



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
NEW DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR BUS OPERATIONS	1
CANDIDATES FOR URBAN ELECTIONS COME FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS	6
FUNDS APPROVED FOR ADULT EDUCATION COURSES	7
STUDENT TRAVEL SCHEME	8
FS VISITS FACTORIES	8
SPEEDPOST MINIMUM RATE TO BE REDUCED BY \$20	9
SOCIAL WORKERS BUSIER NOWADAYS WITH MATRIMONIAL COUNSELLING	9
CLEARANCE OPERATION IN SHEUNG WAN	12

NEW DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR BUS OPERATIONS
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THE WORKING PARTIES WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED IN THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR TO REVIEW THE OPERATIONS OF THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY AND THE CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY HAVE COMPLETED THEIR WORK AND THEIR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN PUT TO THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL.

THE WORKING PARTIES CONDUCTING THE REVIEW COMPRISED FIVE SUB-GROUPS WHICH WERE SET UP TO EXAMINE FIVE ASPECTS OF THE OPERATIONS OF BOTH BUS COMPANIES. THESE ASPECTS WERE:

- (I) ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME;
- (II) BUS MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES AND PROCEDURES;
- (III) BUS DEPOT REQUIREMENTS;
- (IV) SPARE PARTS STOCK LEVELS; AND
- (V) PROFIT CONTROL SCHEMES.

THE SUB-GROUPS OPERATED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT. THEY WERE HEADED BY SPECIALIST OFFICERS FROM APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND BRANCHES. TWO MEMBERS NOMINATED BY THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND TWO MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC WERE APPOINTED TO EACH SUB-GROUP.

THE WORKING GROUPS' OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY
- (I) ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

THE RDP SUB-GROUP'S DELIBERATIONS WERE AIMED TOWARDS EVALUATING MEASURES BY WHICH OPERATING ECONOMIES COULD BE REALISED, AND EXAMINING THE EFFECT ON FARES OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES INCORPORATING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SERVICE EXPANSION. IN CONSIDERING THE VARIOUS OPTIONS A BALANCE HAD TO BE ACHIEVED BETWEEN THE COST OF THE BUS SERVICE (AND THEREFORE THE FARES) AND THE LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC. IN THE COURSE OF ITS WORK, THE SUB-GROUP ACTIVELY SOUGHT THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC AS TO THE DESIRED LEVEL OF SERVICE, UTILISING THE DISTRICT OFFICE CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THE OPPORTUNITY WAS TAKEN TO EXPLAIN THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE OPERATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC ON THE SUB-GROUP.

THE INVESTIGATION OF SHORT-TERM OPERATING ECONOMIES HAS CONFIRMED THAT KMB'S OPERATIONS ARE ALREADY HIGHLY COST-EFFECTIVE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIES WITHOUT CAUSING INCONVENIENCE TO THE PUBLIC ARE VERY FEW. PROPOSALS HAVE NEVERTHELESS BEEN MADE BY THIS SUB-GROUP THAT A NUMBER OF LOW PATRONAGE AND LOSS-MAKING BUS ROUTES COULD BE CONSIDERED FOR CANCELLATION IN THE EVENT THAT ALL MEANS OF RESTORING VIABILITY ARE EXHAUSTED AND THAT ADEQUATE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED. PROPOSALS HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE TOWARDS THIS END FOR A REDUCTION IN THE NETWORK OF COACH SERVICES AND FOR SOME REDUCTION IN BUS SERVICES DURING OFF-PEAK PERIODS. TOWARDS AN IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICES, THE SUB-GROUP CONSIDERED THREE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE EXPANSION OPTIONS, I.E. MINIMUM, MODERATE AND FULL OPTIONS, RANGING FROM A LOW OF 1 709 BUSES IN DAILY OPERATION TO A HIGH OF 1 957 BUSES IN DAILY OPERATION UP TO THE END OF 1983. IN TERMS OF LEVEL OF SERVICE, THESE OPTIONS RANGE FROM THAT OF NO CHANGE IN PRESENT PEAK TRAVELLING CONDITIONS TO A PEAK CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT OF THE ORDER OF 20 PER CENT.

HAVING REGARD TO ALL THE RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS, THE SUB-GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE MODERATE RDP OPTION SHOULD BE ADOPTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 1982 AND 1983, WITH THE OPTION OF PROGRESSING TO THE HIGH RDP IF ADDITIONAL SAVINGS IN THE BUS OPERATIONS COULD BE IDENTIFIED ELSEWHERE.

(II) BUS MAINTENANCE

THE MAINTENANCE SUB-GROUP EXAMINED MAINTENANCE STANDARDS FOR KMB'S BUSES, PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COST REDUCTION TO THE COMPANY IN THE USE OF SPARE PARTS, WHILE ENSURING THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO COMPROMISING OF SAFETY STANDARDS. THE SUB-GROUP HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE MAINTENANCE SYSTEMS OF THE COMPANY ARE GENERALLY SPEAKING ADEQUATE, ALTHOUGH IT HAS MADE SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS CONCERNING THE STANDARDISATION OF BUSES, MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES AND VEHICLE INSPECTION.

(III) BUS DEPOTS

THE DEPOT REQUIREMENTS SUB-GROUP SET OUT TO PRODUCE A REALISTIC PROGRAMME FOR THE PROVISION OF NEW DEPOT FACILITIES, AND TO ESTABLISH MOST ECONOMICAL MEANS OF MEETING THE LAND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF DEPOTS. THREE OPTIONS FOR THE PROVISION OF DEPOT FACILITIES WERE CONSIDERED - A MINIMUM OPTION BASED UPON LIMITING THE FUTURE PROVISION OF NEW DEPOT FACILITIES AS FAR AS POSSIBLE BY MAKING USE OF EXISTING AND COMMITTED MAINTENANCE FACILITIES, AND ACCEPTING A HIGH LEVEL OF ON-STREET PARKING OF BUSES AT NIGHT; A MODERATE OPTION SEEKING TO ENSURE THAT EACH GEOGRAPHICAL OPERATING AREA IS REASONABLY SELF-CONTAINED IN TERMS OF MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AND DAYTIME OFF-STREET PARKING, AND PROVIDING ADDITIONAL LAND FOR OVERNIGHT PARKING IN THOSE AREAS WHERE ON-STREET PARKING IS LEAST ACCEPTABLE; AND A MAXIMUM OPTION, AS AN EXTENSION OF THE MODERATE OPTION, TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT ADDITIONAL LAND FOR DEPOT FACILITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL BUSES COULD BE PARKED OFF-STREET AT NIGHT WITHIN THEIR OPERATING AREAS.

DURING ITS DELIBERATIONS, THE SUB-GROUP ADDED, FOR COMPARATIVE PURPOSES, A FURTHER OPTION DESCRIBED AS THE FULL OPTION, WHICH PROVIDED ACCOMMODATION WITHIN MULTI-STORY DEPOTS FOR THE WHOLE BUS FLEET WITHOUT THE NEED FOR OVERNIGHT OPERATING AREAS. FOLLOWING AN EVALUATION OF THE FOUR OPTIONS, THE SUB-GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMPANY BE ENCOURAGED TO PURSUE A DEPOT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME BASED UPON THE MAXIMUM OPTION. UNDER THIS OPTION, NO ON-STREET PARKING OF BUSES SHOULD BE NECESSARY FROM 1984 ONWARDS. THE SUB-GROUP HAS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD USE ITS BEST ENDEAVOURS TO ENSURE THAT SUITABLE SITES ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COMPANY AT THE TIME REQUIRED.

(IV) SPARE PARTS

THE SPARE PARTS SUB-GROUP EXAMINED ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS, SPARE STOCK LEVELS, THE COMPANY'S EXISTING SYSTEM FOR TENDERING AND THE ACQUISITION OF SPARE PARTS, AND THE FEASIBILITY OF DIRECT PURCHASE FROM MANUFACTURERS. DURING ITS STUDY THE SUB-GROUP FOUND THAT WHILE THE COMPANY'S SPARE PARTS STOCK CONTROL SYSTEM HAD BENEFITED MUCH FROM ITS CONVERSION IN LATE 1980 FROM A MANUAL SYSTEM TO A MODERN ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING BASED COMPUTER SYSTEM, THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS IN LATE 1979 APPEARED TO HAVE PRODUCED UNNECESSARILY COMPLICATED PROCEDURES TOGETHER WITH A DUPLICATION OF WORKLOAD. RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE BY THE SUB-GROUP FOR STREAMLINING THESE PROCEDURES. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT FACES IN REGARD TO THE SIZE OF ITS OPERATIONS, THE VARIED LOCATION OF ITS STORAGE FACILITIES AND THE PRESSURES OF THE HONG KONG ENVIRONMENT, THE SUB-GROUP CONSIDERED THAT ITS SYSTEM WAS OF A FAIRLY HIGH STANDARD, LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE COMPANY'S CONTINUOUS CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF ITS OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

HAVING REVIEWED THE LEVEL OF STOCK HELD BY KMB AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REVIEW, THE SUB-GROUP WAS OF THE VIEW THAT THE LEVEL OF STOCK COULD BE SAFELY REDUCED BY AS MUCH AS 20 PER CENT AND KMB, IN THE COURSE OF THE REVIEW, TOOK ACTION TO REDUCE THE STOCK LEVEL BY 20 PER CENT.

THE SUB-GROUP CONSIDERED THAT THE PRESENT METHOD OF DETERMINING THE STOCK-HOLDING WAS INADEQUATE, AND RECOMMENDED A MORE SCIENTIFIC METHOD USING BOTH FINANCIAL AND QUANTITY CONTROLS TO REPLACE IT. SUGGESTIONS TO STREAMLINE THE PURCHASING PROCEDURES WERE ALSO PUT TO KMB AND A LARGE NUMBER OF THESE HAVE SINCE BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY KMB.

(B) CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY(I) ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

THE SUB-GROUP'S BRIEF AIMED AT ASSESSING THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF VARIOUS RDP OPTIONS AND EVALUATING OPERATING ECONOMIES. IN CONSIDERING THE VARIOUS OPTIONS IT WAS NECESSARY TO EVALUATE THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE COST OF BUS SERVICES AND THE STANDARD OF SERVICES. THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC WERE PARTICULARLY SOUGHT ABOUT THE LATTER.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CMB'S 1980/82 RDP WAS FOUND TO BE BEHIND SCHEDULE BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS CAUSED BY TRAFFIC CONGESTION, INSUFFICIENT DEPOT AND MAINTENANCE CAPACITY, SHORTAGE OF DRIVERS, AND SOME UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICES REQUIRED WHEN THE MTR ISLAND LINE OPENS. THE LEVEL OF SERVICE WAS SEEN AS UNSATISFACTORY BY PASSENGERS, ALTHOUGH OPERATIONS WERE NOTABLY COST-EFFECTIVE, OBTAINING THE NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL FARE INCREASES IN 1982. IT APPEARS FROM THE FINDINGS OF THE SUB-GROUP THAT THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF BUSES EACH DAY. THE SUB-GROUP RECOGNISED THAT THE PROBLEM OF LOW VEHICLE AVAILABILITY WAS UNLIKELY TO BE SOLVED IN THE SHORT TERM AND THAT CMB'S RESOURCES SHOULD BE DEPLOYED IN THE MANNER BEST SUITED TO THE NEEDS OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC.

(II) BUS MAINTENANCE

THE SUB-GROUP FOUND THAT SHORTCOMINGS IN FLEET AVAILABILITY WERE LARGELY RELATED TO A NEED TO IMPROVE MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AND PROCEDURES. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THAT END HAVE BEEN MADE.

(III) BUS DEPOTS

THE SUB-GROUP ADOPTED AS ITS CRITERION THE 'MAXIMUM' DEPOT PROVISION, WHICH INVOLVED THE USE OF ACCEPTABLE TERMINI AS WELL AS PURPOSE-BUILT DEPOTS FOR OVERNIGHT PARKING. A FUTURE FLEET SIZE OF 1 400 BUSES UP TO 1991 WAS USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. AT THE TIME THE REVIEW OF CMB'S DEPOT REQUIREMENTS STARTED THERE WAS A 40 PER CENT SHORTFALL OF PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY DEPOTS, AND AT ONE STAGE 25 PER CENT OF CMB'S FLEET WAS PARKED ON-STREET. THE ACCEPTANCE OF A NUMBER OF COVERED BUS TERMINI FOR USE AS OVERNIGHT PARKING, SUBJECT TO THE NECESSARY FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS, WILL PROVIDE OVERNIGHT PARKING SPACES FOR 700 BUSES, A MAJOR STEP IN SOLVING THE OVERNIGHT PARKING PROBLEM. THE PROVISION OF TERMINI SPACE FOR PARKING WILL SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE COSTS TO THE COMPANY, AND HENCE PRESSURE ON FARE LEVELS.

BY 1986 CMB SHOULD HAVE UP TO 1 000 PERMANENT DEPOT SPACES AVAILABLE AT CHAI WAN, NORTH POINT, WAH FU AND WONG CHUK HANG. ADDED TO THE 700 SPACES IN BUS TERMINI, THIS WILL EXCEED FORECAST REQUIREMENTS.

(IV) SPARE PARTS

THE SUB-GROUP'S TASK WAS TO EXAMINE STOCK LEVELS, PURCHASING, SOURCES OF SUPPLY AND STOCK CONTROL PROCEDURES. THE SUB-GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMPANY SHOULD REVIEW ITS PURCHASING, STOCK CONTROL AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES WITH A VIEW TO INTRODUCING FORMALISED PROCEDURES AND MORE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF ITS STOCKHOLDING. THE SUB-GROUP ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO INTRODUCING COMPUTERISED STOCK CONTROL.

(C) PROFIT CONTROL SCHEMES

THE PROFIT CONTROL SCHEME SUB-GROUP WAS ASKED TO REVIEW THE BASIS AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE EXISTING SCHEMES, TO CONSIDER THE INCLUSION OF SOURCES OF INCOME CURRENTLY OUTSIDE THE SCHEMES, AND ALSO TO CONSIDER PROJECTED REVENUE, EXPENDITURE AND FUTURE FARE LEVELS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ON THE ADVICE OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL TODAY ENDORSED THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (A) THE EXISTING FORM OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH THE COMPANIES SHOULD BE SUPERSEDED AND REPLACED BY A FORM OF FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME TO BE NEGOTIATED, REVIEWED AND AGREED ANNUALLY;
- (B) THE BASIS FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SHOULD BE THE ANNUAL ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME EXERCISE CONDUCTED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IN LIAISON WITH THE COMPANIES, AND IN CONSULTATION WITH DISTRICT BOARDS;
- (C) THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SHOULD INCLUDE:
 - (I) ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES;
 - (II) BUS PURCHASING PROGRAMMES;
 - (III) DEPOT REQUIREMENTS;
 - (IV) FINANCIAL FORECASTS;
 - (V) SPARE PARTS STOCK LEVELS;
 - (VI) MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES;
- (D) THE FIRST YEAR OF EACH AGREED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SHOULD BE COSTED REALISTICALLY, IN ALL ITS FACETS, AND THAT WHERE THIS GAVE RISE TO A RESULTANT FARES LEVEL CONSIDERED BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO BE UNACCEPTABLE, THE TAC SHOULD BE CONSULTED;
- (E) THE COMPANIES' COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGREED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE CLOSELY MONITORED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, AND THE NECESSARY RESOURCES SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THIS TO BE DONE;

(F) THE ARRANGEMENTS

- (F) THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING DISTRICT BOARDS ON THE ANNUAL ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME EXERCISE SHOULD BE FORMALISED, AND THAT THIS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SECRETARY FOR CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, HAVING CONSIDERED THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE PROFIT CONTROL SCHEME SUB-GROUP, AGREED THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINOR AMENDMENTS THAT SHOULD BE MADE, THE SCHEMES OF CONTROL APPLICABLE TO THE TWO BUS COMPANIES WERE STILL APPROPRIATE.

ON THE ADVICE OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE FIVE SUB-GROUPS WHICH WERE SET UP TO CONDUCT THE REVIEWS OF KMB AND CMB WILL NOT BE DISBANDED BUT WILL BE RECALLED AS NECESSARY TO CONDUCT SUCH FURTHER RESEARCH INTO THE OPERATIONS OF THE TWO COMPANIES AS MIGHT, IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE, PROVE TO BE NECESSARY.

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CANDIDATES FOR URBAN ELECTIONS COME FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS
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QUALIFIED PEOPLE WHO WISH TO STAND IN NEXT MONTH'S URBAN DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS SHOULD CONTACT THEIR LOCAL CITY DISTRICT OFFICES WITHOUT DELAY, THE DEPUTY REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR ALBERT LAM, SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

THERE ARE FOUR WORKING DAYS LEFT BEFORE THE NOMINATION PERIOD CLOSES ON AUGUST 31, HE SAID.

FROM AUGUST 6 WHEN NOMINATIONS BEGAN TILL YESTERDAY (MONDAY), A TOTAL OF 163 CANDIDATES, INCLUDING 11 WOMEN, HAD BEEN NOMINATED FOR THE ELECTIONS, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND EVER TO BE HELD IN THE URBAN AREAS.

ADDRESSING A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON EAST, MR LAM NOTED THAT CANDIDATES NOMINATED SO FAR REPRESENTED DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, EDUCATIONAL LEVELS AND OCCUPATIONS, WITH AGES RANGING FROM 22 TO 84.

+SUCH A DIVERSITY OF BACKGROUNDS SHOWS THAT PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE WELL BEING OF THEIR COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

IT ALSO SHOWED THAT MORE PEOPLE HAD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME AND HOW DISTRICT BOARDS COULD HELP TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HONG KONG, HE ADDED.

MR LAM SAID THAT THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION PROVIDED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR CIVIC-MINDED PEOPLE TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY.

THIS OPPORTUNITY, HE SAID, MANIFESTED ITSELF IN TWO WAYS:

FIRST, THE ELECTIONS ARE GIVEN A BROAD FRANCHISE, WITH PEOPLE OVER 21 AND HAVING LIVED IN HONG KONG FOR SEVEN YEARS BEING ELIGIBLE TO REGISTER AS ELECTORS, THEREBY EXERCISING THEIR RIGHT TO CHOOSE THE BEST CANDIDATES TO REPRESENT THEM AS MEMBERS ON THE LOCAL DISTRICT BOARDS.

- 7 -

SECOND, REGISTERED ELECTORS WHO HAVE LIVED IN HONG KONG FOR TEN YEARS OR MORE MAY STAND AS CANDIDATES THEMSELVES.

HE POINTED OUT THAT MANY OF THE CANDIDATES COULD +TRULY AND ADEQUATELY REPRESENT THE INTERESTS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE MAN IN THE STREET+.

STRESSING THAT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME, MR LAM URGED REGISTERED ELECTORS TO COME FORWARD TO VOTE ON THE POLLING DAY ON SEPTEMBER 23 BETWEEN 7 AM AND 11 PM.

THE FACT THAT OVER 700 000 PEOPLE HAD REGISTERED AS ELECTORS INDICATED THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WERE BECOMING MORE SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS, AND THE GOOD RESPONSE SHOWN IN THE NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES PERHAPS REFLECTED A GROWING INTEREST IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS AMONG THE POPULATION AT LARGE, HE SAID.

THERE WILL BE 76 VACANCIES IN THE COMING ELECTIONS -- ONE FOR EACH OF THE 76 CONSTITUENCIES THAT MAKE UP THE TEN URBAN DISTRICTS.

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FUNDS APPROVED FOR ADULT EDUCATION COURSES
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED A SUM OF OVER \$1 MILLION FOR A NUMBER OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO RUN EDUCATION COURSES FOR ADULTS ON A PERMANENT ANNUALLY RECURRENT BASIS WITH EFFECT FROM THE 1982-83 ACADEMIC YEAR.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH GRANTS HAVE BEEN APPROVED ON AN ANNUALLY RECURRENT BASIS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED TODAY (TUESDAY) THAT THE MOVE WAS TO ENABLE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO PLAN EFFECTIVELY FOR THE FUTURE IN TERMS OF STAFF, ACCOMMODATION AND COURSES.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD APPROVED SUBVENTIONS FOR 28 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO RUN A TOTAL OF 47 ADULT EDUCATION COURSES IN THE COMING SCHOOL YEAR.

THESE COURSES INCLUDE BASIC LITERACY IN CHINESE, GENERAL EDUCATION FOR PARTICULAR GROUPS, SUCH AS FISHERFOLK, RE-ORIENTATION COURSES FOR NEW COMERS TO HONG KONG, SOCIAL AND MORAL EDUCATION, LABOUR EDUCATION, CAREERS EDUCATION, PRE-RETIREMENT AND RETIREMENT EDUCATION, AND JOB ORIENTATION COURSES.

THE SPOKESMAN ESTIMATED THAT ABOUT 8 800 ADULTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM THESE COURSES, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 4 000 ADULTS OVER THE 1981-82 SCHOOL YEAR.

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STUDENT TRAVEL SCHEME

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FULL-TIME STUDENTS IN THE 12-25 AGE BRACKET MAY APPLY FOR THE CONCESSIONARY STUDENT TRAVEL CARD WHEN THE NEW SCHOOL TERM BEGINS ON SEPTEMBER 1.

THEY SHOULD SUBMIT THE APPLICATIONS THROUGH THEIR SCHOOLS.

THE CARD, WHICH IS VALID FOR 13 MONTHS, IS ISSUED AT A NOMINAL FEE OF \$10.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SAID THAT A TOTAL OF 452 000 STUDENT TRAVEL CARDS WERE ISSUED DURING THE LAST SCHOOL YEAR.

CARD HOLDERS MAY TRAVEL ON BUSES, FERRIES, TRAINS, TRAMS AND THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AT CONCESSIONARY RATES.

ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE MADE BY CALLING 5-7954631.

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FS VISITS FACTORIES

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR JOHN BREMRIDGE, TODAY (TUESDAY) TOURED FACTORIES ON THE TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR PAUL WONG, AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR HUGH BOYLE, MR BREMRIDGE FIRST VISITED ELCAP ELECTRONICS LTD. WHERE HE WAS GREETED BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR DAVID YUNG.

THIS LOCALLY OWNED COMPANY PRODUCES SILICON WAFER CHIPS, DICE AND INTEGRATED CIRCUITS FOR SALE LOCALLY AND IN THE UNITED STATES.

MR BREMRIDGE ALSO VISITED CHEN HSONG MACHINERY CO LTD., ANOTHER LOCAL FIRM, AND WAS SHOWN AROUND ITS PLANT BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR CHIANG CHEN-YUEN AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MR S.K. LAM.

THE PLANT PRODUCES PLASTIC INJECTION MOULDING MACHINES RANGING FROM 30 GRAMS TO 2 500 GRAMS, INCLUDING ELECTRONIC NUMERICALLY CONTROLLED INJECTION MOULDING MACHINES.

IT IS ALSO CAPABLE OF MANUFACTURING MACHINES WITH CAPACITY FROM 2 500 GRAMS TO 8 500 GRAMS UPON SPECIAL ORDER.

HALF OF ITS PRODUCTS ARE FOR THE LOCAL MARKET, AND THE REST ARE EXPORTED TO MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, THAILAND, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA, NORTH AMERICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND WEST AFRICA.

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SPEEDPOST MINIMUM RATE TO BE REDUCED BY \$20
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THE MINIMUM RATE FOR SPEEDPOST PACKAGES WILL BE REDUCED BY \$20 FROM MONDAY (AUGUST 30), THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR A.C. HEATHCOTE, ANNOUNCED TODAY.

THE MINIMUM WEIGHT STEP FOR SPEEDPOST PACKAGES WILL BE REDUCED TO 250 G, AND THE RATES APPLICABLE TO THIS NEW WEIGHT WILL BE \$20 CHEAPER THAN THE PRESENT MINIMUM RATES, HE POINTED OUT.

THIS MEANS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO SPEEDPOST A PACKAGE TO THE UNITED STATES FOR AS LITTLE AS \$64- AND RATES FOR NEARBY COUNTRIES SUCH AS SINGAPORE WILL BE AS LOW AS \$52.

SPEEDPOST IS THE POST OFFICE'S PREMIUM SERVICE DESIGNED FOR THE FAST AND RELIABLE TRANSMISSION OF URGENT DOCUMENTS AND PACKAGES TO 20 OVERSEAS COUNTRIES. PACKAGES CAN EITHER BE COLLECTED AT THE SENDER'S PREMISES OR POSTED AT ONE OF THE NINE SPECIAL SPEEDPOST COUNTERS CONVENIENTLY LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

MANY BUSINESS FIRMS, BANKS AND SHIPPING COMPANIES ARE REGULARLY USING SPEEDPOST TO SEND THEIR TIME-SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS, COMPUTER DATA, CHEQUES, DRAWINGS, SAMPLES AND MERCHANDISE OVERSEAS, HE SAID.

LEAFLETS ANNOUNCING THE NEW RATES ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL POST OFFICES. FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE POST OFFICE TELEPHONE ENQUIRY BUREAU AT TELEPHONE 5-2671222 OR BY CONTACTING THE POSTAL SERVICES REPRESENTATIVES AT 5-2671108.

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SOCIAL WORKERS BUSIER NOWADAYS WITH
MATRIMONIAL COUNSELLING
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MORE MARRIED WOMEN ARE WORKING AND BECOMING FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT OF THEIR HUSBANDS.

RECORDS FROM THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT SHOW THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE NEWLY-MARRIED WOMEN INCREASED FROM 79.4 PER CENT IN 1976 TO 91.5 PER CENT LAST YEAR.

THIS HAS HAD SOME ADVERSE EFFECT ON FAMILY LIFE, AS AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK IN AN OFFICE OR A FACTORY, WORKING MOTHERS ARE LESS INCLINED TO DEVOTE AS MUCH ATTENTION AND ENERGY TO THEIR CHILDREN AND HOUSEWORK AS FULL-TIME HOUSEWIVES, SOCIAL WORKERS EXPLAINED.

CONSEQUENTLY, THE NUMBER OF DIVORCES HAS BEEN INCREASING STEADILY, AND SOCIAL WORKERS FIND THEMSELVES BUSIER NOWADAYS WITH MATRIMONIAL COUNSELLING AND EFFORTS TO KEEP THE FAMILIES TOGETHER.

/+BUT THESE

+BUT THESE FIGURES DO NOT INDICATE THAT THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE IS BREAKING DOWN IN A BIG WAY,+ POINTED OUT MISS ANGELINA LO, AN EXPERIENCED FAMILY SERVICES COUNSELLOR WITH THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT IN THE PAST TEN YEARS OR SO, DIVORCES IN HONG KONG HAVE BEEN INCREASING BY ABOUT 300 TO 400 A YEAR. THIS YEAR, THE TOTAL FIGURE COULD REACH A RECORD HIGH OF ABOUT 3 000.

ANOTHER REASON FOR THE INCREASE IN DIVORCES COULD BE THAT DIVORCED WOMEN NOWADAYS FIND IT EASIER TO REMARRY THAN BEFORE, MISS LO SAID.

OTHER MAJOR CAUSES OF FAMILY BREAK-UPS ARE +LACK OF GENUINE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTNERS, UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS FROM ONE'S PARTNER, DIFFICULTIES WITH IN-LAWS, THE ENDLESS CHASE FOR MATERIAL COMFORTS AND MANY OTHER PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH URBANISATION,+ MISS LO, WHO IS CASEWORK SUPERVISOR OF THE SWD'S TSUEN WAN FAMILY SERVICES CENTRE, SAID.

SHE EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ORDINANCE, A PARTY TO A MARRIAGE CAN PETITION FOR A DIVORCE ON GROUNDS OF ADULTERY, UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR, DESERTION FOR TWO YEARS AND SEPARATION FOR FIVE YEARS.

WHEN APPROACHED WITH A MARITAL PROBLEM, THE FIRST THING A FAMILY SERVICES CENTRE DOES IS TO INTRODUCE ITS PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING SERVICE.

+ALTHOUGH MANY COME WITH THEIR MINDS SEEMINGLY ALREADY MADE UP TO OBTAIN A DIVORCE, WE TRY TO HELP THEM IDENTIFY AND SEE THEIR PROBLEMS IN PERSPECTIVE. WE MAY SUGGEST SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO THEIR LIFESTYLE AND MODIFY SOME OF THEIR UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS,+ MISS LO SAID.

IN URGENT CASES, SWD CASEWORKERS ALSO MAKE HOUSE CALLS. BUT SOME COUPLES PREFER TO GO TO THE CENTRES FOR GREATER PRIVACY.

THE SWD NOW HAS 19 FAMILY SERVICES CENTRES THROUGHOUT HONG KONG, AND THREE MORE CENTRES ARE IN THEIR PLANNING STAGE. STAFFED BY 73 ASSISTANT SOCIAL WORK OFFICERS AND 32 SENIOR SOCIAL WORK ASSISTANTS, THE CENTRES HANDLED SOME 20 000 CASES LAST YEAR. HOWEVER, A SMALL NUMBER OF ABOUT 1 100 CASES INVOLVED MARITAL DISPUTES.

THE SWD ALSO OPERATES A COUNSELLING HOTLINE (NO. 3-432255).

MR ANTHONY CHAN, AN SWD STAFF OFFICER ON FAMILY SERVICES, SAID THAT MANY COUPLES NOW PREFER TO HAVE SMALL WEDDING PARTIES FOR CLOSE RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, RATHER THAN THE MORE LAVISH FUNCTIONS HELD IN THE +OLD DAYS+.

+MOST OF THEM WOULD PREFER TO GO FOR A HONEYMOON WITH THE MONEY SAVED, AND AN INCREASING NUMBER OF THEM ARE GETTING THEIR WAY, DESPITE THEIR PARENTS' OBJECTIONS,+ HE SAID.

THE MEDIAN AGE FOR MARRIAGES HAS REMAINED AT ABOUT 23 AND 27 FOR THE BRIDE AND GROOM RESPECTIVELY SINCE 1971, ACCORDING TO RECORDS.

MOST COUNSELLORS ALSO FEEL THAT ALTHOUGH NO OFFICIAL RECORDS ARE KEPT, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE INCIDENCE OF COHABITATION, SOME INVOLVING PARTNERS BELOW THE AGE OF 21 WHICH WOULD REQUIRE PARENTAL CONSENT FOR LEGAL MARRIAGE.

THE DAYS OF MATCH-MAKING ARE ALSO APPARENTLY COMING TO AN END.

+PARENTS NOW HAVE TO FACE THE FACT THAT WITH OR WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT, THEIR CHILDREN WILL MARRY THE PARTNER OF THEIR CHOICE,+ MR CHAN SAID.

+HOWEVER,+ MR CHAN WENT ON, +OTHER THAN REMEDIAL SERVICES BEING PROVIDED TO COUPLES IN TROUBLE, THE DEPARTMENT WAS ALL THE TIME TRYING TO PROMOTE HEALTHY AND HARMONIOUS FAMILY LIVING THROUGH ITS FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES.

+FOR EXAMPLE, LAST YEAR LARGE SCALE ACTIVITIES FOR TERRITORIAL-WIDE PARTICIPATION, DISTRICT FUNCTIONS AND GAMES IN THE MASS MEDIA WERE ORGANISED TO GET ACROSS PROPER MESSAGES ON THE THEME OF 'ADOLESCENTS AND THE FAMILY'. THESE EFFORTS WOULD GO ON FOR OTHER ASPECTS OF GOOD FAMILY LIFE.+

WHILE ON THE ONE HAND THE NUMBER OF DIVORCES HAS BEEN INCREASING, THERE ARE INDICATIONS ON THE OTHER HAND, OF A POSSIBLE RECORD NUMBER OF MARRIAGES TAKING PLACE THIS LUNAR NEW YEAR (WHICH BEGAN ON JANUARY 25, 1982 UNDER THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR).

BY TRADITION, +LAP CHUN+ OR +BEGINNING-OF-SPRING+ PERIODS ARE POPULAR TIMES FOR MARRIAGE AND THIS LUNAR YEAR BEING A +LEAP YEAR+ WHEN THERE ARE 13 LUNAR MONTHS AND TWO +LAP CHUNS+ (LIKE IN 1974, 1976 AND 1979), A LARGER NUMBER OF MARRIAGES IS EXPECTED.

LAST YEAR THERE WERE 50 756 MARRIAGES, ONLY 89 LESS THAN THE RECORD HIGH YEAR FOR 1980.

AND, GROUP MARRIAGES ARE BECOMING EVER MORE POPULAR SINCE THE FIRST ONE HELD IN JULY 1980.

BUT, FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES, GROUP WEDDINGS ARE LIMITED TO FIVE COUPLES ONLY, SAID MR K.W. WONG, SENIOR IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT THE CITY HALL MARRIAGE REGISTRY OF THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT.

THE PURPOSE OF GROUP WEDDINGS IS TO EASE CONGESTION AT SOME REGISTRIES AND TO SAVE COUPLES SOME WAITING TIME, HE SAID.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1982

- 12 -

CLEARANCE OPERATION IN SHEUNG WAN
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FIVE REMAINING ILLEGAL STRUCTURES USED BY HAWKERS IN SHEUNG WAN WERE CLEARED THIS (TUESDAY) MORNING AS PART OF AN OPERATION TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE REGION, THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICER (CENTRAL AND WESTERN), MR EDDIE CHAN, SAID.

TWELVE OTHER STRUCTURES WERE DISMANTLED EARLIER BY OWNERS THEMSELVES, IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST BY THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

THE STRUCTURES WERE LOCATED WITHIN AN AREA BOUNDED BY HOLLYWOOD ROAD, LOK KU ROAD AND LADDER STREET.

THE OPERATION WILL BE EXTENDED TO OTHER PARTS OF SHEUNG WAN LATER THIS YEAR.

ILLEGAL PARKING, ILLEGAL SHOPS AND UNAUTHORISED EXTENSIONS OF DOMESTIC PREMISES IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF SHEUNG WAN WOULD BE DEALT WITH, ACCORDING TO MR CHAN.

THE OPERATION INVOLVES COORDINATION AMONG SEVEN DEPARTMENTS.

THEY ARE THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, THE CENTRAL POLICE STATION, THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT OFFICE.

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