



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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HEARTENING CONCERN FOR QUALITY OF LIFE

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THE GOVERNOR'S CONCERN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG IS HEARTENING, THE HON EDWARD HO SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR HO PUT EMPHASIS ON LIVING CONDITIONS.

NOTING THAT MANY RESIDENTS STILL LIVED IN CRAMMED OR MAKESHIFT ACCOMMODATION DESPITE THE MASSIVE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME, HE SAID LONG-TERM HOUSING STRATEGY MUST DEPEND ON THE PRODUCTION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE BUILDING OF AFFORDABLE PUBLIC HOUSING BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

HOWEVER, THE LABOUR SHORTAGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAD SERIOUSLY IMPEDED THE PROGRESS OF PUBLIC HOUSING PRODUCTION IN 1987-88.

BESIDE THIS, PUBLIC HOUSING CONSTRUCTION COSTS HAD RISEN BY OVER 35 PER CENT IN THE LAST YEAR AND IT WAS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF QUALITY FROM EVEN THE MOST MAJOR CONTRACTORS.

"IF OUR COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED WITH THE PROGRESS OF OUR PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME, THERE IS CERTAINLY JUSTIFICATION TO CONSIDER LIMITED AND SHORT-TERM IMPORTATION OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS," HE SAID.

TURNING TO OLD ESTATES, MR HO SAID 500 BLOCKS, WHICH HOUSED MORE THAN HALF A MILLION PEOPLE, WOULD HAVE TO BE REDEVELOPED IN THE NEXT 13 YEARS. IF THIS WERE NOT DONE, MAJOR EXPENDITURE WOULD STILL BE NEEDED ON MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS.

HE ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT AGREE WITH ANOTHER MEMBER'S PROPOSAL TO CEASE THE REPAIR WORKS ON THE OLD ESTATE BLOCKS AND INSTEAD REDEVELOP THEM.

HE EXPLAINED THAT IF THESE BLOCKS WERE TOTALLY REDEVELOPED WITHOUT AFFECTING THE CLEARANCE PROGRAMME AND THOSE ON THE WAITING LIST FOR PUBLIC HOUSING, IT WOULD POSSIBLY MEAN THAT THE ANNUAL PRODUCTION FIGURE HAD TO BE DOUBLED, WHICH WAS CLEARLY BEYOND AVAILABLE CAPACITY OF HUMAN, FINANCIAL AND LAND RESOURCES.

ON LAND SUPPLY, MR HO SAID THE PROBLEM LAY NOT IN A SHORTAGE OF LAND FOR PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC HOUSING BUT IN THE PRODUCTION OF SERVICED LAND WITH THE REQUISITE TRANSPORT LINKAGE AND INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE RIGHT LOCATIONS AT THE RIGHT TIME.

THIS AVAILABILITY OF LAND SUPPLY IN THE RIGHT LOCATION WOULD BECOME MUCH MORE CRITICAL FOR THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME FROM 1990 TO 1995, WHEN LAND WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND IN THE URBAN AREA.

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THIS WOULD BE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE RECEPTION ACCOMMODATION FOR RESIDENTS BEFORE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OLDER ESTATES WAS POSSIBLE.

MR HO SAID A LARGE AMOUNT OF LAND WOULD HAVE TO BE FORMED BETWEEN 1995-2001.

AS THE LEAD TIME REQUIRED FROM LAND FORMATION TO BUILDING COMPLETION WAS ESTIMATED TO BE SEVEN YEARS, THE PROGRAMME FOR LAND PRODUCTION HAD TO BE COMMITTED ALMOST RIGHT AWAY, HE ADDED

FOR THOSE LIVING IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES, MR HO SAID WHAT WAS OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO THEM WAS THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY LIVED, AND THEREFORE DESIGNS AND STANDARDS MUST BE PLANNED TO MEET LONG-TERM NEEDS AND TO ANTICIPATE RISING ASPIRATIONS.

"THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW GENERATION OF STANDARD BLOCKS WITH IMPROVED LAYOUT AND ENHANCED LIVING SPACE, AND THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN A LESS LABOUR INTENSIVE MANNER, IS TO BE WELCOMED," HE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO TRANSPORT, MR HO SAID THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC STUDY HOPEFULLY WOULD PROVIDE SOME USEFUL ANSWERS TO TRANSPORT PROBLEMS.

BUT, OWING TO THE DENSITY OF BUILT-UP AREAS AND THE LIMITED ROAD SPACE, IT WAS APPARENT THAT MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS, THOUGH OF VITAL IMPORTANCE, SERVED ONLY TO TRANSPORT PEOPLE AND GOODS BETWEEN MAJOR DESTINATIONS.

THEY WOULD BRING VERY LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN CONGESTION IN THE MAIN URBAN AREA.

HE SUPPORTED THE VIEW THAT MORE EFFECTIVE USE COULD BE MADE OF WATER-BORNE TRANSPORT.

COMMENTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS ONCE AGAIN CONSIDERING PRIORITIES FOR ROAD USAGE, AND PRIVATE TRANSPORT WOULD BE THE ONE TO GIVE WAY, MR HO SAID IT WOULD BE WRONG TO RESTRICT THE MOVEMENT OF PRIVATE CARS WITHOUT PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE MODE OF CONVENIENT AND COMFORTABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

ON LABOUR, MR HO SAID BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE CREATED IF WE WERE TO ATTRACT YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORK IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

WITH RISING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPIRATIONS, THE DAYS OF CHEAP AND ABUNDANT LABOUR WERE OVER, AND IT WAS TIME THAT INDUSTRY STUDIED SERIOUSLY HOW PRODUCTIVITY AND WORKMANSHIP COULD BE IMPROVED WITH CONSTRUCTION METHODS THAT WOULD BE LESS DEPENDENT ON LABOUR.

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HE PRAISED THE HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR ADOPTING SEMI-MECHANISED METHODS FOR ITS CONTRACTS AND FOR ITS NEW DESIGN FOR STANDARD BLOCKS WHICH FURTHER EXPLOITED THE ADVANTAGES OF MODULAR COMPONENTS IN CONSTRUCTION.

IN THE LONG TERM, HOWEVER, MR HO SAID THE SOLUTION TO THE LABOUR SHORTAGE PROBLEM IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY LAY IN SYSTEMS THAT RELIED ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF SKILLED LABOUR.

THIS MEANT THERE WOULD BE GRADUAL PHASING OUT OF UNSKILLED LABOUR, TO BE REPLACED BY PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE BETTER TRAINED, FEWER IN NUMBER, BUT WHO WOULD RECEIVE BETTER INCOME AND WOULD BE WORKING IN CONDITIONS THAT WERE SAFER AND MORE AGREEABLE.

ON TOWN PLANNING, MR HO SAID HE SUPPORTED THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL POLICY BRANCH OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT, SINCE TOWN PLANNING HAD A DIRECT IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT, AND ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD FORM AN INTRINSIC PART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS.

HE BELIEVED THAT THIS WOULD PROVIDE A MORE CENTRAL FOCUS IN THE PLANNING OF OUR TERRITORIES AND OUR ENVIRONMENT.

MR HO ALSO SAID IT WAS NOW APPARENT THAT THE ROLE OF THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD SHOULD BE RE-EXAMINED.

ITS FUNCTION SHOULD BE UPGRADED TO CONSIDER PLANNING AT TERRITORIAL AND SUB-REGIONAL LEVELS, AND PART OF ITS PRESENT FUNCTION SHOULD BE DEVOLVED SO THAT PLANNING AT DISTRICT AND LOCAL LEVELS WOULD BE PERFORMED BY A SMALL NUMBER OF STATUTORY LOCAL PLANNING BODIES.

REFERRING TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE, MR HO SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, SO THAT THERE WAS AN AVAILABLE SOURCE OF SUITABLY PREPARED STUDENTS FOR THE ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS.

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LABOUR SHORTAGE SHOULD NOT CONTINUE UNABATED

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REVERSE ITS POLICY ON THE IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN LABOUR AS THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, IF ALLOWED TO CONTINUE UNABATED, WILL MAKE HONG KONG UNCOMPETITIVE AND UNATTRACTIVE, THE HON RONALD ARCULLI SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL POLICY DEBATE, MR ARCULLI SAID THE LABOUR SHORTAGE NOT ONLY DROVE UP COSTS BUT ALSO CAUSED EXTENSIVE DELAY AND LOWERING OF QUALITY.

HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WAS ONE OF THE AREAS EXPERIENCING SEVERE SHORTAGE.

TURNING TO THE PROPOSED SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION (SFC) BILL, HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A FAIR AMOUNT OF PUBLIC DEBATE ON THREE PARTICULAR ASPECTS.

THESE WERE THE RIGHT OF THE SFC TO REQUIRE A PERSON UNDER INVESTIGATION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE USED AS EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM, THE RIGHT OF THE SFC TO ENTER BUSINESS PREMISES TO HAVE ACCESS TO BOOKS RECORDS ETC. KEPT THERE AND TO REMOVE THEM IF NEEDED; AND THE ABSENCE OF AN APPEAL TO AN INDEPENDENT PANEL OUTSIDE THE SFC BY A PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A DECISION OF THE COMMISSION.

"THERE IS A GREAT BODY OF PUBLIC OPINION INCLUDING PROFESSIONAL BODIES THAT SAY THAT SUCH POWERS ARE UNNECESSARY, FAR TOO WIDE AND SWEEPING.

"UNLESS SUCH OBJECTIONS ARE GROUNDLESS THE PROVISION OF EXCESSIVE POWERS IS NOT ONLY FUNDAMENTALLY UNSOUND BUT ALSO CREATES SUSPICION," HE SAID.

WEAKNESSES THAT WERE EXPOSED IN THE FINANCIAL MARKETS A YEAR AGO NEEDED TO BE CORRECTED AND IMPROVED BUT OVER-CORRECTION COULD STIFLE THE MARKETS, HE SAID.

ON INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT, MR ARCULLI SAID THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR DISPUTING THAT HONG KONG NEEDED A NEW AIRPORT, ADDITIONAL PORT FACILITIES AND A TRANSPORT NETWORK,

"THESE ARE ALL MAJOR UNDERTAKINGS THAT WILL REQUIRE TENS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS BUT IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE TO GROW AND PROSPER WE MUST NOT BE TIMID IN MAKING THESE COMMITMENTS," HE SAID.

IN THIS RESPECT, HE SUGGESTED THAT BRINGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR INTO MAJOR PROJECTS WAS EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT AND MADE A GOOD DEAL OF COMMERCIAL SENSE.

MOREOVER, THERE WAS THE INTANGIBLE BENEFITS OF A TREMENDOUS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR "PUTTING ITS MONEY WHERE ITS MOUTH IS".

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ON THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE ISSUE, HE SAID THAT HONG KONG HAD BORNE MORE THAN ITS FAIR SHARE OF THIS UNFORTUNATE PROBLEM FOR TOO LONG.

HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT FOR HONG KONG TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN ITS RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS, IT WAS CRITICAL THAT THE UK SHOULD INCREASE ITS INTAKE SUBSTANTIALLY FROM CURRENT LEVELS.

ON THE QUESTION OF A BRAIN DRAIN, HE BELIEVED THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF PEOPLE EMIGRATED BECAUSE OF THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE AND THE BULK OF THIS GROUP WERE SIMPLY OUT TO GET AN INSURANCE POLICY, NAMELY, A FOREIGN PASSPORT.

HE SUGGESTED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD DO MORE TOWARDS KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THESE PEOPLE AND IN THIS AREA THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL THROUGH ITS EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF OFFICES ROUND THE WORLD, COULD PERHAPS EXAMINE WHETHER THE TERRITORY COULD DO SOME BUSINESS WITH THEM EVEN IF THEY DID NOT RETURN.

MR ARCULLI BELIEVED THAT THE PERMANENT SOLUTION TO THE BRAIN DRAIN LAY IN FOSTERING A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE AND THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED BY ENCOURAGING THEM TO PARTICIPATE MORE IN ENDEAVOURS AND PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES HERE.

IN OTHER MATTERS, WHILE BACKING THE VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION SCHEME FOR PRIVATE HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY AND A HOLIDAY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY, MR ARCULLI HOPED THE SOCIAL WELFARE AUTHORITIES WOULD ACCELERATE THEIR PLANS FOR THE AGED AND WHENEVER POSSIBLE ENCOURAGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GIVE SUPPORT.

ON THE DRAFT BASIC LAW, HE FELT THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE DOCUMENT WHEN IT WAS PUBLISHED FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION.

FINALLY, HE URGED THE UK GOVERNMENT TO GRANT UK PASSPORTS TO THE 30 OR SO ELDERLY WIVES OR WIDOWS OF EX-SERVICEMEN WITHOUT REQUIRING THEM TO RESIDE IN THE UK FOR EITHER THREE OR FIVE YEARS.

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PLEA TO GET NEW AIRPORT PROJECT UNDERWAY

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS AND GET THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECT UNDERWAY NOW SO THAT IT COULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE SEVEN YEARS OF A 1989 DECISION ON LOCATION AND FINANCING, THE HON MARTIN BARROW SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE, MR BARROW SAID THE NEED FOR AN EARLY DECISION ON A NEW AIRPORT WAS THE KEY ISSUE FACING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.

"I ACCEPT THAT THE QUESTIONS OF WHERE AND HOW ARE STILL TO BE SETTLED BUT SURELY THERE NEED BE NO FURTHER QUESTION ABOUT WHEN," HE SAID, ADDING THAT A FIRM DECISION ON THE ISSUE COULD ACT AS A CONFIDENCE BOOSTER.

MR BARROW SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT AFTER A YEAR OF TECHNICAL EVALUATION, FINANCIAL EVALUATIONS WERE ONLY NOW STARTING AND THESE WOULD TAKE A FURTHER NINE MONTHS. HE WONDERED WHETHER THESE EVALUATIONS COULD HAVE RUN CONCURRENTLY.

ASSUMING THAT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CONSULTATION WITH CHINA ON THE PROJECT WAS NECESSARY, MR BARROW SUGGESTED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD AT LEAST BRING THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES UP TO DATE ON WHERE MATTERS STOOD AND KEEP THEM INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

HE SAID THAT IF AN "AIRPORT AUTHORITY ROUTE BECOMES THE ADMINISTRATION'S MAINLINE PROPOSAL", DELAYS IN SETTING UP THAT ORGANISATION AND RECRUITING A CHIEF EXECUTIVE MUST ALSO BE AVOIDED.

MR BARROW SAID HE WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE IMPROVEMENTS AT KAI TAK AS THESE WERE ESSENTIAL IF HONG KONG WERE TO MAINTAIN ITS REPUTATION AS A TOURIST DESTINATION.

WITH THE OPENING OF THE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR, MR BARROW SAID HE HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE EASING THE PATH FOR EAST EUROPEAN VISITORS TO COME TO THE TERRITORY.

MR BARROW SAID THE STEPS BEING TAKEN BY THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS TO DEVELOP CULTURE AND RECREATION WERE ALSO IMPORTANT TO TOURISM.

"WE MUST CONTINUE TO COME UP WITH NEW FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES WHICH APPEAL TO LOCAL PEOPLE AND FOREIGN VISITORS ALIKE," HE SAID.

"PRESERVATION OF OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE IS VITAL SO THAT THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF HONG KONG CAN BE PRESERVED."

/THE RURAL .....

THE RURAL PLANNING WHICH THE GOVERNOR HAD MENTIONED WAS ALSO SIGNIFICANT IN ENSURING THAT RURAL AREAS COULD BE OPENED UP AND AT THE SAME TIME BE PRESERVED.

HE PLEDGED THAT THE TOURIST ASSOCIATION WOULD PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN SUPPORTING THESE LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS, WHICH COULD PROVIDE A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE YEARS AHEAD WHEN THE OPENING OF THE NEW AIRPORT WOULD GIVE A FURTHER BOOST TO THE INDUSTRY.

TURNING TO THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, MR BARROW OBSERVED THAT PRACTICALLY EVERY SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY -- MANUFACTURING, RETAILING, CONSTRUCTION, HOTELS, UTILITIES AND WHOLESALING -- WAS FACED WITH THE PROBLEM, WITH THE MOST SEVERELY HIT SECTOR BEING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

"UNLESS WE TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE LABOUR SHORTAGE PROBLEM, THE VERY PEOPLE WHO ARE BENEFITTING IN THE SHORT TERM WILL BE AMONG THOSE WHO WILL EVENTUALLY SUFFER FROM THE SHARP INCREASE IN INFLATION, LOSS OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS, AND AN EVENTUAL CONSEQUENTIAL DOWNTURN IN THE ECONOMY," HE SAID.

"NOBODY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS PROPOSING THE IMPORT OF LABOUR TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT WOULD DISCOURAGE PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES. CERTAINLY HONG KONG MUST NOT RETURN TO A SWEATSHOP IMAGE. WHAT IS NEEDED IS THE OPENING OF A VALVE TO RELIEVE SOME OF THE PRESSURE."

MR BARROW SAID THERE WAS WIDESPREAD DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S EARLIER CONCLUSION WAS NOT TO PURSUE A CHANGE OF POLICY, PARTICULARLY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

HE ALSO SUPPORTED THE PROPOSAL ON THE IMMEDIATE FORMATION OF A HIGH-LEVEL WORKING GROUP TO EXPAND THE LONG-TERM MACRO-ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS FOR THE ECONOMY IN SO FAR AS THEY RELATED TO LABOUR SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

THE WORKING GROUP COULD PRODUCE IDEAS FOR IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY, ASCERTAIN WHETHER OR NOT THE SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE COULD BE INCREASED AND EXAMINE DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR IMPORTED LABOUR.

"THIS GROUP, WHICH MUST INCLUDE PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES, SHOULD COMPLETE ITS WORK BY THE CHINESE NEW YEAR IN FEBRUARY 1989," HE SAID.

ON THE CHINA DIMENSION, MR BARROW WELCOMED THE WIDER LINKS WHICH HAD BEEN DEVELOPED BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA BOTH AT THE SENIOR LEVEL, INCLUDING THE GOVERNOR'S REGULAR VISITS, AS WELL AS THROUGH THE WORKING LEVEL EXCHANGES.

WITH REGARD TO THE DRAFT BASIC LAW, HE DEEMED IT IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE SUSTAINED INTEREST IN THE DOCUMENT BY LEGCO AS WELL AS BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

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SHARING THE GOVERNOR'S CONFIDENCE IN THE ONGOING ROLE WHICH HONG KONG WOULD PLAY IN CHINA'S MODERNISATION, MR BARROW SAID THE VISION OF A DYNAMIC HONG KONG AT THE CENTRE OF A GREATER CHINA, ENCOMPASSING THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE MAINLAND, TAIWAN, HONG KONG AND MACAU, PLAYING A VITAL ROLE IN SUSTAINING THIS DEVELOPMENT, WAS AN EXCITING ONE.

"THE HONG KONG COMMUNITY, AND I MEAN ALL THE COMMUNITY - THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE ADMINISTRATION - MUST HAVE THE SELF-CONFIDENCE TO TAKE US THROUGH THE NEXT 10 YEARS AND BEYOND. LET US VIEW 1997 AS A TIME OF OPPORTUNITY," HE CONCLUDED.

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NEED TO PROMOTE FREE TRADE

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HONG KONG MUST MAINTAIN ITS STANDING AS THE UNDISPUTED LEADING COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL CENTRE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION, WITH FULL COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF FREE AND FAIR TRADE, THE HON PAUL CHENG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

ANOTHER OBJECTIVE WAS TO CREATE AND DEVELOP A QUALITY STANDARD OF LIVING ENVIRONMENT WHEREBY RESIDENTS FROM BOTH THE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES, WHO BY CHOICE REGARDED HONG KONG AS THEIR HOME, COULD WORK AND LIVE IN HARMONY WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, MR CHENG SAID IN THE POLICY DEBATE.

DESPITE A SLOWDOWN IN THE RATE OF GROWTH, THE LOCAL ECONOMY WAS IN GOOD SHAPE COMPARED WITH THE ECONOMIES OF MOST COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, WITH GLOBAL ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES AHEAD OF HONG KONG, WE COULD NOT AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT. PROTECTIONIST SENTIMENTS WERE STILL LURKING ABROAD.

"EVEN WITH A FREE TRADE ADVOCATE LIKE THE U.S. PRESIDENT-ELECT GEORGE BUSH, HE STILL HAS TO CONTEND WITH A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND A SENATE IN WASHINGTON WHICH ARE BOTH DOMINATED BY THE DEMOCRATS," HE COMMENTED.

PROTECTIONIST TRADE BILLS, PARTICULARLY IN THE TEXTILES SECTOR, MIGHT WELL RAISE THEIR UGLY HEADS AGAIN.

HONG KONG MUST THEREFORE CONTINUE ITS EFFORT TO PROMOTE ITS FREE TRADE IMAGE AND TO ELIMINATE ANY PRACTICES WHICH MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS UNFAIR, INCLUDING THOSE IN THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE SECTOR.

/MR CHENG .....

MR CHENG SAID THAT OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, HONG KONG HAD DONE A LOT TO DEVELOP ITS EXPORTS TO EUROPE AND JAPAN, AND BOTH THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENTS OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY HAD WORKED CLOSELY IN PROMOTING TRADE DEVELOPMENT.

"THERE IS, HOWEVER, STILL SOME CONFUSION ABROAD ON THEIR RESPECTIVE ROLES. THIS SITUATION REQUIRES FURTHER REVIEW TO ENSURE EFFORTS AND RESOURCES ARE BEING UTILISED ON A COST-EFFECTIVE BASIS," HE SAID.

MR CHENG ALSO SUGGESTED THAT MORE TRADE DELEGATIONS BE ORGANISED WITH A BROADER-BASED PARTICIPATION THAN BEFORE.

"WE NEED TO ASSEMBLE PEOPLE AT SENIOR OPERATING LEVELS FROM TRADE, MANUFACTURING AS WELL AS SERVICE SECTORS. THIS WILL RESULT IN A HIGHER SUCCESSFUL CONVERSION RATE IN FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND IN INCREASED TRADE," HE SAID.

ON THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, MR CHENG SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD KEEP AN OPEN MIND AND EVALUATE PROVEN IDEAS FROM OTHER PLACES SUCH AS THOSE IMPLEMENTED IN SINGAPORE AND IN GUAM.

"FOR EXAMPLE, ANY FOREIGN INVESTOR WHO DECIDES TO BUILD A HOTEL IN GUAM, I WAS TOLD, CAN BRING IN A CONSTRUCTION TEAM TO WORK ON THE PROJECT WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE TEAM MUST LEAVE UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT," HE SAID.

ON THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MR CHENG SAID THE COMMITTEE SHOULD LOOK MORE AT NEW AREAS, SUCH AS BIOTECHNOLOGY, RATHER THAN TRYING TO PLAY "A CATCH-UP GAME".

WITH MORE AND MORE MANUFACTURING MOVING ACROSS THE BORDER, THERE WAS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HONG KONG TO BECOME THE DESIGN AND QUALITY CONTROL CENTRE FOR MANY PRODUCTS EXPORTED FROM THIS PART OF THE WORLD TO NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE.

REFERRING TO IMPROVEMENTS TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ENVIRONMENT, MR CHENG SUGGESTED THAT HONG KONG NEEDED A "TIGER" PROGRAMME WITH "REAL TEETH" TO COMBAT POLLUTION.

IN THE AREA OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS, HE SAID AT THE FIRST FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HE WAS SURPRISED HOW EASY IT WAS FOR TWO SUBSIDISED CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS TO OBTAIN MILLIONS IN ADDITIONAL FUNDS BECAUSE THEY HAD FAILED TO MAKE ENDS MEET.

IN THE BUSINESS WORLD, ONE WAS SACKED FOR NOT DELIVERING ACCORDING TO BUDGET. "I MUST QUESTION THE CREDIBILITY OF THE MANAGEMENT CONCERNED," HE SAID.

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PROPER YOUTH POLICY NEEDED

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HONG KONG NEEDS A YOUTH POLICY THAT IS DESIGNED SO THAT THE POTENTIALS, ABILITIES AND OTHER ADMIRABLE QUALITIES OF ITS YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CHANNELLED INTO THE RIGHT PATHS FOR PROPER DEVELOPMENT, THE HON CHEUNG CHI-KONG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE POLICY DEBATE, MR CHEUNG CALLED ON ALL IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS TO WORK TOGETHER DILIGENTLY TO CREATE A SOCIETY AND A SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THIS WOULD ALLOW THEM TO GROW UP FEELING SECURE, HAPPY AND INCULCATED WITH SUCH VIRTUES AS SELF-RESPECT, DECENCY, HONESTY, COURTESY AND INTEGRITY, AND THUS WELL ABLE TO FACE THE FUTURE.

SUCH AN ATMOSPHERE COULD ALSO HELP SHIFT THE MAIN CONCERN OF LIFE AWAY FROM GAUDINESS, LAVISHNESS, CREATURE COMFORTS AND MATERIALISTIC PURSUITS, HE ADDED.

MR CHEUNG SAID THERE HAD BEEN A DECLINE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPORTS. HE SUGGESTED THAT FOR A MORE BALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNG A WAY MUST BE FOUND TO BRING THEM BACK TO THE SPORTS FIELD AND THE GYMNASIA.

NOTING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY WERE SO ENGROSSED IN THE PURSUIT AND MAINTENANCE OF SUCH A LIFESTYLE THAT THEIR PRIORITIES WERE OFTEN IN A TOPSY-TURVY STATE, MR CHEUNG URGED THE GOVERNMENT AND ALL CONCERNED TO GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO THE ISSUE.

THEY SHOULD CONSIDER WHAT ADULTS COULD DO TO TRANSFORM THEIR SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE AND INCLINATIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND VALUES, AND SHOW YOUNG PEOPLE BY EXAMPLE HOW THEY SHOULD LIVE.

"ACCURATE ASSESSMENT MUST ALSO BE MADE OF THE REAL SITUATION OUR YOUTHS ARE IN SO THAT WE CAN COME UP WITH A SENSIBLE AND WORKABLE YOUTH POLICY SOON," HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT THE POLICY MUST NOT ONLY ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF YOUTH BUT MUST PINPOINT THEIR SHORTCOMINGS, THEIR INADEQUACIES, THEIR SEEMINGLY MISCONCEIVED WAY OF LIFE, AS WELL AS THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND SOCIETY AT LARGE.

ON EDUCATION, MR CHEUNG REITERATED THAT THE MAIN FAULTS IN THE SYSTEM INCLUDED THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENTS HAVING TO LEARN IN A LANGUAGE IN WHICH THEY WERE NOT PROFICIENT.

HE HOPED THAT ALL CONCERNED WOULD DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE TO INCREASE TERTIARY PLACES AND TO REAPPRAISE THE LANGUAGE STRATEGY.

/NO ONE, .....

"NO ONE, MYSELF INCLUDED, WOULD CHALLENGE THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH TO A CITY LIKE HONG KONG, BUT IS IT NOT AXIOMATIC THAT LEARNING ENGLISH IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM LEARNING IN ENGLISH?" HE ASKED.

"WHILE EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO MAKE EVERY CHILD LEARN AS MUCH ENGLISH AS POSSIBLE AND STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLY HIGH OVERALL STANDARD OF ENGLISH, WE MUST SIMULTANEOUSLY CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH CHILDREN WHO CHOOSE TO BE EDUCATED IN THE MOTHER TONGUE IN OTHER SUBJECTS AND FULFILL REQUIREMENTS IN THE SUBJECT OF ENGLISH, SHOULD NOT BE UNDULY HANDICAPPED IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS AND FURTHER EDUCATION."

STRESSING THAT HALF-DAY PRIMARY SCHOOL WAS EDUCATIONALLY UNDESIRABLE, MR CHEUNG ALSO SAID THAT THE PACE OF CONVERSION OF HALF-DAY PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO WHOLE-DAY COULD BE QUICKENED.

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MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES NEED REVAMPING

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THE GOVERNMENT WAS TODAY (THURSDAY) CRITICISED FOR LACKING VISION OR A WORKABLE POLICY IN EXPANDING ITS MEDICAL AND HEALTH SYSTEM.

SPEAKING IN THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR THE HON LEONG CHE-HUNG SAID IT WAS THE "BLIND" EXPANSION OF THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM THAT RESULTED IN THE PRESENT "SORRY STATE".

DR LEONG SAID THE MEDICAL SYSTEM HAD SERVED ITS TIME, AND THERE WAS A "DIRE NEED" TO REVAMP SERVICES.

SUPPORTING THE SETTING UP OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY, DR LEONG SAID HE SAW THE BODY MORE AS "CORPORATISATION", LIKE THE HOUSING AUTHORITY, AIMED AT ACHIEVING MORE FLEXIBILITY AND BETTER MANAGEMENT.

"FORMATION OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WILL BE A MAMMOTH TASK," HE SAID. "THE NEW SYSTEM HAS TO SATISFY A STAFF OF OVER 40,000. IT ALSO HAS TO LOCATE THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL RESOURCES."

DR LEONG SAID IN VIEW OF THE HIGH MEDICAL COST, THE PRESENT ONE-OFF PAYMENT OF A TOKEN FEE OF \$26 PER DAY IN HOSPITAL TO INCLUDE EVERYTHING WAS NO LONGER WORKABLE, UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT WAS WILLING TO INCREASE UNCONDITIONALLY THE BUDGET FOR MEDICAL SERVICES.

HE ADVISED THE GOVERNMENT TO DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED IN HEALTH CARE WITH THE RESOURCES IT WOULD PROVIDE.

/ "A BASELINE .....

"A BASELINE MUST BE DETERMINED AS TO THE TYPE AND EXTENT OF SERVICE GOVERNMENT CAN SHOULDER FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY," HE SAID.

"DISTINCTION MUST BE MADE AS TO WHICH SECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY THAT THE FUTURE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WILL PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE ON A HEAVILY SUBSIDISED BASIS.

"FURTHERMORE, PROVISIONS MUST BE MADE TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES TO INCREASE RESOURCES."

HOWEVER, DR LEONG STRESSED THAT IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE STANDARD OF MEDICAL CARE BE AFFORDED TO THE POOR AND INDIGENT, AND THAT THE QUALITY OF MEDICAL SERVICES SHOULD NEVER BE COMPROMISED.

ACCORDING TO DR LEONG, ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WAS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO DO AWAY WITH THE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICE AND LEAVE IT ALL TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

"SUCH A SYSTEM SHOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL; FOR ONE, THE PATIENTS WILL BE MORE SATISFIED AS THEY CAN SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE AND CARE FROM DOCTORS OF THEIR CHOICE; FOR ANOTHER, THERE IS NO INCREASE IN THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF THE GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED THAT A VERY DETAILED SCHEME OF ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT TO AVOID POSSIBLE ABUSES.

DR LEONG CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT FOR PAYING TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO DENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SERVICE.

"GOVERNMENT HAS NEVER TAKEN A POSITIVE STEP TO MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE OF DENTAL HEALTH AND THE NEED FOR PREVENTING RATHER THAN CURING DENTAL PROBLEMS," HE SAID.

HE PROPOSED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD EMBARK ON A TERRITORY-WIDE EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON THE NEED FOR PROPER DENTAL CARE AND DENTAL HYGIENE.

CONSIDERATION SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO EXTENDING THE SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE BY TRAINED DENTISTS TO KINDERGARTENS AND ALL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, OR EVEN UP TO UNIVERSITY.

"IT IS ONLY WITH SUCH PROPERLY DEFINED POLICY THAT THE PROVISIONAL HOSPITAL AUTHORITY COULD SETTLE DOWN TO WORK OUT ITS OWN OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE FUTURE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY," HE SAID.

DR LEONG POINTED OUT THAT HOSPITAL SERVICE FORMED ONLY A PART OF THE INTEGRAL STRUCTURE OF A TOTAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PERHAPS CONTRIBUTED AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT ASPECT, BECAUSE A PROPERLY RUN AND AN EFFICIENT PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WOULD DECREASE THE NEED FOR HOSPITAL SERVICE.

"UNFORTUNATELY, THE CURRENT PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OF OUT-PATIENT CLINICS RUN BY GOVERNMENT IS INADEQUATE," HE SAID.

"IT FAILS TO PROVIDE THE CARE, CONFIDENCE AND TREATMENT THAT ANY SUFFERER YEARNS FOR," HE ADDED.

DR LEONG SUGGESTED THAT WHILST REVAMPING THE HOSPITAL SERVICE, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD TAKE A MORE REALISTIC LOOK AT PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, AND THIS WAS PERHAPS AN AREA THAT THE "THINK TANK" COULD LOOK INTO.

DR LEONG WAS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE OVER-SUPPLY OF MANPOWER IN THE DENTAL PROFESSION. HE REFERRED TO A RECENT ANALYSIS BY THE DENTAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, WHICH SHOWED THAT IF THE RATE OF GROWTH OF DENTISTS REMAINED UNCHANGED, THERE WOULD BE AN EXCESS OF OVER 400 DENTISTS IN HONG KONG BY THE YEAR 2000.

HE CONSIDERED IT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PLAN PROPERLY TO PROVIDE ENOUGH JOBS FOR DENTAL GRADUATES AND BLAMED THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE PLANNERS OF THE DENTAL SCHOOL FOR NOT ADEQUATELY STUDYING THE ACTUAL NEED FOR DENTAL CARE.

"THEY FAILED TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE INDIFFERENCE IN DENTAL CARE NEEDS OF OUR POPULATION," HE SAID.

"FURTHERMORE, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN ORGANISED TERRITORY-WIDE EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON DENTAL HEALTH CARE TO AROUSE THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ASPECT OF HEALTH CARE."

HE ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM WAS COMPOUNDED BY THE FACT THAT A GOOD PERCENTAGE OF DENTAL WORK WAS PERFORMED BY ILLEGAL "DENTISTS" WITH UNCONTROLLABLE STANDARDS WHO FREQUENTLY PRODUCED A SOURCE OF HARM.

DR LEONG MAINTAINED THAT SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE WITH EXTREME URGENCY.

HE SUGGESTED THAT A GOOD AND EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF PEOPLE PRACTISING ILLEGAL DENTISTRY MUST BE ESTABLISHED.

THE DENTAL SCHOOL SHOULD ALSO FACE THE REALITY THAT AN EFFECTIVE REDUCTION IN DENTAL STUDENT INTAKE WAS A NECESSITY.

"WHAT IS MORE EFFECTIVE, WITH IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM EFFECT, IS FOR GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE OF THE NEED FOR PROPER DENTAL HEALTH CARE THROUGH A SYSTEM OF WELL ORGANISED DENTAL EDUCATION," HE SAID, ADDING THAT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE SUGGESTION OF EXPANDING THE SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE.

/DR LEONG .....

DR LEONG ALSO WARNED THE GOVERNMENT OF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN EXCESS OF DOCTORS IN FUTURE, AND ADVISED AGAINST ANY FURTHER INCREASE IN THE INTAKE OF MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR THE TWO MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

"IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT THERE IS NO OVERALL SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS AT ALL. THE SHORTFALL IS IN DOCTORS WORKING IN PUBLIC INSTITUTES - A PROBLEM OF MAL-DISTRIBUTION," HE SAID.

DR LEONG CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH HONG KONG'S OWN BODY - AN ACADEMY OF MEDICINE - TO FORMULATE ITS OWN TRAINING PROGRAMME AND AWARD ITS OWN POST-GRADUATE ACCREDITATION.

HE URGED THE ADMINISTRATION TO SPEEDILY SET UP A STEERING COMMITTEE TO SEE TO IT THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE WORKING PARTY ON POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING WERE PROMPTLY IMPLEMENTED CONCURRENTLY WITH CONSULTATION WITH THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, SO THAT SUCH AN ACADEMY COULD BE SET UP WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY.

DR LEONG BELIEVED THAT THERE SHOULD BE ONE STANDARD AND ONE LICENSING EXAMINATION FOR ALL FUTURE CANDIDATES TO PRACTISE MEDICINE IN HONG KONG.

"THIS IS AN URGENT ISSUE," HE SAID. "A 'HONG KONG SYSTEM' MUST BE WELL ENTRENCHED IN THE HANDS OF THE PROFESSION BEFORE 1997."

IN LOOKING FORWARD AND PLANNING AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE, DR LEONG SAID THAT MAXIMUM FINANCIAL RESOURCES SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN A DEFINED OBJECTIVE IN THE PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE.

POSSIBILITIES OF RESOURCES FROM THE COMMUNITY, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

"IF MEDICAL INSURANCE IS TO BE ENLARGED, THERE MUST BE ADEQUATE REGULATIONS TO CONTROL THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY TO SAFEGUARD THE PUBLIC," HE SAID.

FURTHERMORE, DR LEONG POINTED OUT THAT AS THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WAS ENLARGED, THERE WAS A DEFINITE CALL FOR MEDICALLY QUALIFIED, PROPERLY TRAINED HEALTH SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS. AT PRESENT, SUCH EXPERTISE WAS EXTREMELY LACKING.

"MEASURES SHOULD THEREFORE BE TAKEN WITHOUT DELAY TO STIMULATE THE INTEREST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSION TO PURSUE MEDICAL MANAGEMENT AS A CAREER," HE SAID.

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TAX RATE REDUCTION URGED

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REDUCE THE SALARY TAX RATE TO ITS "TRADITIONAL" 15 PER CENT AND ABOLISH THE ONE AND A HALF PER CENT DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN THE CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL RATES, THE HON PETER WONG HONG-YUEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE POLICY DEBATE, MR WONG SAID THE DIFFERENTIAL IN THE TAX RATES CAME ABOUT AT A TIME WHEN FINANCIAL PROSPECTS WERE NOT BRIGHT.

"NOW THAT WE HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF YEARS OF SURPLUSES, WE SHOULD REVERT TO OUR SIMPLE, SINGLE LOW RATE," HE SAID.

MR WONG ALSO CALLED FOR A SPEEDY COMPLETION OF DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA OVER A DOUBLE TAX ARRANGEMENT.

HE SAID HONG KONG WAS THE MAIN INVESTOR IN CHINA AND IT WAS NOT UNREASONABLE FOR THE TERRITORY TO EXPECT THE MOST FAVOURABLE TAX TREATMENT.

COMMENTING ON THE PROPOSED CENTRAL POLICY UNIT, OR "THINK TANK", MR WONG PUT THREE QUESTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

FIRSTLY, HE SAID, COULD THE THINK TANK TAKE A LONG HARD LOOK AT HOW IT EXPECTED THE ECONOMY TO DEVELOP BECAUSE HONG KONG NEEDED TO KNOW WHAT LAY AHEAD?

SECONDLY, COULD IT ENSURE THAT ALL THE NECESSARY INFORMATION AND STATISTICS WERE AVAILABLE AND WERE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES? HE SAID THE PRESENT AVAILABLE STATISTICS WERE "WOEFULLY INADEQUATE" IN MANY AREAS AND THE THINK TANK WOULD HAVE TO RETHINK HONG KONG'S WHOLE DATA NEEDS BY APPLYING THE LATEST IN COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY.

THIRDLY, HE SAID, COULD THE THINK TANK FIND A MECHANISM TO GET THROUGH GOVERNMENT "RED TAPE" SO THAT FUTURE ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY COULD BE SPEEDILY RECOGNISED AS USEFUL AND DEPLOYED MUCH MORE QUICKLY IN GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS?

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HK MUST MOVE AHEAD AS CHINA DEVELOPS

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HONG KONG MUST CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOP AND UPGRADE ITS SKILLS, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE IF IT IS TO HAVE A SAY IN ITS OWN DESTINY, THE HON NELLIE FONG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

MRS FONG SAID THE CONTINUED PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG DEPENDED ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE TERRITORY COULD BEST COMPLEMENT CHINA IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS OPEN POLICY.

AS CHINA DEVELOPED, HONG KONG MUST ALSO MOVE AHEAD; AND THE GOVERNMENT MUST PLAY A ROLE IN THIS REGARD, SHE STRESSED.

"THERE MUST BE FAR-SIGHTEDNESS IN OUR GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE AND ENCOURAGE AN EFFECTIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM, TO ASSURE THE MOST APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE, AND TO ENCOURAGE TRADE AND INDUSTRY TO BE INNOVATIVE," SHE SAID.

TO MEET THE GREATER CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE, HONG KONG NEEDED LEADERSHIP THAT COULD INSPIRE, AND AN ADMINISTRATION THAT COULD PLAN AND BE CREATIVE.

SHE SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF FORMING A "THINK TANK" WHICH SHE SAW AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN HELPING TO GENERATE CREATIVE IDEAS TO ASSIST HONG KONG'S LEADERSHIP.

MRS FONG ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO LOOK INTO WAYS OF IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

SHE SAID THAT TO KEEP A STRONG CIVIL SERVICE INTACT WAS HARD ENOUGH IN NORMAL TIMES, BUT TO DO SO IN A PERIOD OF TRANSITION REQUIRED MORE THOUGHT AND MORE ACTION.

TO BE ABLE TO ATTRACT DEDICATED AND OUTSTANDING PEOPLE TO JOIN THE CIVIL SERVICE, AND TO RETAIN THEM, THE GOVERNMENT MUST RECOGNISE THEIR WORK AND REWARD THEIR EFFORTS.

SHE CRITICISED THE EXISTING EVALUATION AND PROMOTION SYSTEM IN THE CIVIL SERVICE WHEREBY SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT WAS GIVEN TO SUCH FACTORS AS SENIORITY AND WHETHER OR NOT A PERSON HAD MADE MISTAKES.

SYSTEMS IN WHICH THESE FACTORS PREVAILED TENDED TO BREED MEDIOCRACY, AND MEDIOCRACY WAS SIMPLY NOT ACCEPTABLE IN A PLACE AS EFFICIENT AND DEMANDING AS HONG KONG, SHE SAID.

"IF WE EXPECT A LOT, WE MUST RECRUIT THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND WE MUST OFFER THEM A LOT," SHE SAID.

SHE EXPLAINED THAT A LOT DID NOT NECESSARILY MEAN A LOT OF MONEY; IT COULD MEAN A LOT OF SATISFACTION AND FULFILMENT.

/MRS FONG .....

MRS FONG SAID SHE BELIEVED THAT THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED IF THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDED ITS EMPLOYEES A COMFORTABLE SALARY SCALE, A FAIR AND EFFICIENT METHOD OF EVALUATION, A PROCESS WHICH GAVE RECOGNITION TO CONTRIBUTION, AND A REWARD SYSTEM COMMENSURATE WITH ACHIEVEMENT.

OTHER FACTORS WERE A SENSE OF PRIDE AND ACHIEVEMENT AT BEING PART OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, AND A SATISFACTORY RETIREMENT PACKAGE TO RELIEVE POSSIBLE ANXIETIES.

MRS FONG URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO FOCUS ON THE SALARIES AND BENEFITS AS WELL AS THE HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS AND RETIREMENT PROVISIONS FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE.

IT SHOULD ALSO LOOK MORE FORCEFULLY INTO THE SYSTEM USED TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR TAKING ON INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES.

ATTENTION SHOULD BE PAID TO THE PROVISION OF EXTRA TRAINING AS PART OF A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR PEOPLE WHO SHOWED THE ABILITY, ENTHUSIASM AND COMMITMENT WHICH INDICATED THE DESIRABILITY OF EXTRA REWARD, BY SELECTING THEM AND GROOMING THEM FOR THE "FAST TRACK".

"SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS," MRS FONG SAID. SHE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE OPENING OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOOD CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND THE RESULTANT SUCCESS STORIES WOULD NOT ONLY ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE CONCERNED, BUT WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE AND MOTIVATE THOSE WHO PROGRESSED NORMALLY AND WHO CONSTITUTED THE BACKBONE OF THE SERVICE.

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FIRM COMMITMENT TO LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS  
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THE HON MIRIAM LAU TODAY (THURSDAY) PRAISED THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS WHICH, SHE SAID, WAS A FIRM COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS FOR HONG KONG AND TO MAINTAIN THE TERRITORY AS A PROSPEROUS INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF COMMERCE.

SPEAKING IN THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS LAU SAID THE LONG-RANGE PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT, TO COMBAT ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, AND TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ALL DEMONSTRATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS RESPONDING POSITIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY TO HONG KONG'S NEEDS.

MRS LAU SAID SHE WELCOMED THESE POLICY INITIATIVES, WHICH HAD NO DOUBT BEEN CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT AND METICULOUSLY DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE.

/BUT SHE .....

BUT SHE ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN A NUMBER OF AREAS OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL, MRS LAU CALLED FOR STRONGER ENFORCEMENT OF STATUTORY MEASURES TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME.

"IN THE PAST, RELIANCE HAS BEEN PLACED TO A LARGE EXTENT ON STATUTORY CONTROLS, BUT AS WE HAVE SEEN IN THE CASE OF WATER POLLUTION, LEGISLATION ALONE IS INSUFFICIENT.

"ONE OF THE REASONS FOR OUR PRESENT PREDICAMENT IS THAT GOVERNMENT HAS IN THE PAST BEEN SLOW IN COMING ROUND TO THE POLLUTION PROBLEM, AND EVEN WHEN IT HAS COME AROUND TO IT, GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUFFICIENTLY PLAN AHEAD," SHE SAID.

MRS LAU SAID PROGRAMMES, PARTICULARLY THOSE EXTENDING OVER THE NEXT DECADE, MUST BE DESIGNED WITH FORESIGHT AND FLEXIBILITY SO THAT THEY WOULD BE CAPABLE OF MEETING THE EVER CHANGING AND INCREASING NEEDS OF SOCIETY.

"THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW OF THE CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES RESULTING IN CONTINUOUS SHIFT OF POPULATION DENSITY AND OPENING UP OF NEW INDUSTRIAL ESTATES.

"I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE GOVERNMENT EMBARK ON AN EXPENSIVE 10-YEAR PROGRAMME ONLY TO FIND ON COMPLETION THAT THE FACILITIES ARE OUTDATED AND INADEQUATE TO COPE WITH THE THEN REQUIREMENTS OF HONG KONG," SHE SAID.

MRS LAU BELIEVED THAT IN DEALING WITH ANY FORM OF POLLUTION, WHETHER WATER, AIR OR NOISE, PREVENTION WAS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE.

"PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE POLLUTION PROBLEM IS VERY IMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE INCREASED," SHE SAID.

"THERE SHOULD BE WIDESPREAD CONSULTATION ON ANTI-POLLUTION MEASURES TO BE ADOPTED AND STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO CANVASS UNDERSTANDING, ACCEPTANCE AND CO-OPERATION FROM THE PUBLIC IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH MEASURES.

"I ALSO URGE GOVERNMENT TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH INTO POSSIBLE COST-EFFECTIVE METHODS AND TECHNIQUES WHICH CAN BE EMPLOYED BY INDIVIDUAL OPERATORS TO MINIMISE, ELIMINATE OR OTHERWISE CONTROL POLLUTION AT SOURCE.

"STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO INTRODUCE SUCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES TO FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND SUCH ESTABLISHMENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT SUCH TECHNIQUES AND METHODS."

TURNING TO CIVIC EDUCATION, MRS LAU SAID WHILE PLANS TO PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION WERE COMMENDABLE, THERE WERE NO PLANS AS TO HOW THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WOULD BE EDUCATED AND GUIDED TO PREPARE THEM FOR 1997.

/"IT IS .....

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"IT IS CLEAR THAT IF HONG KONG IS TO GIVE FULL EFFECT TO THE HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY CONFERRED ON IT AFTER 1997, EFFORTS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE TO PREPARE THE PEOPLE TO ASSUME THAT RESPONSIBILITY AND FACE THAT CHALLENGE," SHE SAID.

MRS LAU ALSO BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF YOUTH POLICY, WHICH SHE CONTENDED WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY SPEECH.

"I CANNOT SUFFICIENTLY EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENT NECESSITY OF HAVING A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH POLICY. I BELIEVE THAT THIS GOVERNMENT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF NURTURING THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF TODAY TO BE RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS OF TOMORROW," SHE SAID.

MRS LAU URGED GOVERNMENT TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER WITHOUT DELAY ALL VIEWS MENTIONED IN THE JUST COMPLETED REPORT ON YOUTH POLICY AND TO TAKE ACTIVE MEASURES TO FORMULATE WHAT SHE DESCRIBED AS A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH POLICY.

ON THE SUBJECT OF SETTING UP A CENTRAL POLICY UNIT IN THE GOVERNMENT, MRS LAU SAID THE PROPOSAL WAS INNOVATIVE DESPITE FORESEEABLE DIFFICULTIES.

SHE SAID SHE WELCOMED IT BECAUSE IN SUCH A DYNAMIC AND ADVANCED SOCIETY AS HONG KONG, THERE WAS CERTAINLY THE NEED TO GIVE A WIDER PERSPECTIVE TO GOVERNMENT'S POLICY MAKING PROCESS AND TO ENHANCE THE EFFICIENCY OF CENTRAL POLICY MAKING.

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CALL TO ATTRACT EXPATRIATES TO HK  
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HONG KONG SHOULD BRING IN EXPATRIATE MANAGERS AND PROFESSIONALS OF ANY NATIONALITY OR RACE AS A MEANS OF TACKLING THE EMIGRATION ISSUE, THE HON LAU WAH-SUM SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

IT WOULD BE AN INSTANT INJECTION OF TALENT TO FILL THE VACANCIES CREATED BY THE EMIGRANTS, MR LAU SAID IN THE POLICY DEBATE.

"THE INFUSION OF NEW BLOOD WILL ALSO BE A SOURCE OF NEW IDEAS AND VALUABLE EXPERIENCE WHICH WILL ENABLE US TO FUNCTION BETTER AS AN INTERNATIONAL CITY," HE SAID.

MR LAU WELCOMED THE RECENT PROPOSALS TO ALLOW LAWYERS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO PRACTISE IN HONG KONG IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL LAWYERS. HE ALSO CONGRATULATED THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE OPEN-MINDEDNESS DEMONSTRATED IN THIS CASE.

/ "IN MY .....

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"IN MY OPINION, HONG KONG'S DOOR SHOULD BE KEPT OPEN TO ALL CAPABLE AND QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS, WHETHER THEY ARE LAWYERS, ACCOUNTANTS, ENGINEERS OR DOCTORS, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHERE THEY HAVE OBTAINED THEIR TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS," HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, MR LAU SAID IT MADE PERFECT COMMERCIAL SENSE FOR SOME LABOUR INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES TO MOVE THEIR PRODUCTION LINES TO CHINA IN ORDER TO LOWER LABOUR COSTS. IT WAS NOT FOR COUNCILLORS TO DISCOURAGE THIS MOVEMENT.

BUT THERE WERE INDUSTRIES WHICH COULD NOT AFFORD SUCH PHYSICAL MOVEMENT ACROSS THE BORDER, FOR EXAMPLE BUILDING INDUSTRIES WHICH REQUIRED WORKERS TO PERFORM THE WORK IN SITU.

HE SUGGESTED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD STUDY WAYS AND MEANS OF USING LABOUR FROM CHINA PROVIDED THIS DID NOT ADD TO THE BURDEN OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACILITIES SUCH AS HOUSING AND MEDICAL SERVICES. BESIDES, THE WORKERS SHOULD BE IMPORTED IN A CONTROLLED MANNER.

WITH THE COMPLETION OF BETTER ROAD LINKS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA, MR LAU SAID IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR MANUFACTURERS TO TRANSPORT WORKERS FROM SHENZHEN FOR A DAY'S WORK AND SEND THEM BACK HOME AT THE END OF THE WORKING DAY.

THE WORKERS WOULD SPEND ALL THEIR TIME OFF AND HOLIDAYS AT HOME WITHOUT BURDENING HONG KONG'S SOCIAL SERVICE SYSTEM.

REFERRING TO FINANCING OF HONG KONG'S MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, HE SAID THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR SHOULD BE ENLISTED FIRST.

"TAKE THE SECOND AIRPORT AS AN EXAMPLE. THE PASSENGER AND FREIGHT SERVICES ARE POTENTIALLY LUCRATIVE OPERATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT MAY WELL PRIVATISE THESE OPERATIONS, HOLDING BACK ONLY THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL, CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER PUBLIC LISTING ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE FOR THOSE COMPLETED GOVERNMENT PROJECTS WHICH WERE OPERATING SUCCESSFULLY, SUCH AS THE MTR AND THE KCR.

THE PROCEEDS FROM THESE SOURCES COULD THEN BE USED TO FINANCE THOSE PROJECTS WHICH WERE NON-REVENUE GENERATING, SUCH AS ROADS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

AFTER IT HAD FULLY REALISED ALL PRIVATISATION POSSIBILITIES, HONG KONG SHOULD CONSIDER PAYING FOR ANY FURTHER REQUIREMENTS BY DEBT FINANCING.

MR LAU ALSO CALLED FOR A REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS IN THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WERE GUIDED BY GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS.

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MANY OF THESE REGULATIONS WERE LEGACIES OF THE OUTDATED COLONIAL REGULATIONS WHICH WERE NO LONGER APPLICABLE TO MODERN HONG KONG, HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, MR LAU URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT TAX LEVEL BECAUSE HONG KONG'S PAST SUCCESS WAS LARGELY DUE TO THE LOW TAX POLICY.

"WE MAY WIDEN OUR TAX NET BUT MUST KEEP OUR STANDARD TAX RATE AROUND THE PRESENT LEVEL," HE SAID.

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#### LABOUR SHORTAGE DELAYING MAJOR PROJECTS

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THE LABOUR SHORTAGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS VERY LARGE AND IS SERIOUSLY DELAYING MAJOR PROJECTS, THE HON JAMES MCGREGOR SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR MCGREGOR SAID THERE HAD, IN FACT, BEEN A SHORTAGE OF CERTAIN CLASSES OF LABOUR IN HONG KONG FOR MANY YEARS, AND THIS SHORTAGE HAD COMPELLED EMPLOYERS TO IMPROVE PLANT AND WORKER PRODUCTIVITY WITH NEW EQUIPMENT, HIGHER AUTOMATION, BETTER TRAINING AND BY MOVING UP-MARKET.

HOWEVER, MR MCGREGOR SAID IN THE POLICY DEBATE, THE DEMAND FOR HONG KONG PRODUCTS HAD REMAINED HIGH AND IN RECENT YEARS MANUFACTURERS HAD OBTAINED RELIEF BY MOVING LOWER-END PRODUCTION INTO CHINA.

"THIS HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL TO MANY INDUSTRIES BUT NOT PARTICULARLY TO THE GARMENT INDUSTRY WHICH, BECAUSE OF THE EXPORT QUOTA RULES OF ORIGIN, MUST PRODUCE IN HONG KONG," HE SAID.

OTHER ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIES WHICH HE SAID COULD NOT MOVE TO CHINA OR ANYWHERE ELSE WERE THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AND THE TOURIST/HOTEL INDUSTRIES WHERE MANY WORK CATEGORIES WERE SERIOUSLY UNDERSTAFFED.

NOTING THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT FEEL THAT IT COULD RELAX ITS PRESENT POLICY ON IMPORTED CONTRACT LABOUR, MR MCGREGOR BELIEVED THAT A VERY STRONG CASE EXISTED AND WOULD CONTINUE TO EXIST FOR THE POLICY TO BE MODIFIED IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY.

"AT THE VERY LEAST, A START COULD BE MADE WITH CONTRACT LABOUR FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WHERE MANY THOUSANDS OF WORKERS MAY BE NEEDED," HE SAID.

/MR MCGREGOR .....

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MR MCGREGOR ADDED THAT IF A TRIAL SCHEME WITH THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WERE SUCCESSFUL, OTHER SCHEMES COULD FOLLOW, IN THOSE AREAS OF ACTIVITY MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED.

HE ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO RECONSIDER ITS POLICY TOWARDS THE ISSUE OF VISAS FOR EAST EUROPEAN NATIONALS WISHING TO VISIT HONG KONG FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES.

FOR MANY YEARS, HE SAID THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES HAD APPLIED AN EXTREMELY STRICT POLICY TOWARDS BUSINESSMEN FROM EAST EUROPE AND THIS POLICY HAD REDUCED GREATLY HONG KONG'S ABILITY TO TRADE WITH THESE COUNTRIES.

"I UNDERSTAND THE OVER-RIDING SECURITY CRITERIA BUT, WITH CHINA AND RUSSIA EXPANDING THEIR CONNECTIONS AND TRADE AND WITH 1997 COMING NEARER, IS IT NOT NOW TIME TO REASSESS THIS SITUATION CAREFULLY WITH THE INTENTION OF OPENING UP OUR TRADING CONNECTIONS WITH EAST EUROPE?" MR MCGREGOR ASKED.

ON THE SETTING UP OF A CENTRAL POLICY UNIT, MR MCGREGOR SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY HAD AN EXTREMELY EXTENSIVE AND INTERLINKED SYSTEM OF BOARDS, COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES, AS WELL AS ACCESS TO THE MOST PROFESSIONAL OPINION OVER A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS.

"IT SEEMS TO ME THAT A SO-CALLED THINK TANK COULD BE ESTABLISHED TO CONSIDER SPECIAL PROBLEMS BUT IN SUCH CASES THE MEMBERS OF THE THINK TANK WOULD BE ASSEMBLED INTO A COMMITTEE AND DISBANDED WHEN THEIR THOUGHTS HAD BEEN CONVEYED," HE SAID.

MR MCGREGOR ADDED THAT A PERMANENT COMMITTEE OF THINKERS MIGHT POSE CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS WITH MEMBERSHIP, THE SUBJECT MATTERS IT WOULD BE ASKED TO CONSIDER, AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ESTABLISHED SENIOR COUNCILS AND BOARDS INCLUDING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HE THEREFORE PRESSED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER MOST CAREFULLY HOW THE THINK TANK WOULD OPERATE AND HOW IT SHOULD FIT INTO THE PRESENT ADVISORY SYSTEM WHICH WAS NOW WORKING WELL.

TURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG, MR MCGREGOR SAID THE CONCEPT OF ONE COUNTRY TWO SYSTEMS, WHILST BRILLIANT, HAD A HIGH DEGREE OF RISK.

"IT DEPENDS FOR ITS SUCCESS UPON THE CONTINUED EXPANSION OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY, THE CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMY OF A WIDE VARIETY OF FOREIGN INTERESTS AND AN UNFLAGGING GROWTH OF INVESTMENT INTO OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUSINESS BY BOTH LOCAL PEOPLE AND EXTERNAL INVESTORS," HE SAID.

"AT THE CENTRE OF THIS ACTIVITY, THERE MUST BE A HIGH DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE HERE AND ELSEWHERE THAT THE EXPERIMENT WILL SUCCEED. ANYTHING LESS THAN FULL CONFIDENCE WILL HAVE A DEPRESSING EFFECT ON INVESTMENT AND THEREFORE ON BUSINESS.

/"WE MUST .....

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"WE MUST THEREFORE WORK QUICKLY TOWARDS A SYSTEM OF INTERNAL GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WITHIN WHICH BUSINESS AND INVESTOR CONFIDENCE WILL REMAIN HIGH.

"WE CANNOT AFFORD TO MAKE MISTAKES FOR THERE WILL BE NO TIME FOR CORRECTIONS."

MR MCGREGOR SAID HE PERSONALLY BELIEVED THAT THE BEST ANSWER FOR HONG KONG WAS A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH INCLUDED THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE DEGREE OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY FREE FROM INTERFERENCE, INTERVENTION AND WHAT HE CALLED UNDUE INFLUENCE IN POLICY MATTERS BY CHINA.

HE ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER RELAXING THE LEASE CONDITIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS TO ALLOW A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF THE SPACE AVAILABLE TO BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES.

SUCH A CHANGE IN LEASE CONDITIONS WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE VERY SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY IN RECENT YEARS HAD RESULTED IN A LARGE DEMAND FOR COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION.

"QUITE CLEARLY, THE BUILDING PROGRAMME, ALTHOUGH MASSIVE, IS NOT YET PRODUCING THE AMOUNT OF COMMERCIAL SPACE WHICH OUR SERVICE INDUSTRIES REQUIRE AND THIS IS HAVING QUITE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON THE MOVEMENT OF RENTALS," HE SAID.

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTING ACTIVITIES IN HONG KONG, MR MCGREGOR SAID HE BELIEVED THE TIME HAD COME FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER BECOMING MORE INVOLVED IN THE FINANCING AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM, ESPECIALLY THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG LOCAL ATHLETES WHO HAD THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME CHAMPIONSHIP MATERIAL.

"I FEEL THAT HONG KONG HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO REACH ITS FULL POTENTIAL AS A SPORTING COMMUNITY AND AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO ASIAN AND WORLD SPORTS PARTLY BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO BECOME CENTRALLY INVOLVED.

"I THINK THAT WE HAVE THE TALENT OVER A WIDE RANGE OF SPORTS AND WE ARE INCREASINGLY ENDOWED WITH THE FACILITIES NEEDED TO PRODUCE ATHLETES OF WHOM HONG KONG CAN BE PROUD," HE SAID.

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HONG KONG FACING 'LABOUR FAMINE'

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HONG KONG IS FACING NOT A LABOUR SHORTAGE BUT RATHER A LABOUR FAMINE, THE HON JAMES TIEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE POLICY DEBATE, MR TIEN STRONGLY URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE ITS POLICY OF NOT ALLOWING LABOUR TO BE IMPORTED.

IN THE CASE OF THE GARMENT INDUSTRY, LABOUR SHORTAGE HAD PUSHED WAGE LEVELS UP TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT HONG KONG GARMENT MANUFACTURERS WERE NO LONGER COMPETITIVE, HE SAID.

AUTOMATION WAS NO SOLUTION TO EASING THE TIGHT LABOUR SUPPLY SITUATION BECAUSE THE GARMENT TRADE WAS ALREADY HIGHLY AUTOMATED. MOREOVER, THERE WERE LIMITS TO AUTOMATION.

"THERE ARE CHANGES IN FASHION AND DESIGN WHICH VARY ALMOST ON A WEEKLY BASIS. AUTOMATION IS JUST NOT FLEXIBLE ENOUGH FOR OUR NEEDS," HE ARGUED.

THE "COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN" RULES UNDER THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA) POSED ANOTHER DILEMMA FOR THE LOCAL GARMENT INDUSTRY, ACCORDING TO MR TIEN.

"THE MFA RECOGNISES A TERRITORY FOR THE PURPOSES OF DEFINING THE COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN RULE. THE MFA IS ABOUT GEOGRAPHY, NOT ABOUT CITIZENSHIP. IT DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NATIONALITY OF THE WORKERS," HE SAID.

"HENCE, GARMENT MANUFACTURERS CANNOT SIMPLY MOVE INTO SHENZHEN, AS PERHAPS THE MANUFACTURERS OF, SAY, PLASTICS OR ELECTRICAL GOODS, CAN.

"HOWEVER, IF FOREIGN LABOUR WERE TO COME TO HONG KONG IT WOULD NOT CONTRAVENE THE RULES OF THE MFA."

STATING THAT THE GARMENT TRADE WAS RAPIDLY DECLINING INTO A SUNSET INDUSTRY AS A RESULT OF THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, HE WARNED THAT THE TRADE WOULD BE UNABLE TO HELP RE-ABSORB LABOUR FROM THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES IN THE EVENT OF A RECESSION BECAUSE BY THEN THE GARMENT MANUFACTURING WOULD HAVE CEASED TO EXIST.

WHILE EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A CENTRAL POLICY UNIT, MR TIEN STRESSED THAT THE PROPOSED "THINK-TANK" SHOULD BE SEEN AS HAVING A STRONG RESEARCH ELEMENT, FREE OF EXTERNAL PRESSURES.

HE HOPED THE CENTRAL POLICY UNIT WOULD STEER CLEAR OF PARTICULAR PRESSURE GROUPS OR SOCIAL CAUSES LEST IT LOSE ITS NEUTRALITY AND CREDIBILITY.

/UNHAPPY THAT .....

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UNHAPPY THAT INDUSTRIALISTS WERE OFTEN PORTRAYED AS BEING UNCONCERNED ABOUT POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENT, MR TIEN SAID POLLUTION WAS A BY-PRODUCT RATHER THAN THE OBJECT OF BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.

"ENTREPRENEURS ARE NOT SPECIALISTS IN THE TECHNOLOGY OF POLLUTION CONTROL. THAT FIELD IS HIGHLY SPECIALISED AND HIGHLY EXPENSIVE FOR THE AVERAGE SMALL INDUSTRIALIST," HE SAID.

SMALL BUSINESSES, NOW PLAGUED BY THE LABOUR SHORTAGE, COULD EASILY LOSE HEART IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST POLLUTION.

PUNISHING ENTREPRENEURS BY IMPOSING HEAVY FINES WAS NO SENSIBLE WAY TO ELIMINATE POLLUTION AS THE COST WOULD MERELY BE PASSED ON TO THE CONSUMER. AN APPROACH BASED ON EDUCATION WAS MORE APPROPRIATE.

"LET US HELP, NOT PENALISE, INDUSTRY, IN TRYING TO CLEAN UP THE ENVIRONMENT," HE SAID.

MR TIEN SUGGESTED THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD) SHOULD, THROUGH ITS INSPECTORATE, IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM AND THE PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL (PC) SHOULD ADVISE ON THE APPROPRIATE METHODS AND LATEST TECHNIQUES TO REDUCE POLLUTION.

RATHER THAN PAY FINES, INDUSTRIALISTS SHOULD THEN BE ASKED TO COVER THE COSTS OF SUCH INSTALLATIONS DEEMED NECESSARY.

"WHAT IS REQUIRED IS A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EPD, PC AND INDUSTRIALISTS.

"WE DON'T WANT A WAR, WE WANT CO-OPERATION OVER THE ERADICATION OF POLLUTION," HE SAID.

REFERRING TO ARGUMENTS THAT HONG KONG'S BEST BRAINS WERE LEAVING BECAUSE DIRECT ELECTIONS TO LEGCO HAD NOT YET BEEN INTRODUCED, MR TIEN SAID THE LOGIC OF THIS "BORDERS ON THE RIDICULOUS".

HE BELIEVED PEOPLE WOULD CONTINUE TO LEAVE AS LONG AS IMMIGRATION QUOTAS WERE AVAILABLE AND CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG WAS NOT A FUNCTION OF THE WAY IN WHICH LEGCO WAS ELECTED. RATHER, CONFIDENCE WAS A PRODUCT OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL FACTORS.

MR TIEN WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT SOME RECEIVING COUNTRIES HAD DERIVED MUCH FINANCIAL BENEFIT FROM HONG KONG IMMIGRANTS, AND LIKENED THEIR TACTICS, SUCH AS ALLOWING IMMIGRATION ON THE BASIS OF INVESTMENT, TO "HIGHWAY ROBBERY".

WHILE THE JOINT DECLARATION WAS CLEAR ON THE POINT OF FREE ENTRY AND EXIT INTO HONG KONG FOR THOSE QUALIFIED, MR TIEN HOPED SOMETHING COULD BE DONE TO ASK THE RECEIVING COUNTRIES TO PLAY FAIR, EVEN THOUGH WE COULD NOT ASK THEM TO REDUCE THE QUOTAS.

"IF THEY WANT MORE PEOPLE AS PEOPLE, THEY ARE VERY WELCOME TO TAKE THOUSANDS OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM US. I DOUBT IF WE WILL HAVE MANY TAKERS," HE CONCLUDED.

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CONCERN OVER ROLE OF NEW POLICY BRANCH

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THE URBAN COUNCIL IS CONCERNED THAT THE PROPOSED NEW POLICY BRANCH FOR SPORTS, RECREATION AND CULTURE WOULD ENCROACH UPON THE JURISDICTION OF THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

THE CONCERN WAS VOICED BY THE URBAN COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY'S REPRESENTATIVE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE HON ELSIE TU, IN THE POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

ONE OF THE FEARS, MRS TU SAID, WAS THAT IF THE COUNCIL FOR PERFORMING ARTS, IN CO-ORDINATION WITH THE NEW POLICY BRANCH, WAS GOING TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE ARTS FRONT, IT WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO ONLY AT THE EXPENSE OF THE WORK ALREADY DONE BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

SHE ALSO SAID THAT SOME OF THE PROPOSALS IN A GOVERNMENT-COMMISSIONED CONSULTANCY REPORT ENTITLED "THE WAY AHEAD: A CONSULTANCY REPORT ON SPORT IN HONG KONG" MIGHT WELL LEAD TO UNHEALTHY COMPETITION BETWEEN THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND THE STATUTORY BODY ON SPORTS WHICH THE CONSULTANT PROPOSED.

ANOTHER AREA OF CONCERN RELATED TO PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP.

SPONSORSHIP FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, ALTHOUGH AVAILABLE, WAS NOT UNLIMITED.

BUT IF SEVERAL BODIES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED STATUTORY BODY, SET OUT TO TAP THE SAME RESOURCES OF FUNDING, THEY WOULD BE SET IN COMPETITION AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.

THAT WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTERESTS OF SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC, SHE SAID.

MRS TU ALSO GAVE A WARNING ON THE GROWTH OF STATUTORY APPOINTED BODIES.

"WHILST THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMS TO BE PROMOTING GREATER DEMOCRACY ON THE ONE HAND, THE GROWTH OF STATUTORY APPOINTED BODIES APPEARS ON THE OTHER HAND LIKELY TO UNDERMINE THE POWERS OF THE LARGELY ELECTED MUNICIPAL COUNCILS," SHE SAID.

UNLESS THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS WERE CONSULTED AT ALL STAGES BY THE GOVERNMENT CONCERNING NEW PROPOSALS RELATING TO CULTURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS, UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS MIGHT ARISE, SHE ADDED.

MRS TU ALSO REFERRED TO THE EX-PRISONERS OF WAR. "MAY I MENTION, AS REMEMBRANCE DAY APPROACHES, THAT WE ALSO OWE A DEBT TO THE ELDERLY PRISONERS OF WAR, LEST WE FORGET THE LIVING WHILE HONOURING THE DEAD OF WORLD WAR II," SHE SAID.

ON THE WELFARE OF THE ELDERLY, MRS TU SAID SHE FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT HONG KONG COULD NOT TAKE CARE OF THOSE WHO COULD NOT TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES.

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23 MORE MEMBERS SPEAK IN LEGCO DEBATE  
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MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY) COMPLETED THEIR SPEECHES ON THE MOTION THAT THE GOVERNOR BE THANKED FOR HIS ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE COUNCIL.

TWENTY-THREE MEMBERS SPOKE ON THE MOTION AFTER THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE COUNCIL RESUMED AT 2.30 PM AND CONTINUED UNTIL THE SITTING WAS ADJOURNED AROUND 9.35 PM. TWENTY-TWO MEMBERS SPOKE YESTERDAY.

OFFICIAL MEMBERS WILL REPLY TO POINTS RAISED BY MEMBERS WHEN THE DEBATE RESUMES AT THE COUNCIL'S NEXT SITTING ON WEDNESDAY (NOVEMBER 16).

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GOVERNOR PRAISES DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT OF CAS  
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THE DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT OF THE AUXILIARY SERVICES IS SOMETHING THAT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED BY THOSE WHO DESCRIBE HONG KONG AS PURELY MATERIALISTIC, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE CIVIL AID SERVICES ANNUAL DINNER, SIR DAVID SAID HONG KONG WAS EXTREMELY FORTUNATE IN ITS AUXILIARY SERVICES WHOSE MEMBERS WERE PREPARED TO DEVOTE LONG PERIODS OF THEIR LEISURE TO WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THE STAFF OF CAS HAD CARRIED OUT A WIDE VARIETY OF DUTIES IN THE PAST YEAR.

THESE DUTIES INCLUDED MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS; COUNTRYSIDE FIRE PROTECTION; PATROLLING AND CONTROLLING CROWDS AT FUNCTIONS SUCH AS COMMUNITY CHEST WALKS FOR A MILLION; INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT RACES; LUNAR NEW YEAR FIREWORKS DISPLAY; GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGNS AND VARIOUS FESTIVALS.

THIS YEAR, THE CAS ALSO HAD TO SHOULDER AN ADDITIONAL AND VERY IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITY - MANAGING RECEPTION CENTRES TO COPE WITH THE MASSIVE INFLUX OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE, THE GOVERNOR SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID HE HAD VISITED THESE CENTRES AND SEEN THE EFFICIENCY AND DEDICATION OF CAS MEMBERS IN DIFFICULT AND TIRING CONDITIONS.

HE NOTED THAT AFTER OVERSEEING CENTRES FOR THE PAST SEVEN MONTHS, THE TIME HAD FINALLY ARRIVED WHEN THE CAS WAS ABLE TO HAND THEM OVER TO THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

"YOU CAN DO SO KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE DONE A FIRST RATE JOB. I CONGRATULATE YOU ALL ON WHAT YOU HAVE ACHIEVED," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID THAT THE CAS WOULD NOW HAVE MORE TIME FOR TRAINING, ADDING THAT ONE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ASPECT WAS TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 TO 18.

"THE DISCIPLINE AND THE OPERATIONAL TRAINING THAT THE CADETS RECEIVE WILL HELP THEM THROUGHOUT THEIR ADULT LIVES.

"IT WILL ALSO ENABLE THEM TO CONTRIBUTE MORE TO THE COMMUNITY," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

NOTING THAT THE CAS CHIEF STAFF OFFICER, MR JOHN FORTUNE, WOULD BE RETIRING NEXT YEAR, SIR DAVID TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO WISH HIM WELL FOR THE FUTURE.

/HE ALSO .....

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HE ALSO EXTENDED HIS APPRECIATION TO THE CAS FOR ITS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY.

IN HIS ADDRESS WELCOMING THE GOVERNOR, THE COMMISSIONER OF THE CAS, SIR ROGER LOBO, SAID THAT 1988 WAS PERHAPS THE BUSIEST YEAR FOR THE CAS SINCE THE SERVICE WAS FOUNDED IN 1952.

IN ADDITION TO LOOKING AFTER OVER 4,000 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN FOUR CENTRES, SIR ROGER SAID: "DURING THE YEAR, MORE THAN 7,000 ADULTS AND 4,000 CADETS WERE DEPLOYED ON 380 OCCASIONS IN CROWD CONTROL, COMMUNICATION AND MARSHALLING SERVICES IN CHARITY FUND-RAISING EVENTS, GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGNS AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES."

HE COMMENDED ALL OFFICERS, MEMBERS OF THE PERMANENT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO HAD WORKED UNTIRINGLY IN THE REFUGEE CENTRES.

SIR ROGER SAID IT WAS HOPED THAT WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE RENOVATION OF CAS HEADQUARTERS AT CAROLINE HILL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TAI TAN WATER ACTIVITY TRAINING CENTRE AT SAI KUNG NEXT YEAR, TRAINING AND OTHER FACILITIES WOULD BE GREATLY ENHANCED.

"AT THIS JUNCTURE, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB WHO HAVE GRANTED \$1 MILLION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF OUR TRAINING SWIMMING POOL AT THE TAI TAN TRAINING CAMP, THIS IN ADDITION TO THE \$1.5 MILLION ALREADY GRANTED FOR INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THAT CAMP," HE SAID.

"THAT, HOWEVER, WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO COPE WITH OUR INCREASED TRAINING SCHEDULE. WE HAVE PLANS ALREADY IN THE PIPELINE TO REPROVISION OUR HONG KONG TRAINING CENTRE WHICH SHOULD BE READY BY 1990.

"WE HOPE THAT THE REDEVELOPMENT OF OUR KOWLOON TRAINING CENTRE AND REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS, WHICH WERE BUILT MORE THAN 33 YEARS AGO, WILL BE EXPEDITED, AS WE WOULD NEED A MODERN TRAINING COMPLEX THERE."

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#### WATER POLLUTION CONTROL LEGISLATION TO BE STRENGTHENED

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD) HAS RECOGNISED THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE TO TACKLE LOCAL WATER POLLUTION PROBLEMS, PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER (WATER POLICY) MR PAUL HOLMES SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR HOLMES WAS SPEAKING ON "MARINE POLLUTION IN HONG KONG" AT A SEMINAR ORGANISED BY THE MARINE BIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG.

HE SAID WORK WOULD BE GOING ON TO SIMPLIFY THE LEGISLATION AND TO MAKE IT MORE EFFECTIVE.

/THE WATER .....

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THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE, ENACTED IN 1980, WAS DESIGNED TO HOLD POLLUTION AT PRESENT LEVELS IN THE SHORT TERM, AND TO REDUCE POLLUTION GRADUALLY TO THE LEVELS SET BY WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES.

AT PRESENT, THE ORDINANCE ONLY APPLIED TO TWO PARTS OF HONG KONG, NAMELY TOLO HARBOUR AND CHANNEL, AND THE SOUTHERN WATERS.

RECENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED A POLICY OF EXTENDING THE ORDINANCE TO THE WHOLE TERRITORY WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

"IT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN TWO NEW WATER CONTROL ZONES DURING 1989. THEY ARE PORT SHELTER AND JUNK BAY, BOTH OF WHICH ARE UNDERGOING URBANISATION," MR HOLMES SAID.

"IN THE CASE OF JUNK BAY, IT INVOLVES EXTENSIVE LAND RECLAMATION FROM THE SEA. WATER QUALITY MONITORING BY EPD ALREADY SHOW THAT BOTH AREAS ARE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF EUTROPHICATION, AND EFFECTIVE POLLUTION CONTROLS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED," HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MR HOLMES SAID THE ORDINANCE WAS NEVER INTENDED TO CLEAN HONG KONG'S WATER POLLUTION ALL BY ITSELF.

"SOUND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, AND THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR THE SAFE DISPOSAL OF EFFLUENTS AND SOLID WASTES ARE ALSO ESSENTIAL TO THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY", HE ADDED.

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#### ACADEMY OF MEDICINE PROPOSED

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A HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE HAS BEEN PROPOSED TO UNDERTAKE AND SUPERVISE POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION.

THIS WAS ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY ON POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING WHICH WAS SET UP IN 1986 ON THE ADVICE OF THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD TO ADVISE ON MATTERS RELATING TO POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN HONG KONG.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (THURSDAY) WHEN RELEASING THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY, THE CHAIRMAN, DR KEITH HALNAN, SAID THERE WAS A NEED IN HONG KONG FOR ONE OVERALL ACADEMIC BODY OF DOCTORS INCLUDING ALL SPECIALTIES OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY AND NON-UNIVERSITY, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, TO TAKE PART IN POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

/DR HALNAN .....

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DR HALNAN SAID IT WAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE ACADEMY BE COMPOSED OF FELLOWS ACCREDITED AFTER COMPLETION OF APPROVED TRAINING AND PRESCRIBED EXAMINATIONS.

THE ACADEMY SHOULD HAVE A COUNCIL AS GOVERNING BODY, AND AT INAUGURATION 13 MAIN PARENT SPECIALTIES, ORGANISED AS SEVEN COLLEGES AND SIX FACULTIES.

THERE SHOULD BE DAUGHTER SPECIALTIES, WITH THEIR OWN SPECIALTY BOARDS WITHIN THE COLLEGES AND FACULTIES.

ON MEDICAL MANPOWER, DR HALNAN SAID THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDED THE SETTING UP OF A STANDING GOVERNMENT "JOINT MEDICAL MANPOWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE" WHICH SHOULD REPORT REGULARLY TO GOVERNMENT ON THE MEDICAL MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS OF HONG KONG, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ALL SECTORS OF PRACTICE, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

"WE ALSO RECOMMEND THAT THERE SHOULD BE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF MEASURES TO REDUCE THE SHORTAGE OF FULLY TRAINED DOCTORS IN THE PUBLIC HOSPITALS," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS EDUCATION AND TRAINING, DR HALNAN SAID THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDED THAT THE POSTGRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAMME CONSIST OF ONE YEAR AS AN "INTERN" BEFORE BASIC REGISTRATION, THREE YEARS AS A "RESIDENT" FOR GENERAL AND BASIC SPECIALIST TRAINING, AND THREE YEARS AS A "SENIOR RESIDENT" FOR HIGHER SPECIALIST TRAINING.

"IT IS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION CENTRES SHOULD BE SET UP IN ALL LARGE HOSPITALS.

"AT THE SAME TIME, A HONG KONG MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL SHOULD BE FORMED TO ADMINISTER MEDICAL RESEARCH, SUPPORTED BY BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE CHARITIES AND DONATIONS," HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE IN HONG KONG, DR HALNAN SAID THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDED THAT GENERAL PRACTICE SHOULD HAVE FURTHER ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITIES, AND TRAINEE POSTS IN THE APPROPRIATE HOSPITAL SPECIALTIES AND IN EDUCATIONALLY APPROVED GENERAL PRACTICE CLINICS.

THERE SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERATION OF "CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE" IN CERTAIN GROUPS OF SPECIALTIES, AS PARTS OF CERTAIN MAIN HOSPITALS, HE SAID.

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SECOND CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT STUDY COMMISSIONED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS COMMISSIONED THE SECOND CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES STUDY TO REVIEW THE CURRENT, AND TO ASSESS THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES UP TO 1996.

THE CONTRACT FOR THE STUDY, COSTING \$580,000, WAS AWARDED TO THE TRANSPORT PLANNING ASSOCIATES, AND WAS SIGNED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR RICHARD SCURFIELD, AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE CONSULTANCY, MR MICHAEL MCCRORY.

THE FIRST CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES STUDY WAS CONDUCTED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IN 1985 TO ASSESS THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES UP TO 1991.

IN LIGHT OF THE CHANGES IN LAND USE AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE AVAILABILITY OF THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY RESULTS IN LATE 1988, IT IS PROPOSED THAT A SECOND CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES STUDY SHOULD BE CONDUCTED.

THE STUDY WILL REVIEW THE 1988 TRANSPORT NETWORK AND PRODUCE FORECASTS OF THE 1991 AND 1996 CROSS HARBOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT TRAVEL DEMAND, WITH THE AID OF TRANSPORT MODELS DEVELOPED IN THE SECOND COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY.

AS THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING WILL OPEN IN 1989, THE STUDY WILL LOOK INTO THE COMPATIBILITY AND VIABILITY OF CROSS HARBOUR BUS AND FERRY ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.

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FREE TRADE EQUATES WITH GREATER PROSPERITY

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HONG KONG OPERATES A COMPLETELY FREE MARKET WHICH WAS OPEN TO ALL ON AN EQUAL BASIS, THE DIRECTOR OF THE HONG KONG ECONOMIC AND TRADE OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN UNITED STATES, MR PETER JOHNSON, SAID IN LOS ANGELES YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR JOHNSON, WHO WAS SPEAKING AT A SEMINAR SPONSORED BY THE GREATER LOS ANGELES WORLD TRADE CENTRE ASSOCIATION, TOLD HIS AUDIENCE OF BUSINESS EXECUTIVES THAT HONG KONG BELIEVES THAT THE MORE FREEDOM THAT WAS AVAILABLE TO TRADE, THE GREATER THE ALL ROUND PROSPERITY OF THOSE WHO ARE TAKING PART IN IT.

"IT IS A NATION'S OVERALL GLOBAL TRADING BALANCE THAT MATTERS, NOT SO MUCH ITS INDIVIDUAL BI-LATERAL RELATIONSHIPS.

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"INDEED ANY ATTEMPT TO BALANCE ALL INDIVIDUAL BI-LATERAL RELATIONSHIPS, IF SUCCESSFUL, WOULD LEAD TO A REDUCTION IN OVERALL PROSPERITY," MR JOHNSON ELABORATED.

AS AN ILLUSTRATION, HE OUTLINED THE LARGE DEFICIT HONG KONG RUNS WITH CHINA, ABOUT US\$3.75 BILLION IN 1987, AND ALSO WITH JAPAN AND SOME OTHER TRADING PARTNERS.

THESE DEFICITS WERE OFFSET BY SURPLUSES WITH THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND SOME OF HONG KONG'S TRADING PARTNERS IN EUROPE, HE NOTED.

QUOTING A RECENT US TREASURY REPORT TO CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND EXCHANGE RATE POLICY, MR JOHNSON SAID HONG KONG'S SURPLUS WITH THE UNITED STATES IN 1987 WAS JUST UNDER US\$6 BILLION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE REPORT WENT ON TO STATE THAT, DUE PRINCIPALLY TO AN INCREASE IN AMERICAN EXPORTS TO HONG KONG, THE SURPLUS DECLINED BY 28 PER CENT IN THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF THIS YEAR OVER 1987.

"BI-LATERAL AGREEMENTS ALSO HAVE A TENDENCY TO BRING WITH THEM PROTECTIONIST UNDERTONES AGAINST THIRD PARTIES.

"SO WE IN HONG KONG ARE NOT VERY KEEN ON THE PROLIFERATION OF SUCH AGREEMENTS. INDEED WE FEAR THAT THERE COULD BE A DANGER OF THEM SUPERSIDING THE MULTI-LATERAL APPROACH WHICH HAS SERVED THE WORLD SO WELL SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR," MR JOHNSON SAID.

TURNING TO HONG KONG'S LINKS WITH CHINA, MR JOHNSON SAID THAT THIS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT DIMENSION IN TRADE PRESENTS A WHOLE NEW RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HONG KONG AND OVERSEAS BUSINESSMEN, AND A NEW ROLE FOR HONG KONG AS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA.

HE NOTED THE SPEED AND EXTENT TO WHICH THIS INTERLOCKING ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA HAD GROWN: "CHINA NOW SELLS TO HONG KONG MORE THAN 15 TIMES AS MUCH AS IT SOLD IN THE MID-SEVENTIES.

"WE ARE CHINA'S LARGEST MARKET. CHINA HAS COME FROM NOWHERE TO BECOME HONG KONG'S LARGEST SOURCE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT - LARGER INDEED THAN ALL OTHER SOURCES COMBINED," MR JOHNSON SAID.

"ON THE MANUFACTURING FRONT, HONG KONG INTERESTS ARE NOW ESTIMATED TO BE EMPLOYING, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, AS MANY AS TWO MILLION WORKERS IN THE PEARL RIVER DELTA AREA - MORE THAN THE NUMBER EMPLOYED IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN HONG KONG ITSELF," HE ADDED.

ALSO TAKING PART IN THE SEMINAR ON "HONG KONG AS A WORLD MARKETPLACE" WERE MR CHRISTOPHER LEU OF THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION IN LOS ANGELES; MR DANIEL FERNANDEZ, HONG KONG TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE; AND MR FRANKIE LEUNG, AN ATTORNEY.

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DISKETTE SUBMISSION SCHEME  
\* \* \* \* \*

IN JUNE 1988, GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO INTRODUCE A SCHEME PROVIDING TRADERS WITH AN ADDITIONAL OPTION TO SUBMIT IMPORT AND EXPORT DECLARATIONS ON MICRO-COMPUTER DISKETTES.

TO ALLOW AMPLE TIME FOR TRADERS TO MAKE THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS FOR JOINING THE SCHEME (REFERRED TO AS THE "DISKETTE SUBMISSION SCHEME" BELOW) WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MIDDLE OF 1989, A GAZETTE NOTICE (GN3747) SPECIFYING THE DETAILED REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHEME WAS PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 4, 1988.

THE EXACT DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE SCHEME WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE GAZETTE SOMETIME IN EARLY 1989.

BROADLY SPEAKING, TRADERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BRING THE FOLLOWING TO ANY ONE OF THE CUSTOMS & EXCISE DEPARTMENT'S TRADE DECLARATION CHARGES COLLECTION OFFICES IF THEY USE THIS NEW SCHEME FOR SUBMITTING IMPORT AND EXPORT DECLARATIONS:

- (I) INDIVIDUAL DECLARATIONS IN THE FORM OF COMPUTER PRINTOUTS;
- (II) ONE OR MORE MICRO-COMPUTER DISKETTE(S) ON WHICH THE ABOVE DATA ARE RECORDED;
- (III) A SUMMARY DECLARATION SIGNED BY THE DECLARANT; AND
- (IV) CASH OR CHEQUE OF AN APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF CHARGES.

FORMATS OF THE DOCUMENTS DESCRIBED IN ITEMS (I) - (III) ABOVE ARE SPECIFIED IN THE GAZETTE NOTICE (GN3747) PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 4, 1988.

A COMPUTER-ASSISTED INPUT PROGRAM WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL ENABLE TRADERS TO PREPARE THEIR DECLARATIONS USING MICRO-COMPUTERS AND AT THE SAME TIME TO PRODUCE OUTPUTS IN THESE SPECIFIED FORMATS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE DISKETTE SUBMISSION SCHEME IS TO FACILITATE TRADERS IN PREPARING TRADE DECLARATIONS IN A MORE EFFICIENT AND ACCURATE WAY.

THE PROCESSING TIME AT THE COLLECTION OFFICES WILL ALSO BE GREATLY SHORTENED DUE TO THE USE OF COMPUTERS.

TRADERS SUBMITTING MANY DECLARATIONS AND ALREADY USING COMPUTERS TO HANDLE THEIR TRADE DOCUMENTATION WILL FIND THE SCHEME OF GREAT CONVENIENCE TO THEM.

TO JOIN THE SCHEME, A TRADER NEEDS TO HAVE AN IBM OR IBM-COMPATIBLE MICROCOMPUTER WITH HARD DISK AND PRINTER.

/AS REGARDS .....

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AS REGARDS THE SOFTWARE FOR PRODUCING THE REQUIRED DISKETTE AND HARDCOPY, THE TRADERS MAY CHOOSE TO ACQUIRE ONE FROM THE GOVERNMENT AT VERY LOW COST OR TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN SOFTWARES.

SEMINARS ON THE DISKETTE SUBMISSION SCHEME AND DEMONSTRATIONS ON A PROTOTYPE OF THE SOFTWARE FOR PREPARING TRADE DECLARATIONS ON DISKETTE WILL BE ORGANISED BY THE CENSUS & STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN THE SCHEME, THEY SHOULD WRITE TO THE DEPARTMENT AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS TO MAKE RESERVATION FOR THE COMING SEMINARS AND DEMONSTRATIONS:

COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS & STATISTICS,  
(ATTN: SENIOR STATISTICIAN (TRADE) 2)  
WAN CHAI TOWER I,  
12 HARBOUR ROAD,  
WAN CHAI,  
HONG KONG.  
(REF: DISKETTE SUBMISSION SCHEME)

TRADERS ARE REQUESTED TO INCLUDE IN THEIR APPLICATION LETTER A DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPUTER FACILITIES THEY ARE USING AND THE NUMBER OF DECLARATIONS THEY NORMALLY SUBMIT EACH MONTH.

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DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR YEUNG SIU HANG VILLAGE  
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THE TUEN MUN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE WILL PRESENT A PAPER STIPULATING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR YEUNG SIU HANG VILLAGE AT A MEETING OF THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

PROJECTS SUGGESTED IN THE LAYOUT PLAN FOR THE VILLAGE INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BOTANICAL GARDEN, EXTENSION AND WIDENING OF ROADS, EXTENSION OF SEWERAGE SYSTEM, BUILDING OF NEW FOOTPATHS AND PROVISION OF CAR PARK.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT AND THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT WILL ATTEND THE MEETING TO EXPLAIN TO MEMBERS THE IMPACT OF DUMPING ASBESTOS WASTE AT PILLAR POINT AND IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLY TO VILLAGES IN THE DISTRICT RESPECTIVELY.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY A QUARRY SITE, REQUESTS TO REMOVE WEEDS ALONG VILLAGE PATHS AND TO IMPROVE FLOWER BEDS, FOOTPATHS AND REFUSE COLLECTION POINTS AS WELL AS THE COLLECTION OF ANIMAL CARCASSES.

/THE PROGRESS .....

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THE PROGRESS REPORT OF LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS AND THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD FUNDS WILL ALSO BE TABLED FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING OF THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT BOARD'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE BEGINNING AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) IN THE DISTRICT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE THIRD FLOOR, GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING, TUEN MUN.

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MOTION ON CHEAPER FARES FOR ELDERLY

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THE KWAI TSING DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WILL CONSIDER A MOTION AT TOMORROW'S (FRIDAY) MEETING THAT THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION AND THE PUBLIC BUS COMPANIES SHOULD GRANT HALF-PRICE CONCESSIONS TO ELDERLY PEOPLE AGED OVER 60.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS RENT ASSESSMENT FOR COMMERCIAL UNITS IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FULL-DAY CLASSES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT.

QUESTIONS WILL BE RAISED ON ISSUES CONCERNING CRIMINAL CASES, A PEDESTRIAN FOOTBRIDGE AND HOUSING.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING OF KWAI TSING DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO BEGIN AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM, 10TH FLOOR, KWAI HING GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING, KWAI CHUNG.

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KWAI TSING CIVIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

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THE KWAI TSING DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMITTEE FOR PROMOTING CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS WILL ORGANISE A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES FROM MID-NOVEMBER TO PROMOTE AWARENESS IN CIVIC EDUCATION AMONG STUDENTS.

THE COMMITTEE WILL IMPLEMENT AN OUTSTANDING YOUTH PASSPORT AWARD SCHEME IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR 11 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS FROM NOVEMBER 14 TO FEBRUARY 3. THE SCHEME IS AIMED AT ENCOURAGING GOOD CONDUCT AND HARD WORK AMONG STUDENTS.

TEACHERS AND PARENTS WILL ASSESS THE STUDENTS DURING THIS PERIOD AND GIVE MARKS ON A SPECIALLY-DESIGNED PASSPORT. STUDENTS SCORING MARKS UP TO A CERTAIN STANDARD WILL BE AWARDED CERTIFICATES FOR OUTSTANDING YOUTHS.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO INVITES SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH AND EXHIBITION ON CIVIC EDUCATION.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS WILL BE REQUIRED TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH OR SURVEY ON CIVIC EDUCATION AND THE FINDINGS WILL BE DISPLAYED AT AN EXHIBITION TO BE HELD ON FEBRUARY 25 AND 26 AT THE HA KWAI CHUNG GOVERNMENT SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL, HING SHING ROAD, KWAI CHUNG.

TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' INTEREST IN SOCIAL ISSUES, THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO ARRANGE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO SIT IN AT MEETINGS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, REGIONAL COUNCIL AND OTHER SUB-COMMITTEES.

THE KWAI TSING DISTRICT BOARD HAS RESERVED \$40,000 FOR ORGANISING THESE ACTIVITIES.

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KWUN TONG TO LAUNCH DISTRICT FESTIVAL

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A SPECTACULAR DISTRICT FESTIVAL, FEATURING A WIDE VARIETY OF CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL AND SPORTS PROGRAMMES, WILL BE STAGED IN KWUN TONG BETWEEN NOVEMBER 20 AND DECEMBER 10.

THE KWUN TONG FESTIVAL '88 IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE URBAN COUNCIL, THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND 15 LOCAL AREA COMMITTEES IN KWUN TONG.

A PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF THE FESTIVAL WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT THE FOUR SEASONS SUITE OF THE NEW WORLD HOTEL IN TSIM SHA TSUI.

/PRESENT AT .....

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PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR CHRIS WAN; DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR LAM HANG-FAI; PRESIDENT OF THE KWUN TONG FESTIVAL '88 ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MR YU SUN-SAY; CHAIRLADY OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MADAM YEUNG KAM-CHUN; DISTRICT RECREATION AND SPORT OFFICER, MR LAU KWOK-KONG, AND PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATION MANAGER OF ASIA TELEVISION LTD., MR ANDREW LUK.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE KWUN TONG FESTIVAL '88 PRESS CONFERENCE, BEGINNING AT 3 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT THE FOUR SEASONS SUITE, NEW WORLD HOTEL, TSIM SHA TSUI.

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YAU TSIM CARNIVAL TO SPREAD FIGHT CRIME MESSAGE

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A CARNIVAL TO SPREAD THE FIGHT CRIME MESSAGE WILL BE HELD AT THE URBAN COUNCIL CENTENARY GARDEN, TSIM SHA TSUI EAST, ON SUNDAY (NOVEMBER 13) AFTERNOON.

OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WHICH BEGINS AT 2.30 PM WILL BE THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE (OPERATIONS), MR LI KWAN-HA; POLICE DISTRICT COMMANDER (YAU MA TEI), MR LAU YUK-KUEN; CHAIRMAN OF THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT BOARD, MR YIP WAH, AND ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ARTHUR YUEN.

ORGANISED BY THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WITH THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE CARNIVAL FEATURES A MARCHING BAND, SINGING AND DANCE PERFORMANCES; STALL-GAMES; A PARADE BY CARTOON CHARACTERS AND AN INFLATABLE "GORILLA" FOR CHILDREN.

ON SATURDAY (NOVEMBER 12) AFTERNOON, STAFF OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN THE DISTRICT WILL DISTRIBUTE PUBLICITY LEAFLETS AND TICKETS TO THE CARNIVAL AT THE UC CENTENARY GARDEN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME CARNIVAL BEGINNING AT 2.30 PM ON SUNDAY (NOVEMBER 13) AT THE UC CENTENARY GARDEN, TSIM SHA TSUI EAST.

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APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS ON AGENDA

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THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD'S SOCIAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION COMMITTEE WILL CONSIDER AT A MEETING TOMORROW (FRIDAY) APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING SEVERAL PROJECTS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ELDERLY SERVICES AND THE WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNITY INFORMATION.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE THE PROGRESS REPORTS OF VARIOUS WORKING GROUPS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING WHICH WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW IN THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, SECOND FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN.

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CHINESE ORCHESTRA TO PERFORM FOR SOUTHERN RESIDENTS

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THE HONG KONG CHINESE ORCHESTRA WILL GIVE AN ENSEMBLE CONCERT FOR SOUTHERN DISTRICT RESIDENTS ON SUNDAY (NOVEMBER 13) AT THE WAH FU COMMUNITY HALL IN WAH FU ESTATE.

PRESENTED BY THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT ARTS AND CULTURE ASSOCIATION AND THE URBAN COUNCIL AND SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD, THE CONCERT WILL START AT 8 PM, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR YIN HOK-MAN.

THE PROGRAMME WILL INCLUDE A HOST OF POPULAR PIECES OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MUSIC RANGING FROM SELECTED DANCE MUSIC WORKS AND GUANGDONG MELODIES TO FOLK SONGS OF MINORITY NATIONALITIES.

THE HONG KONG CHINESE ORCHESTRA, NOW IN ITS 12TH PROFESSIONAL SEASON, HAS 85 MEMBERS THOUGH A SMALLER GROUP OF 26 WILL BE PERFORMING ON THIS OCCASION.

FREE ADMISSION TICKETS FOR THE CONCERT ARE AVAILABLE ON THE FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS AT THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE AT ABERDEEN CENTRE, ITS SUB-OFFICE IN WAH FU ESTATE AND THE SDACA'S OFFICE AT LEI CHUK HOUSE, AP LEI CHAU ESTATE.

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SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

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SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY (NOVEMBER 13) TO FACILITATE THE SERVICE AT THE CENOTAPH IN CENTRAL.

THE ARRANGEMENTS INCLUDE TEMPORARY CLOSURES OF THE FOLLOWING ROAD SECTIONS.

- \* JACKSON ROAD BETWEEN CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL AND CHATER ROAD, AND EDINBURGH PLACE NORTH BETWEEN QUEEN'S PIER AND HMS TAMAR, WILL BE CLOSED FROM 8 AM TO NOON.
- \* CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL EASTBOUND BETWEEN EDINBURGH PLACE WEST AND EDINBURGH PLACE EAST WILL BE CLOSED FROM 10.50 AM TO 11.30 AM.
- \* HARCOURT ROAD FLYOVER, CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL WESTBOUND BETWEEN HARCOURT ROAD AND ICE HOUSE STREET, AND MURRAY ROAD NORTHBOUND BETWEEN CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL AND CHARTER ROAD, WILL BE CLOSED FROM 10.28 AM TO NOON.
- \* CHATER ROAD BETWEEN PEDDER STREET AND JACKSON ROAD, AND ICE HOUSE STREET BETWEEN QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL AND CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL, WILL BE CLOSED FROM 7 AM TO MIDNIGHT.

THE FOLLOWING DIVERSIONS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED FROM 8 AM TO NOON UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED:

- \* AS JACKSON ROAD WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC, VEHICLES ON CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL WESTBOUND WILL BE DIVERTED VIA CLUB STREET.
- \* EASTBOUND TRAFFIC ON CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL WILL BE DIVERTED VIA EDINBURGH PLACE WEST, EDINBURGH PLACE NORTH AND EDINBURGH PLACE EAST FROM 10.50 AM TO 11.30 AM. ALL BUSES AND HEAVY VEHICLES WILL USE THE NORTHERN LANE WHEN PASSING THROUGH THE QUEEN'S PIER CONCOURSE AREA.
- \* WESTBOUND TRAFFIC ON HARCOURT ROAD WILL BE DIVERTED SOUTH INTO COTTON TREE DRIVE. VEHICLES WISHING TO PROCEED FURTHER WEST WILL BE DIVERTED VIA THE SLIP ROAD TO QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL.
- \* EASTBOUND TRAFFIC FROM THE ADMIRALTY MTR STATION WILL BE PERMITTED TO TURN SOUTH TO TAMAR STREET AND THEN LEFT TO QUEENSWAY.

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\* DURING THE CLOSURE OF CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL EASTBOUND BETWEEN EDINBURGH PLACE WEST AND EDINBURGH PLACE EAST FROM 10.50 AM TO 11.30 AM, EDINBURGH PLACE CENTRAL WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND. VEHICLES LEAVING THE STAR FERRY MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK WILL BE DIVERTED VIA EDINBURGH PLACE CENTRAL, QUEEN'S PIER AND EDINBURGH PLACE EAST.

ALL PARKING SPACES IN JACKSON ROAD WILL BE SUSPENDED THROUGHOUT SUNDAY FROM MIDNIGHT, AND THOSE ON CONNAUGHT PLACE WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM MIDNIGHT TO NOON. MOTORCYCLE PARKING SPACES ON EDINBURGH PLACE NORTH WILL ALSO BE CANCELLED BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND NOON.

THE TAXI STAND IN EDINBURGH PLACE WEST WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM 10 AM TO 11.30 AM AND WILL BE RESITED TO THE EASTERN SIDE OF CONNAUGHT PLACE.

THE GREEN MINIBUS TERMINI FOR ROUTES 1, 1A AND 3 IN EDINBURGH PLACE EAST OR EDINBURGH PLACE CENTRAL WILL ALSO BE SUSPENDED FROM 10 AM TO NOON, AND WILL BE RESITED TO THE NORTHERN SECTION OF CONNAUGHT PLACE.

BUSES ON CMB ROUTES 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 61, 64, 70, 80, 81M, 90, 97, 99, 260, 780, CROSS-HARBOUR ROUTE 103, AND KMB ROUTE A2 WILL BE DIVERTED DUE TO THE SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN 8 AM AND NOON.

GREEN MINIBUSES ON ROUTES 1, 1A, 3, 8, 9, 22 AND 28 WILL ALSO BE DIVERTED BETWEEN 10 AM AND NOON.

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NIGHT CLOSURE OF TWO STREETS IN HUNG HOM

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ADVISED MOTORISTS THAT THE WINSLOW STREET VEHICULAR UNDERPASS IN HUNG HOM WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC BETWEEN 1 AM AND 5 AM ON SATURDAY (NOVEMBER 12) FOR CLEANSING OF THE UNDERPASS.

DURING THE CLOSURE, VEHICLES IN WINSLOW STREET HEADING FOR TO KWA WAN WILL BE DIVERTED VIA CHATHAM ROAD NORTH, COOKE STREET, GILLIES AVENUE AND WUHU STREET.

MEANWHILE, YAN FUNG STREET WILL ALSO BE CLOSED BETWEEN 1 AM AND 6 AM DAILY FROM NOVEMBER 12 TO 15 FOR THE DEMOLITION WORKS OF A TEMPORARY FOOTBRIDGE.

VEHICLES ON CHATHAM ROAD NORTH HEADING FOR FAT KWONG STREET WILL BE DIVERTED VIA CHATHAM ROAD NORTH, WUHU VEHICULAR UNDERPASS, GILLIES AVENUE, WUHU STREET AND MA TAU WAI ROAD.

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INTERRUPTION TO FRESH WATER SUPPLY

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THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) REMINDED RESIDENTS THAT SOME PREMISES IN TSIM SHA TSUI WILL BE SUBJECTED TO WEAK WATER PRESSURE FOR NINE HOURS FROM 10 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AND ON SATURDAY (NOVEMBER 12) TO FACILITATE WATER WORKS.

THE AFFECTED AREA IS BOUNDED BY AUSTIN ROAD, NATHAN ROAD, SALISBURY ROAD AND CHEONG WAN ROAD.

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