HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1977

CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
RATES OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCES TO BE INCREASED BY 11 PER CENT	1
WORK ON COASTAL HIGHWAY BETWEEN CAUSEWAY BAY AND SHAU KEI WAN STARTS SOON	3
HONG KONG SPENT $1,100 MILLION ON ROAD WORK IN PAST TEN YEARS	4
AIR-BORNE STUDIO BROADCASTS FIRE RISK MESSAGES	7
SECURITY CUBICLES FOR KAI TAK AIRPORT	8
EXPLOSIVES SUPERVISOR OF LABOUR DEPARTMENT RETIRING	9
NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENT IN SHEK WU HUI	10

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RATES OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCES TO BE INCREASED BY 11 PER CENT

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THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THE SCALE OF PAYMENTS FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA) AND DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCES (DIA) WILL BE INCREASED BY ABOUT 11 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY NEXT YEAR.

COMMENTING ON THE INCREASES, MR. LU YU-HUA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, SAID: +IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE POOREST SECTOR OF OUR COMMUNITY, THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RATES ARE INCREASED FROM TIME TO TIME TO MAINTAIN THEIR PURCHASING POWER.+

HE NOTED THAT THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT ALWAYS KEEPS A CLOSE WATCH ON THE LEVELS OF PA AND DIA BY REFERRING EACH MONTH TO THE MOVEMENT OF THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE INDEX.

+THIS INDEX IS MADE UP OF THOSE ELEMENTS IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX SUCH AS FOOD, FUEL, LIGHTING, CLOTHING IN PROPORTIONS REFLECTING THE SPENDING HABITS OF OUR POORER FAMILIES. RENT IS EXCLUDED BECAUSE IT IS ALLOWED FOR SEPARATELY IN CALCULATING THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE PAYABLE,+ HE SAID.

THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1971 AND THE RATES WERE IMPROVED IN REAL TERMS IN APRIL 1972, MR. LU SAID.

+THE 1972 BASIC RATE WAS FIRST INCREASED IN JULY 1973 BY NINE PER CENT, AND BY 21 PER CENT IN JANUARY 1974 AND AGAIN BY 24 PER CENT IN JUNE THAT SAME YEAR.+

THE RATES OF PAYMENT TO BE INCREASED IN FEBRUARY NEXT YEAR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	
* FOR A SINGLE PERSON ON HIS OWN	FROM $180 TO $200
* FOR A FAMILY -	
FIRST THREE ELIGIBLE MEMBERS	FROM $130 TO $145 PER PERSON
SECOND THREE ELIGIBLE MEMBERS	FROM $105 TO $120 PER PERSON
EACH ADDITIONAL ELIGIBLE MEMBER	FROM $80 TO $90 PER PERSON
DISABILITY ALLOWANCE	FROM $180 TO $200
INFIRMITY ALLOWANCE	FROM $90 TO $100

/AS AN EXAMPLE .....

AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE PA SCHEME CAN HELP A FAMILY IN FINANCIAL DISTRESS, MR. LU SAID THAT THE BASIC SCALE RATE AT THE NEW LEVEL FOR A FIVE-MEMBER FAMILY WOULD BE $675 A MONTH.

+ON TOP OF THIS AMOUNT, RENT ALLOWANCE AND THE COST OF ANY SCHOOL FEES AND TRAVELLING EXPENSES WILL BE ADDED. MOREOVER, ANY SPECIAL EXPENSES, SUCH AS DIETARY NEEDS, WILL ALSO BE COVERED.

+THESE ALLOWANCES ARE, OF COURSE, IN ADDITION TO THE NON-MEANS-TESTED INFIRMITY AND DISABILITY ALLOWANCES FOR ANY FAMILY MEMBER WHO MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR THEM,+ HE SAID.

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR, THERE WERE 47,671 PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, 16,785 DISABILITY AND 59,075 INFIRMITY CASES ON THE DEPARTMENT'S BOOKS.

THE INCREASE IS EXPECTED TO COST THE GOVERNMENT AN ADDITIONAL $32.2 MILLION FOR 1978/79.

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WORK ON $400M COASTAL HIGHWAY STARTS SOON

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THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WILL BEGIN WORK SHORTLY ON THE FIRST STAGE OF THE $400 MILLION-PLUS COASTAL ROAD BETWEEN CAUSEWAY BAY AND SHAU KEI WAN.

TENDERS FOR THE WORK WERE INVITED TODAY BY THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE OF THE P.W.D.

MR. T.S. NG, CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE CONSULTANTS MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE, SAID THAT THE WORK WOULD CONSIST OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 390-METRES SEAWALL AND THE RECLAMATION OF THE NORTH-EASTERN CORNER OF THE CAUSEWAY BAY TYPHOON SHELTER.

+REPROVISIONING OF EXISTING FACILITIES ON THE NEW RECLAMATION INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STOREY DEPOT BUILDING FOR THE PORT WORKS DIVISION OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND A VEHICULAR RAMP FOR OFF-LOADING OF REFUSE FOR THE URBAN COUNCIL,+ HE SAID.

WORK ON THIS CONTRACT WILL BEGIN IN DECEMBER AND WILL TAKE ABOUT 18 MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

+ON COMPLETION, SUFFICIENT SPACE WILL BE PROVIDED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF STAGE ONE OF THE COASTAL ROUTE, KNOWN AS HONG KONG ISLAND EASTERN CORRIDOR, AT THE EASTERN END OF THE CAUSEWAY BAY TYPHOON ANCHORAGE,+ MR. NG SAID.

MR. NG SAID THAT THE FIRST STAGE OF THE SCHEME CONSISTED OF A TWO-KILOMETRE ELEVATED ROAD RUNNING ALONG THE WATERFRONT FROM VICTORIA PARK TO NORTH POINT.

+IT IS BEING DESIGNED AS A FAST, HIGH-CAPACITY ROUTE WHICH WILL TAKE MUCH OF THE PRESSURE OFF EXISTING ROADS IN THE AREA, PARTICULARLY KING'S ROAD AND PROVIDE FAST AND CONVENIENT ACCESS BETWEEN THE TWO DISTRICTS,+ HE SAID.

+THE NEW HIGHWAY WILL HAVE SIX LANES -- THREE LANES FOR TRAFFIC IN EACH DIRECTION -- AND WILL HAVE A CAPACITY OF ABOUT 6,000 CARS AN HOUR.+

THERE WILL BE TWO MAJOR INTERCHANGES AT EACH END OF THE HIGHWAY -- ONE AT THE CAUSEWAY BAY END GIVING ACCESS TO VICTORIA PARK ROAD, AND ANOTHER AT THE NORTH POINT END WITH SLIP ROADS TO JAVA ROAD AND KING'S ROAD.

MR. NG POINTED OUT THAT THE MAJOR SECTIONS OF THE HIGHWAY WOULD BE RUNNING OVER THE SEA AND SOME 75 PIERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE ELEVATED DECK STRUCTURE.

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$1,100 MILLION SPENT ON ROAD WORK IN PAST TEN YEARS

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HONG KONG HAS SPENT SOME $1,100 MILLION ON NEW ROAD WORKS IN THE PAST 10 YEARS DURING WHICH THE TOTAL LENGTH OF ROADS HAS INCREASED BY 300 KILOMETRES TO 1,100 KILOMETRES.

DISCLOSING THIS TODAY, MR. SIU CHUEN, CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE P.W.D.'S TRAFFIC ENGINEERING (MAINLAND) DIVISION, SAID IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE FUTURE SPENDING ON NEW ROAD WORKS SHOULD BE $350 MILLION A YEAR (AT 1974 PRICES).

MR. SIU WAS PRESENTING A TECHNICAL PAPER ON +A DECADE OF PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF HIGHWAY NETWORK IN HONG KONG+ ON BEHALF OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE, AT THE EIGHTH WORLD MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ROAD FEDERATION BEING HELD IN TOKYO.

HE SAID THAT HONG KONG AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S FOREMOST INDUSTRIAL CITIES WAS ALSO ONE OF THE MOST DENSELY POPULATED WITH 4.4 MILLION PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN A COMPARATIVELY TINY AREA OF 1,046 SQUARE KILOMETRES (403 SQUARE MILES).

AS MUCH OF THIS CONSISTED OF MOUNTAINS AND ISLANDS, THE ACTUAL AREA IN CONSTANT USE WAS LESS THAN 100 SQUARE KILOMETRES (40 SQUARE MILES).

OUTLINING THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE GROWTH OF ROAD TRANSPORT, MR. SIU SAID : +BETWEEN 1966 AND 1976 THE POPULATION GREW FROM 3.6 MILLION TO 4.4 MILLION.

+IN COMMON WITH TRENDS ELSEWHERE VEHICLE REGISTRATION, WHICH IN 1960 STOOD AT 40,000, WENT UP FROM 93,000 IN 1966 TO 192,000 IN 1976 AND THE NUMBER OF PERSON TRIPS INCREASED FROM 2.8 MILLION TO OVER SIX MILLION PER DAY.+

ANOTHER FACTOR WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE NEED FOR AN EXPANDED HIGHWAY NETWORK WAS THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

MR. SIU TOLD REPRESENTATIVES FROM 70 COUNTRIES THAT HONG KONG HAD ONE OF THE HIGHEST VEHICLE DENSITIES IN THE WORLD.

+IT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE OF THE P.W.D. TO FIND WAYS TO KEEP THE TRAFFIC MOVING REASONABLY SMOOTHLY, TO PLAN PARKING PROVISIONS BOTH ON-STREET AND OFF-STREET, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE STREETS ARE WELL LIT,+ HE SAID.

/+TO IMPROVE .....

+TO IMPROVE JUNCTIONS, SOME 43 GRADE SEPARATED INTERCHANGES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED. IN THE NARROW CONFINES OF URBAN STREET AND, IN THE HILLY TOPOGRAPHY OF HONG KONG ISLAND THIS OFTEN REQUIRES A GREAT DEAL OF INGENUITY. WHERE SPACE IS INADEQUATE FOR GRADE SEPARATION, SOME 320 SETS OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED - MANY OF THEM LINKED.

+AN AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SCHEME INVOLVING SOME 83 JUNCTIONS WAS PUT INTO OPERATION IN MARCH THIS YEAR.+

ON ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE WORK, MR. SIU SAID THAT MANY OF HONG KONG'S HIGHWAYS WERE DESIGNED AND BUILT FOR A DIFFERENT ERA AND THUS CONSIDERABLE RECONSTRUCTION WORK WAS CONSTANTLY TAKING PLACE.

ALSO, HE POINTED OUT THAT HIGH POPULATION DENSITIES AND LARGE SCALE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SUCH A SMALL AREA HAD CREATED A PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICING PROBLEM THAT FEW CITIES HAD EVER KNOWN.

EACH YEAR, HE ADDED, THERE WERE 16,000 ROAD OPENINGS BY UTILITY UNDERTAKERS.

MR. SIU RECALLED THAT SYSTEMATIC PLANNING OF TRANSPORT BEGAN IN HONG KONG IN 1964 WITH THE SETTING UP OF THE PASSENGER TRANSPORT SURVEY UNIT JOINTLY BY THE BRITISH TRANSPORT AND ROAD RESEARCH LABORATORY AND THE HONG KONG PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

ONE OF ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE WAS TO BUILD UP WITHIN GOVERNMENT A PERMANENT ORGANISATION WHICH WOULD KEEP UNDER CONTINUOUS REVIEW THE REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN HONG KONG.

THE UNIT COMPLETED ITS WORK IN DECEMBER 1966 AND WAS PERMANENTLY INTEGRATED INTO THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND EVENTUALLY BECAME THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SURVEY DIVISION OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE.

SINCE THEN, HE SAID, TWO MORE STUDIES -- THE STUDY ON THE NEED AND FEASIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A MASS TRANSPORT SYSTEM AND THE LONG TERM ROAD STUDY -- HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT.

AS ALL THREE STUDIES WERE AIMED AT INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF TRANSPORT AND NONE HAD LOOKED AT THE TRANSPORT SCENE AS AN ORGANIC WHOLE, CONSULTANTS WERE AGAIN EMPLOYED IN 1973 TO CARRY OUT A +COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY+ OF HONG KONG.

THE FINAL REPORT ON THE STUDY WAS MADE PUBLIC IN DECEMBER 1976, MR. SIU SAID.

ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE CONSULTANTS WAS THAT THE ROAD NETWORK SHOULD BE EXPANDED AT A COST OF $350 MILLION TO ACCOMMODATE THE MAJOR PORTION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT PLUS ALL PRIVATE AND GOODS VEHICLES.

/THE CONSULTANTS .....

THE CONSULTANTS ALSO RECOMMENDED EXPANSION OF ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORT MODES, PARTICULARLY THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY, WHOSE FARE STRUCTURE SHOULD BE DISTANCE BASED SO AS TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM REVENUE WITH MAXIMUM RIDERSHIP.

MR. SIU SPOKE ABOUT THE FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SURVEY DIVISION OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE.

+IT FUNCTIONS AS A SERVICE AGENCY TO ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS REQUIRING TRANSPORT SURVEYS OR TRANSPORT PLANNING STUDIES TO BE CARRIED OUT,+ HE SAID.

+ITS RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE THE OPERATION OF AN ANNUAL TRAFFIC CENSUS WHICH COVERS 364 COUNTING STATIONS, THE SURVEY AND MONITORING OF THE SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE DIFFERENT TRANSPORT COMPANIES AND THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF ROAD ACCIDENT STATISTICS.+

IN ADDITION, MR. SIU SAID, THE DIVISION WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PERIODIC UPDATING OF THE RESULTS OF THE MAJOR TRANSPORT STUDIES AND CARRYING OUT TRANSPORT PLANNING AND TRANSPORT PROJECT EVALUATION STUDIES.

+THE FINDINGS OF SURVEYS AND STUDIES ARE CONTAINED IN TECHNICAL REPORTS OF VARIOUS TYPES, OF WHICH SOME 560 HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO DATE,+ HE SAID.

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AIR-BORNE STUDIO TO BROADCAST FIRE RISK MESSAGES

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AN AIR-BORNE BROADCASTING STUDIO HAS BEEN HOVERING OVER THE NEW TERRITORIES THIS WEEK, ISSUING ANNOUNCEMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CURRENT FIRE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN.

THE STUDIO IS INSTALLED IN THE FUSELAGE OF A SPECIALLY EQUIPPED ISLANDER AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG AUXILIARY AIR FORCE.

TWO POWERFUL LOUDSPEAKERS, MOUNTED ON THE OPEN DOORWAY, BEAM PRE-RECORDED MESSAGES TO GRAVE YARD VISITORS IN RURAL AREAS DURING THE CHUNG YEUNG FESTIVAL.

THE MESSAGES REMIND THESE VISITORS OF THE RISK OF FIRE IF THEY FAIL TO EXERCISE PROPER CARE IN LIGHTING JOSS STICKS AND PAPER AT GRAVE SITES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED THAT THE THREAT OF MAJOR FIRE OUTSBREAKS RESULTING FROM VISITS TO GRAVEYARDS IS EXTREMELY HIGH.

+REGRETTABLY, TOO MANY PEOPLE LIGHT JOSS STICKS AND PAPER WITHOUT PROPER THOUGHT FOR THE CONSEQUENCES.

+THEY FAIL TO CHECK THE PROXIMITY OF VEGETATION WHICH CAN BE SET ALIGHT, OR THE EFFECTS OF EVEN A SLIGHT BREEZE WHICH CAN CARRY BURNING PAPER INTO THE NEAREST TREES AND START AN INFERNO THAT DESTROYS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF VALUABLE FOREST.

+IT MAY SEEM INTRUSIVE TO ADDRESS THESE PEOPLE FROM THE AIR IN THIS WAY, BUT IT HAPPENS TO BE THE ONLY MEANS BY WHICH WE CAN REACH THEM ON THE SPOT TO REMIND THEM OF THEIR OBLIGATION TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND TO OTHERS.

+WE CONSIDER THAT THE HIGH COST WHICH THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAVE PAID IN PAST YEARS, LOSING VAST TRACTS OF RECREATIONAL COUNTRYSIDE THROUGH SHEER NEGLIGENCE AND CARELESSNESS, JUSTIFIES ANY MEANS OF DRIVING HOME THE NEED FOR SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS THAT WOULD AVOID THIS WASTE.+

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SECURITY CUBICLES FOR KAI TAK

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THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WILL SOON INVITE TENDERS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUMBER OF SECURITY CUBICLES IN KAI TAK AIRPORT TERMINAL BUILDING, ACCORDING TO A NOTICE IN TODAY'S GAZETTE.

THE CUBICLES WILL BE BUILT WITH BULLET PROOF SCREENING COMPONENTS WHICH SHOULD BE OPAQUE OR TRANSPARENT AS REQUIRED. AUTOMATIC SLIDING DOORS AND SWING DOORS OF SIMILAR MATERIAL ARE ALSO REQUIRED.

FIRMS INTERESTED IN THE CONTRACT SHOULD SUBMIT INFORMATION SHOWING THAT THEY ARE WELL ESTABLISHED WITH PERMANENT OFFICE AND WORKSHOP ACCOMMODATION, AND HAVE HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE OF THIS TYPE OF WORK.

APPLICATIONS TO TENDER FOR THIS PARTICULAR CONTRACT, AND ALSO FOR INCLUSION ON A LIST OF CONTRACTORS SUITABLE FOR EXECUTING SIMILAR WORK ON FUTURE PROJECTS, SHOULD BE SENT TO THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT, ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 4, 1977.

THEY SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED +APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION ON LIST OF SPECIALIST CONTRACTORS FOR THE EXECUTION OF BULLET PROOF SECURITY CUBICLES+.

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EXPLOSIVES SUPERVISOR RETIRING

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AN EXPLOSIVES SUPERVISOR OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S MINES DIVISION, MR. WAN KIRN-TAI, WILL BE RETIRING SHORTLY AFTER MORE THAN 30 YEARS SERVICE WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

AT A CEREMONY HELD AT THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING, MR. PETER WILLIAMS, IN HIS ROLE AS COMMISSIONER OF MINES, PRESENTED MR. WAN WITH A RETIREMENT GIFT ON BEHALF OF HIS FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES IN THE MINES DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

MR. WAN FIRST JOINED THE GOVERNMENT IN MAY 1947 AS AN OFFICE ATTENDANT IN THE MARINE DEPARTMENT. HE WAS LATER TRANSFERRED TO THE GREEN ISLAND GUN POWDER DEPOT AS HEAD DEPOT ATTENDANT WHICH WAS REGRADED FOREMAN CLASS III IN DECEMBER 1962. THREE YEARS LATER HE WAS PROMOTED TO DEPOT SUPERVISOR.

IN SEPTEMBER 1971, MR. WAN JOINED THE MINES DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND WAS APPOINTED EXPLOSIVES SUPERVISOR CLASS II, AND THEN TO EXPLOSIVES SUPERVISOR CLASS I TWO YEARS LATER.

DURING HIS SERVICE WITH THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, MR. WAN WAS TWICE COMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE FOR HIS EXPERT HANDLING OF EXPLOSIVES.

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NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENT IN SHEK WU HUI

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE BAN ON RIGHT TURN FROM LUNG SUM AVENUE TO SAN FUNG AVENUE IN SHEK WU HUI WILL BE LIFTED FROM MONDAY (OCTOBER 24) TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AT SAN FUNG AVENUE.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP IN THE AREA TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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