

MR CHAMBERS ADDED THAT IN VIEW OF THE COMPLICATED NATURE OF CHILD ABUSE CASES, THE MANNING RATIO OF THE CPSU WAS BEING REVIEWED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

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\$400 MILLION TO INTRODUCE SEPARATE TAXATION  
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THE PRESENT ESTIMATED COST OF INTRODUCING A SCHEME OF SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED COUPLES WOULD BE AT LEAST \$400 MILLION IN THE YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION AND IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS THEREAFTER, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON RITA FAN, MR JACOBS SAID THAT IN ADDITION THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS WOULD INCREASE BY SOME \$17 MILLION PER ANNUM BECAUSE OF THE INCREASED NUMBER OF FILES RESULTING FROM A SCHEME OF SEPARATE TAXATION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE FORMER FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAD ESTIMATED IN 1983 THAT THE COST OF INTRODUCING A SCHEME OF SEPARATE TAXATION FOR MARRIED COUPLES WOULD BE \$285 MILLION IN THE YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION, AND AROUND \$180 MILLION IN A FULL YEAR.

+THE INCREASE TO \$400 MILLION ARISES BECAUSE OF INFLATION AND ADJUSTMENTS TO TAX THRESHOLDS SINCE THEN,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

/+THE DIFFERENCE .....

+THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND FULL YEAR COSTS GIVEN IN 1983 AROSE BECAUSE, AT THAT TIME, ADJUSTMENTS TO TAX THRESHOLDS APPLIED NOT ONLY TO THE FORTHCOMING FISCAL YEAR, BUT ALSO TO FINAL TAX LIABILITIES FOR THE THEN CURRENT YEAR.

+IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT SINCE 1985 SUCH ADJUSTMENTS HAVE APPLIED ONLY TO THE FORTHCOMING FISCAL YEAR, THERE WOULD NOW BE NO REVENUE LOSS DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND FULL YEAR COSTS,+ HE ADDED.

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THA RESIDENTS ENCOURAGED TO USE WELFARE SERVICES  
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IN VIEW OF THE TRANSIENT NATURE OF TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA (THA'S) AND THE RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF RESIDENTS, IT IS NOT POLICY TO PROVIDE WELFARE SERVICES SPECIFICALLY TO CATER FOR THESE AREAS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROSANNA TAM, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES WAS PLANNED ON A TERRITORY-WIDE BASIS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POPULATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS.

HOWEVER, THA RESIDENTS WERE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE USE OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT AND SUBVENTED WELFARE AGENCIES IN THE VICINITY, HE SAID.

+IN CASES WHERE A THA IS ISOLATED AND WELFARE FACILITIES ARE NOT READILY AVAILABLE, THE NEED FOR SUCH SERVICES IS CONSIDERED AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT FACTORS SUCH AS THE LOCATION, SIZE OF POPULATION AND LENGTH OF TENURE OF THE THA AND NEIGHBOURHOOD-LEVEL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ARE SET WHEN THIS IS JUSTIFIED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS NOTED THAT THE PROJECTS PROVIDED A RANGE OF SERVICES, WHICH INCLUDED SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROMOTION OF SELF-HELP AMONG RESIDENTS.

+AT PRESENT 29 OUT OF 50 THA'S ARE SERVED BY PROJECTS OF THIS TYPE,+ HE ADDED.

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ONE BILL PASSED  
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THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 WAS PASSED  
IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

FOUR OTHER BILLS -- THE CONTROL OF OBSCENE AND INDECENT  
ARTICLES BILL 1986, THE MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE  
PROBATION OF OFFENDERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE ROADS  
(WORKS, USE AND COMPENSATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 -- WERE READ  
A SECOND TIME AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO JANUARY 21.

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KOWLOON WALLED CITY CLEARANCE  
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THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO CLEAR THE AREA OF NORTH-EAST KOWLOON GENERALLY KNOWN AS THE KOWLOON WALLED CITY. FOLLOWING A SURVEY NOTICE ISSUED TODAY A PRE-CLEARANCE OCCUPANCY SURVEY IS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH WHO IS NOW RESIDENT THERE. DETAILED SCREENING WILL FOLLOW, TO ESTABLISH WHO SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR REHOUSING AND COMPENSATION. ALL ELIGIBLE PERSONS WILL BE REHOUSED AND COMPENSATED AS APPROPRIATE. REHOUSING ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE ON THE BASIS USED FOR REDEVELOPMENT CLEARANCES IN URBAN AREAS.

THERE HAS BEEN LONGSTANDING, WIDELY SHARED CONCERN ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS IN THE WALLED CITY, INCLUDING FLOODING, UNSAFE STRUCTURES, POOR STANDARDS OF HYGIENE AND SERIOUS FIRE HAZARDS. THESE UNACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS HAVE FACED THE INHABITANTS OF THE WALLED CITY AND THOSE OF SURROUNDING AREAS WITH MANY PROBLEMS. CAREFUL STUDY HAS SHOWN THAT THE ONLY SOLUTION IS COMPLETE CLEARANCE. THIS WILL BE MANAGED IN THREE PHASES OVER A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS AND SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY MARCH 1990. THE AREA WILL NOT BE REBUILT BUT WILL BE REDEVELOPED INTO A PARK, POSSIBLY WITH SOME RELATED COMMUNITY USE.

THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO ASK THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO ADVISE THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT AND BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT ON THE CLEARANCE AND ON REHOUSING AND COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS. THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO CONSIDER REPRESENTATIONS FROM RESIDENTS AND THOSE AFFECTED BY THE CLEARANCE.

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WALLED CITY CLEARANCE AN IMPORTANT STEP  
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THE CLEARANCE OF THE +VERY RUN-DOWN AND DIRTY AREA+ OF KOWLOON WALLED CITY HAS GREAT SIGNIFICANCE FOR HONG KONG, THE ACTING GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING, HE SAID: +IT'S SOMETHING THAT WE'VE ALL WANTED TO DO FOR A VERY LONG TIME. SO I THINK IT IS A VERY IMPORTANT STEP THAT'S BEING TAKEN.

+EVERYONE IN HONG KONG SHOULD BE VERY GLAD THAT WE ARE GETTING RID OF THIS CANCER IN KOWLOON WHICH HAS WORRIED US FOR SO LONG.+

/ASKED .....

ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE, SIR DAVID SAID: +WE'VE HAD DISCUSSIONS ON AND OFF ABOUT IT FOR A NUMBER OF MONTHS.

+AND IT'S MADE POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, BY THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE JOINT DECLARATION ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.+

EARLIER IN THE MORNING, SIR DAVID TOLD REPORTERS AFTER AN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING THAT THE CLEARANCE WAS QUITE A COMPLICATED QUESTION.

+IT IS APPARENT TO THE CHINESE AND TO THE BRITISH AND TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG THAT REALLY THE TIME HAS COME TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE WALLED CITY,+ HE SAID.

+THE JOINT DECLARATION PROVIDES THE FOUNDATION FOR THAT, AND WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO AGREE ON THE CLEARANCE OF THE WALLED CITY AND THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT WILL BE MADE TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTIONS WHICH WILL ARISE FROM THE PEOPLE LIVING IN WALLED CITY.+

ON THE QUESTION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, SIR DAVID SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE WERE VERY MANY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ACTUALLY IN THE WALLED CITY. +BUT IF THERE ARE, THEY WILL BE DEALT WITH BY NORMAL PROCEDURES.+

ON ILLEGAL DENTISTS THERE, SIR DAVID NOTED THAT IN ALL THE CLEARANCES THAT HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS OR MORE, THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN A NUMBER OF ILLEGAL OCCUPATIONS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO DEVISE WAYS AND MEANS OF DEALING WITH SUCH PEOPLE FAIRLY, AND HE BELIEVED THAT THE PRESENCE OF ILLEGAL DENTISTS WOULD NOT PRESENT ANY PARTICULAR PROBLEM. +WE WILL FIND A WAY TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS FAIRLY AND SATISFACTORILY.+

SIR DAVID ADDED THAT IN THE COURSE OF HONG KONG'S HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, IT SO HAPPENED THAT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS THERE WOULD BE A GREAT DEAL OF HOUSING TO BE BUILT IN KOWLOON AND IN THE URBAN AREA.

+IF YOU LEAVE IT LATER, THEN THE HOUSING THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE WILL BE MUCH FURTHER AWAY FROM THE URBAN AREA AND THE CLEARANCE MIGHT BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO ACCOMPLISH.+

ASKED ABOUT THE RATIONALE BEHIND TURNING THE WALLED CITY INTO A PARK, SIR DAVID SAID: +THE SURROUNDING AREA IS ALREADY A PARK. IT'S VERY CLOSE TO THE FLIGHT PATH OF THE RUNWAY AND IT'S NOT A VERY SUITABLE PLACE TO GO IN FOR HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT. AND IT IS A VERY CONGESTED AREA OF KOWLOON, SO I THINK A PARK MAKES VERY GOOD SENSE.+

ASKED WHY THE CLEARANCE WAS DIVIDED INTO THREE PHASES, HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS A VERY BIG PROJECT INVOLVING ABOUT 40 000 PEOPLE.

ALSO, HE SAID THE CLEARANCE WOULD HAVE TO BE PHASED TO MATCH THE AMOUNT OF PERMANENT HOUSING AND TEMPORARY HOUSING AVAILABLE.

+IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT WE CAN DO ALL AT ONCE. +AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WILL BE, AS IT WERE, SUPERVISING THE CLEARANCE IN THOSE DETAILS,+ HE SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID HE COULD NOT ESTIMATE THE COST OF THE CLEARANCE, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE QUITE LARGE. +BUT NEVERTHELESS, THESE 40 000 PEOPLE ARE RESIDENTS OF HONG KONG, LET'S REMEMBER THAT.

+THEY LIVE HERE AND WE'LL BE REHOUSING THEM AS PART OF OUR HOUSING COMMITMENT. AND WE'LL BE GETTING RID OF A PLACE WHICH HAS BEEN OF GREAT CONCERN TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG FOR A GREAT MANY YEARS,+ HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID HOPED THAT THE CLEARANCE OF THE WALLED CITY WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AS TACKLING IT IN A REALISTIC WAY, SOMETHING WHICH NEEDED TO BE TACKLED FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

ASKED WHY THE LOCAL RESIDENTS WERE NOT CONSULTED PRIOR TO THE SURVEY, SIR DAVID SAID: +WELL, THAT IS A SENSIBLE QUESTION. BUT ONE HAS TO REMEMBER IN ANY OF THESE CLEARANCES THAT IF YOU OPEN UP THE QUESTION, YOU OPEN UP THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPOSTORS TRYING TO MUSCLE IN ON THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING REHOUSING, GETTING COMPENSATION.+

+AND USUALLY WITH ANY OF OUR BIG CLEARANCES, THIS IS THE WAY IN WHICH WE DO IT,+ HE SAID.

SIR DAVID HOPED THAT BY APPOINTING A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE INTERFACE BETWEEN THE LEGITIMATE REQUEST OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED AND THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

ASKED ABOUT VARIOUS PROBLEMS OF THE COMING CLEARANCE, SIR DAVID CITED AN EXAMPLE OF A MAJOR CLEARANCE IN TSUEN WAN FOR THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY A FEW YEARS AGO.

+WE CLEARED SOMETHING LIKE 65 000 PEOPLE IN A PERIOD OF 20 MONTHS. AND IN THE COURSE OF THAT CLEARANCE WE MET ALL KINDS OF THINGS THAT WE DIDN'T THINK WE WERE GOING TO MEET.

+AND WE WERE ABLE TO SOLVE ALL THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THAT CLEARANCE WITHOUT ANY SERIOUS OUTCRY FROM THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT IF WE TACKLE THIS IN A SENSIBLE AND REALISTIC WAY, WE WILL ACHIEVE THE SAME RESULTS,+ HE SAID.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS RELEASED  
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THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT SITUATION IMPROVED IN THE QUARTER SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 1986, COMPARED WITH THE QUARTER ENDING AUGUST 1986, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 1986 WAS 2.4 PER CENT, COMPARED WITH THE RATES OF 3.0 PER CENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING AUGUST 1986 AND 3.3 PER CENT FOR THE SAME QUARTER LAST YEAR.

THE DECREASES OF 0.6 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER AND OF 0.9 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR ARE BOTH STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT.

THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 1986 WAS ESTIMATED AT 65 100, LESS THAN THE FIGURE OF 81 700 FOR THE QUARTER ENDING AUGUST 1986 AND 86 400 FOR THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR.

A GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AS LOW AS THIS REPRESENTED VIRTUALLY FULL EMPLOYMENT IN THE HONG KONG CONTEXT.

THE UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1986 WAS 1.2 PER CENT, COMPARED WITH THE RATE OF 1.5 PER CENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING AUGUST 1986. THE RATE FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1985 WAS 2.3 PER CENT.

THE DECREASES OF 0.3 PERCENTAGE POINT COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER AND OF 1.1 PERCENTAGE POINTS COMPARED WITH THE SAME QUARTER OF LAST YEAR ARE BOTH STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT.

THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED PERSONS FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1986 AT 33 100, WAS AGAIN LESS THAN THE FIGURE OF 39 900 FOR THE QUARTER ENDING AUGUST 1986 AND 59 600 FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1985.

CONSISTENT WITH THE LATEST RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO), PERSONS WHO WORKED LESS THAN 35 HOURS A WEEK DUE TO ECONOMIC REASONS (SUCH AS SLACK WORK, MATERIAL SHORTAGE, MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN AND INABILITY TO FIND FULL-TIME WORK) WERE REGARDED AS UNDEREMPLOYED ONLY IF THEY WERE EITHER SEEKING OR AVAILABLE FOR MORE WORK.

COMMENTING UPON THESE FIGURES, THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS SAID THAT BECAUSE THE PROPORTION OF FIRST-TIME JOB SEEKERS (PEOPLE WHO HAVE JUST LEFT SCHOOL) VARIES FROM MONTH TO MONTH, UNEMPLOYMENT RATES THAT HAD BEEN SEASONALLY ADJUSTED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE VARIATIONS IN THE NUMBER OF FIRST-TIME JOB-SEEKERS SHOULD BE USED IN MAKING COMPARISONS OVER TIME.

/THE COMMISSIONER .....

THE COMMISSIONER ADDED THAT, BASED ON A SYSTEM OF MANUAL EXTRACTION OF INFORMATION FROM SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE LATEST MONTH, PROVISIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATES COVERING THE LATEST THREE-MONTH PERIOD COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE WITHIN TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SURVEY.

THESE PROVIDE AN EARLY INDICATION OF THE LATEST TREND IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT SITUATION. THE PROVISIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED) FOR OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1986 WAS 2.2 PER CENT AND THE PROVISIONAL UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 1.2 PER CENT. (THE UNADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1986 WAS 2.5 PER CENT.)

THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT STATISTICS WERE OBTAINED FROM A CONTINUOUS GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT. THIS SURVEY COVERS A QUARTERLY SAMPLE OF SOME 14 000 HOUSEHOLDS OR 50 000 PERSONS, SELECTED SCIENTIFICALLY TO REPRESENT THE LAND-BASED CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONAL POPULATION IN HONG KONG.

PERSONAL AND LABOUR FORCE DATA WERE OBTAINED IN THE SURVEY BY INTERVIEWING EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AGED 15 AND ABOVE IN THE HOUSEHOLDS SAMPLED. IN THE SURVEY, THE DEFINITIONS USED IN MEASURING UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT FOLLOW CLOSELY THOSE RECOMMENDED BY THE ILO.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS IS GIVEN IN THE REPORT ON THE GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY WHICH IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR. THE NEXT REPORT COVERING THE QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER 1986 SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE AROUND MARCH 20, 1987.

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MORE SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY PLANNED  
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THERE ARE NOW 104 SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT PLANS TO OPEN 30 MORE IN 1987-88, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MRS ANSON CHAN, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE CHUNG SING BENEVOLENT SOCIETY GAN LOW KHOON CHOO SOCIAL CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY, SHE SAID IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT THE NUMBER OF OLD PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD INCREASE FROM THE PRESENT 600 000 TO OVER 800 000 WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE.

+TO COPE WITH THE CHANGES AND THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY, BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR ARE TRYING THEIR BEST TO EXPAND SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY,+ SHE SAID.

+GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN THIS SERVICE AREA IS TO PROMOTE 'CARE IN THE COMMUNITY' WHEREBY FINANCIAL RELIEF AND VARIOUS COMMUNITY FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED TO ASSIST FAMILIES TO LOOK AFTER THEIR ELDERLY MEMBERS, TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO ACCEPT THE AGEING PROCESS AND TO ENABLE THE ELDERLY TO REMAIN USEFUL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY,+ SHE ADDED.

SHE NOTED THAT A SOCIAL CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY WAS ONE OF THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO GIVE THE ELDERLY OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

+ACTIVITIES AT THESE CENTRES ARE BECOMING MORE DIVERSIFIED. THERE ARE PROGRAMMES TO ENHANCE THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ELDERLY ABOUT PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AS WELL AS ABOUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

+THESE PROGRAMMES ARE A GREAT HELP TO THEM TO ADAPT TO THE CHANGES THEY FACE IN THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY,+ MRS CHAN SAID.

MRS CHAN PAID TRIBUTE TO THE CHUNG SING BENEVOLENT SOCIETY FOR ITS EFFORTS IN OPERATING VARIOUS SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, NOTING THAT THE AGENCY WAS ALSO PLANNING TO OPEN A CARE-AND-ATTENTION HOME IN TSING YI ESTATE.

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RECORD NUMBER OF FLAT SALES REGISTERED  
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THE NUMBER OF SALE AGREEMENTS OF FLATS REGISTERED IN 1986 ROSE TO A RECORD 56 080, AN INCREASE OF 3.8 PER CENT OVER THE FIGURE FOR 1985, THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, MR NOEL GLEESON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF CONSIDERATION IN THESE AGREEMENTS INCREASED BY 33.7 PER CENT FROM \$30.683 BILLION TO \$41.015 BILLION, MR GLEESON SAID IN REPORTING ON LAND OFFICE FIGURES FOR 1986.

DURING THE YEAR, 80 487 ASSIGNMENTS OF FLATS WERE REGISTERED, COMPARED WITH 73 791 IN 1985.

OF THESE, A TOTAL OF 9 775 ASSIGNMENTS WERE COMPLETED BY THE DEPARTMENT ON BEHALF OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME. COMPARED WITH 8 398 IN 1985.

THE TOTAL VALUE OF CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSIGNMENT OF FLATS INCREASED BY 45.3 PER CENT FROM \$31.309 BILLION TO \$45.501 BILLION.

/THERE WERE .....

THERE WERE 653 ASSIGNMENTS OF LOTS AND SECTIONS, 9.9 PER CENT MORE THAN IN 1985. THE TOTAL VALUE OF CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSIGNMENTS OF LOTS AND SECTIONS INCREASED BY 306.4 PER CENT FROM \$6.920 BILLION IN 1985 TO \$28.122 BILLION LAST YEAR.

FORTY-NINE BUILDING MORTGAGES AND 76 004 OTHER MORTGAGES WERE REGISTERED, COMPARED WITH 52 AND 64 602 RESPECTIVELY IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THE TOTAL AMOUNT SECURED UNDER BUILDING MORTGAGES REGISTERED DURING THE YEAR DROPPED BY 6.7 PER CENT, FROM \$0.974 BILLION TO \$0.909 BILLION.

THE AMOUNT SECURED UNDER MORTGAGES OTHER THAN BUILDING MORTGAGES ROSE BY 31.6 PER CENT, FROM \$25.148 BILLION TO \$33.086 BILLION.

REPAYMENTS UNDER MORTGAGES OF ALL KINDS, AS EVIDENCED BY DISCHARGES AND MORTGAGEE'S RECEIPTS, WERE DOWN BY 2.4 PER CENT, FROM \$22.735 BILLION TO \$22.182 BILLION.

SEARCHES IN THE LAND OFFICE BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC REACHED A RECORD OF 1 220 951, UP BY 20.9 PER CENT.

DURING THE YEAR, THE FIVE NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICT LAND REGISTRIES OPERATED BY THE DEPARTMENT REGISTERED A TOTAL OF 130 899 INSTRUMENTS, ALSO A RECORD.

THIS INCLUDED 23 523 SALE AND PURCHASE AGREEMENTS OF FLATS, 33 341 ASSIGNMENTS OF FLATS, 2 827 ASSIGNMENTS OF LOTS AND SECTIONS, 46 BUILDING MORTGAGES, 37 857 OTHER MORTGAGES AND 16 811 MORTGAGEES' RECEIPTS, REASSIGNMENTS AND CERTIFICATES OF SATISFACTION WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF CONSIDERATION OF \$10.504 BILLION, \$11.047 BILLION, \$1.799 BILLION, \$1.334 BILLION, \$10.699 BILLION AND \$6.025 BILLION RESPECTIVELY.

COMMENTING ON THESE FIGURES, MR GLEESON SAID +THEY REFLECT A CONTINUING INCREASE OF ACTIVITY IN THE PROPERTY MARKET, PARTICULARLY IN RESIDENTIAL FLATS WHICH SHOWED NO SIGNS OF SLACKENING TOWARDS THE END OF 1986.+

HE SAID THAT AN INTERESTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INDICATOR WAS THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED PROPERTY OWNERS IN HONG KONG NOW STOOD AT 906 957, AN INCREASE OF 79 880 OR 9.7 PER CENT OVER THE FIGURE AT THE END OF 1985 WHICH ITSELF WAS AN INCREASE OF 9.8 PER CENT OVER 1984.

THE NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT LAND GRANTS AND MODIFICATIONS OF GOVERNMENT LEASE CONDITIONS COMPLETED AND REGISTERED IN THE URBAN LAND OFFICE LAST YEAR INCREASED FROM 273 IN 1985 TO 303, WHILE THE TOTAL PREMIUM INVOLVED DECREASED BY 43.5 PER CENT FROM \$4.546 BILLION TO \$2.57 BILLION.

SIGNIFICANT GOVERNMENT LAND TRANSACTIONS COMPLETED DURING THE YEAR INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING :

- \* THE SALE BY PUBLIC TENDER OF A 7 800-SQUARE METRE SITE IN TUEN MUN (TUEN MUN TOWN LOT NO. 281) TO THOROGOOD ESTATES LIMITED AT A PREMIUM OF \$102 680 000 FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.
- \* THE SALE BY PUBLIC TENDER OF A 6.675-SQUARE METRE SITE AT CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD (NEW KOWLOON INLAND LOT NO. 5955) TO LAI SUN GARMENT COMPANY LIMITED AT A PREMIUM OF \$68 800 000 FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL (EXCLUDING RESIDENTIAL, PETROL FILLING STATION, HOTEL AND GODOWN) PURPOSES.
- \* THE SALE BY PUBLIC AUCTION OF A 1.6-HECTARE SITE AT SUPREME COURT ROAD (INLAND LOT NO. 8582) TO SWIRE PROPERTIES SALES LIMITED AT A PREMIUM OF \$1 005 000 000 FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.
- \* THE GRANT BY PRIVATE TREATY OF A 5.587-HECTARE SITE IN TUEN MUN (TUEN MUN TOWN LOT NO. 289) TO KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION AT A PREMIUM OF \$28 000 000 FOR A LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM DEPOT AND THE MODIFICATION OF THE LEASE CONDITIONS AT A PREMIUM OF \$45 MILLION TO PERMIT COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OVER THE DEPOT.
- \* THE GRANT BY CASH TENDER OF A 2.293-HECTARE SITE IN JUNK BAY (JUNK BAY TOWN LOT NO. 6) TO CONTRA ENTERPRISES LIMITED AT A PREMIUM OF \$172 888 888 FOR A NON-INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME.
- \* THE SALE BY PUBLIC AUCTION OF A 1.538-HECTARE SITE AT JUNCTION OF TIN HAU TEMPLE ROAD AND BRAEMAR HILL ROAD (INLAND LOT NO. 8658) TO BOATSWAIN ENTERPRISES LIMITED AND BEVERHILL LIMITED AT A PREMIUM OF \$645 000 000 FOR PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES.

DURING THE YEAR, SURRENDERS AND RESUMPTIONS OF LAND DROPPED BY 29.8 PER CENT FROM 131 TO 92, WHILE THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION INCREASED BY 66.4 PER CENT FROM \$50.3 MILLION TO \$83.7 MILLION.

MR GLEESON SAID THE WHOLE OF THE LAND OFFICE IN CENTRAL MOVED TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN QUEENSWAY ON AUGUST 26 AND COMPUTERISATION OF LAND OFFICE RECORDS BEGAN ON NOVEMBER 1.

+FULL CONVERSION IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 1988,+ HE SAID.

OF THE EIGHT NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICT LAND REGISTRIES, FIVE HAD NOW BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT. IT WAS INTENDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD TAKE OVER THE REMAINDER BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, MR GLEESON ADDED.

REGISTRATION REVOKED

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THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING ANNOUNCED THAT THE REGISTRATION OF SEARCH ASIA FINANCE LTD. AS A DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY HAS BEEN REVOKED TODAY AT ITS OWN REQUEST UNDER SECTION 31 (2) OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE 1986.

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PUBLIC URGED TO DONATE TO SIR EDWARD YOUDE FUND

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IN RESPONSE TO THE +10-DOLLAR+ DRIVE LAUNCHED BY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE SIR EDWARD YOUDE FUND, WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DONATED MONEY TO THE FUND AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND CALLED ON THE PUBLIC TO CONTRIBUTE.

WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MRS PEGGY LAM, SAID SIR EDWARD HAD BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE AND WELFARE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE AND DURING A VISIT TO WAN CHAI HAD EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISTRICT.

SHE SAID SIR EDWARD CONTRIBUTED A LOT TO HONG KONG DURING HIS TERM OF OFFICE AND WAS MISSED BY MANY PEOPLE.

AS THE FUND WOULD BE USED FOR THE FURTHERING OF EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, MANY PEOPLE WOULD BENEFIT FROM IT, SHE SAID.

DONATIONS COULD BE MADE AT ANY BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG BANK AND HANG SENG BANK, ANY DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE TREASURY CENTRAL COLLECTION AND PAYMENT OFFICE AND ALL SUB-TREASURY OFFICES.

IN ADDITION, THE WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD HAD PROPOSED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO NAME THE NEW ROAD ADJACENT TO THE HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE THE SIR EDWARD YOUDE ROAD.

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O'BRIEN ROAD FOOTBRIDGE OPENED

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A COVERED FOOTBRIDGE OVER O'BRIEN ROAD IN WAN CHAI WAS OPENED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE \$14 MILLION FOOTBRIDGE, PROVIDING A MAIN PEDESTRIAN LINK BETWEEN WAN CHAI RECLAMATION AND ENTRANCES TO WAN CHAI MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY STATION, WAS OPENED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF WAN CHAI DISTRICT BOARD, MRS PEGGY LAM.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT SAID THE FOOTBRIDGE WAS ESSENTIAL TO COPE WITH GROWING PEDESTRIAN FLOW GENERATED BY THE OPENING OF THE ISLAND LINE IN 1985 AND RAPID DEVELOPMENT TAKING PLACE ON THE RECLAMATION.

THE FOOTBRIDGE IS THE FIRST OF SIX THAT WILL PROVIDE ACCESS TO WAN CHAI RECLAMATION. THE OTHERS ARE BEING BUILT AT FENWICK PIER STREET, STEWART ROAD, WAN SHING STREET, TONNOCHY ROAD AND WAN CHAI FERRY PIER.

THE FOOTBRIDGE, COMPLETED IN 15 MONTHS, WAS CONSTRUCTED WITH REINFORCED AND PRE-STRESSED CONCRETE.

FOUR ESCALATORS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED AT THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDES OF GLOUCESTER ROAD AND AT THE MTR STATION ENTRANCES IN O'BRIEN ROAD.

IN ADDITION, PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE FOOTBRIDGE FOR A DIRECT LINK TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE BLOCK NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION OF GLOUCESTER ROAD.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE SECTION OF O'BRIEN ROAD BETWEEN HENNESSY AND LOCKHART ROADS, WHERE THE STATION'S ENTRANCES WERE LOCATED, WOULD BE PEDESTRIANISED, WHILE THE SECTION BETWEEN GLOUCESTER AND LOCKHART ROADS WOULD BE REDUCED TO TWO LANES OF TRAFFIC.

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SURVEY LOCATES DRAINAGE BLACKSPOTS IN MONG KOK  
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A SURVEY IN MONG KOK HAS IDENTIFIED ABOUT 100 BLACKSPOTS IN THE DISTRICT THAT HAVE SUFFERED FROM POOR DRAINAGE.

THE SURVEY, CONDUCTED BY A WORKING GROUP UNDER THE MONG KOK DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN, CONCLUDED THAT DRAINAGE BLOCKAGE WAS GENERALLY CONSIDERED A SERIOUS PROBLEM BY MONG KOK RESIDENTS.

THE WORKING GROUP HAD EARLIER DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 600 QUESTIONNAIRES TO AREA COMMITTEE, OWNERS' CORPORATION AND MUTUAL AID COMMITTEE MEMBERS AS WELL AS LOCAL FACTORIES, SCHOOLS AND SHOPS TO SEEK INFORMATION AND 366 OF THEM WERE RETURNED FOR ANALYSIS, WORKING GROUP CHAIRMAN, MR LAU TAK-KI, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE ADDED THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE SIX AREAS IN THE DISTRICT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A FAIR OVERALL PICTURE.

/MOST RESPONDENTS .....

MOST RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT THERE WERE THREE MAIN CAUSES OF BLOCKAGE. THEY WERE THE CLUSTERING OF RUBBISH AT SEWER OPENINGS; THE ACCUMULATION OF OIL AND GREASE FROM RESTAURANT AND COOKED FOOD STALL OPERATORS; AND THE DISCHARGE OF INDUSTRIAL WASTES BY FACTORY OWNERS.

THE MORE NOTORIOUS BLACKSPOTS IDENTIFIED BY THE STUDY INCLUDED THE JUNCTION OF NATHAN ROAD AND BOUNDARY STREET, FA YUEN STREET, AROUND THE COOKED FOOD STALLS AT NELSON STREET, TUNG CHOI STREET, THE JUNCTION OF BUTE STREET AND SHANGHAI STREET, THE REAR LANE OF IVY STREET, LARCH STREET AND BEDFORD STREET.

FLOODINGS WERE FREQUENTLY REPORTED IN THESE LOCATIONS DURING THE RAINY SEASONS.

APART FROM UNDERGROUND DRAINS, SEWERS OF MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS ALSO SUFFERED FROM SEVERE BLOCKAGE. MORE THAN HALF OF THE RESPONDENTS REPORTED THAT CHOKAGES HAD OCCURRED IN THEIR BUILDINGS.

THEY BELIEVED THAT CHOKAGE WAS MAINLY DUE TO POOR MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING SEWERS, UNAUTHORISED ALTERATIONS TO SEWERAGE SYSTEMS, AND THE DUMPING OF THE GARBAGE INTO WASTE-WATER PIPES.

FOR REMEDIAL ACTION, THE WORKING GROUP PROPOSED A SYSTEMATIC AND COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY BE DRAWN UP TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PROPER WAYS TO DISPOSE OF WASTE.

IT ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT HEAVIER PENALTIES BE IMPOSED ON PEOPLE WHO CAUSED BLOCKAGE IN UNDERGROUND DRAINS.

THE WORKING GROUP ALSO SUGGESTED THAT DRAINAGE SYSTEM SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY EXAMINED IN ORDER TO WORK OUT A LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED AS PART OF A FIVE-MONTH PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN TO BOOST RESIDENTS' AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE AND CLEANLINESS.

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DB COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS ROAD PROJECT  
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MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO DISCUSS PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE LO WAI ROAD EXTENSION.

THE WORKS INVOLVE WIDENING THE ROAD, IMPROVING DRAINAGE AND PROVIDING OTHER UTILITY SERVICES.

/COMMITTEE .....

COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL BE BRIEFED BY STAFF OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ON A PROPOSED SCHEME TO LICENSE PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES ON SCHEDULED ROUTES TO CARRY GOODS ON CERTAIN NEW TERRITORIES ROUTES.

PROGRESS REPORTS ON INSTALLATION OF WATER SUPPLY TO MA WAN AND ULTRA HIGH AREAS IN THE DISTRICT WILL BE TABLED.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD ON THURSDAY AT 10 AM IN THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN.

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PROVIDENT FUND UNDER DB SCRUTINY  
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THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SERVICES COMMITTEE WILL DISCUSS THE MERITS OF A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND AT ITS MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS SETTING UP AN EDITORIAL GROUP FOR COMPILING THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT RESOURCES HANDBOOK AND THE REVISED WORK PLAN FOR THE COMMITTEE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD TO BE HELD AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT BOARD ON THE 14TH FLOOR OF HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL.

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RESTRICTED ZONES DESIGNATED IN SHEUNG SHUI  
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FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JANUARY 16), THE FOLLOWING ROADS IN SHEUNG SHUI WILL BE DESIGNATED RESTRICTED ZONES:

- \* JOCKEY CLUB ROAD, FROM A POINT ABOUT 300 METRES SOUTH OF MAN KAM TO ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 150 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH ROAD D4, WILL BE A RESTRICTED ZONE FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY;
- \* JOCKEY CLUB ROAD, FROM A POINT ABOUT 150 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH ROAD D4 TO A POINT ABOUT 150 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION, WILL BE A RESTRICTED ZONE FROM 7 AM TO MIDNIGHT DAILY;
- \* JOCKEY CLUB ROAD, FROM A POINT ABOUT 150 METRES SOUTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH ROAD D4 TO A POINT ABOUT 70 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH FU HING STREET, WILL BE A RESTRICTED ZONE FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY; AND
- \* ROAD C3, BETWEEN ITS JUNCTION WITH JOCKEY CLUB ROAD AND A POINT ABOUT 25 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION, WILL BE A RESTRICTED ZONE FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY.

NO VEHICLE WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREA.

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TAI WAI TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE TO OPEN  
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THE TAI WAI INTERIM TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF TAI WAI KCR STATION WILL BE OPENED ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 17). IT WILL REPLACE THE TAI WAI TEMPORARY TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE.

AS A RESULT, KMB ROUTES 72A, 80K, 82K, 85 AND 88K, AND GREEN MINIBUS ROUTES 63K AND 64K WILL BE DIVERTED TO OPERATE VIA THE INTERCHANGE OR TERMINATE THERE.

MEANWHILE, TO FACILITATE ROAD RECONSTRUCTION WORK IN TSUEN NAM ROAD OUTSIDE TAI WAI KCR STATION, TSUEN NAM ROAD BETWEEN ITS JUNCTIONS WITH TAI WAI ROAD AND MEI TIN ROAD WILL BE CLOSED ON SATURDAY.

A TEMPORARY TAXI STAND WILL BE PROVIDED IN TSUEN NAM ROAD NEAR TAI WAI KCR STATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF COMMUTERS.

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