



WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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GOVERNMENT UNABLE TO AGREE ON ELECTRICITY CHARGE INCREASE

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON THAT THE GOVERNMENT FEELS UNABLE TO AGREE TO THE PROPOSED AVERAGE INCREASE OF 2-1/4 CENTS PER UNIT, SOUGHT BY CHINA LIGHT AND POWER, AT THE PRESENT TIME.

HE MADE THE STATEMENT IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM MR. JAMES WU REGARDING THE COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR AN INCREASE IN ELECTRICITY CHARGES.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S STATEMENT

+IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR OBLIGATION TO THE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE SCHEME OF CONTROL, THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY LIMITED ON 28TH APRIL SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION TO INCREASE THEIR BASIC TARIFFS BY AN AVERAGE OF 2-1/4 CENTS PER UNIT OR BY 11.2% OF THE PRESENT TOTAL UNIT CHARGE.

+THE COMPANY PUT FORWARD THREE MAIN REASONS FOR THE INCREASES PROPOSED. THE FIRST CONCERNED INCREASING COSTS, BOTH CAPITAL AND RECURRENT. THE COMPANY STATED THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE GENERAL RISE IN COSTS IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, THEY HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD HIT BY EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE INCREASES IN THE PRICES OF SOME ITEMS OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT. THE SECOND REASON RELATED TO THE NEED TO SECURE AN ADEQUATE CASH FLOW POSITION TO FINANCE EXPENDITURE ON TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS WHICH WILL BE NECESSARY DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS IF THE COMPANY IS TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY FROM NEW AREAS SUCH AS THE NEW TOWNS. THE THIRD REASON PUT FORWARD FOR THE INCREASE WAS THE NEED TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF RELIABILITY OF SERVICE IN BOTH EXISTING AND NEW AREAS.

+MUCH OF THE DATA OF WHICH THE APPLICATION WAS BASED HAD BEEN PREPARED BY THE COMPANY SOME TIME BEFORE THE APPLICATION WAS SUBMITTED AND WAS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT AS PART OF THE REGULAR SYSTEM OF KEEPING THE GOVERNMENT INFORMED AS TO THE STATE OF THE COMPANY'S AFFAIRS.

+THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE COMPANY DURING THE LAST THREE WEEKS AND HAS CONSIDERED THE COMPANY'S POSITION AS REFLECTED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE DATA AVAILABLE TO US VERY CAREFULLY. FOR TWO REASONS, HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT FEELS UNABLE TO AGREE TO THE PROPOSED AVERAGE INCREASE OF 2-1/4 CENTS PER UNIT AT THE PRESENT TIME. IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE COMPANY'S CASH FLOW POSITION WILL BE SOMEWHAT BETTER THAN PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE BOARD'S DECISION TO SEEK A RIGHTS ISSUE, WHICH IT IS EXPECTED WILL RAISE APPROXIMATELY \$60 MILLION FROM THE COMPANY'S SHAREHOLDERS.

/+AND, SECONDLY,

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+AND, SECONDLY, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE COMPANY'S FORECAST OF FUTURE GROWTH IN SALES FOR ELECTRICITY IS RATHER ON THE PESSIMISTIC SIDE AND THE COMPANY IS INCLINED TO AGREE WITH US ON THE BASIS OF VERY RECENT SALES FIGURES.

+BUT THIS CANNOT BE THE END OF THE MATTER: THE COMPANY ADHERES TO THE VIEW THAT ITS CASH FLOW MUST BE IMPROVED AND THAT SUCH IMPROVEMENT IS DEPENDENT ON SOME ADJUSTMENT OF ITS BASIC TARIFFS. SO THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE FRESH DISCUSSIONS WITH THE COMPANY OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WITH A VIEW TO DETERMINING WHAT INCREASE(S), IF ANY, IN THE BASIC TARIFFS ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE COMPANY'S CIRCUMSTANCES AND WITH EFFECT FROM WHAT DATE.

+MY HONOURABLE FRIEND ALSO SOUGHT AN ASSURANCE THAT FULL CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO ANY POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT OF AN INCREASE IN ELECTRICITY CHARGES ON THE ECONOMY.

+THAT ASSURANCE I CAN READILY GIVE, BUT I MUST MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT THE ECONOMY WOULD NOT BE WELL SERVED IF THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY, AS ONE OF OUR MAJOR PUBLIC UTILITIES, WAS NOT ABLE TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE AND EFFICIENT SERVICE TO ALL CONCERNED, AS AND WHEN REQUIRED.

+THE INTERESTS OF THE COMPANY AND OF THE ECONOMY IN GENERAL ARE CERTAINLY NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE AND I HAVE MADE THIS POINT SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE (FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN DEALING WITH THE GENERAL QUESTION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC UTILITIES IN THE DEBATE ON YOUR EXCELLENCY'S ADDRESS TO THIS COUNCIL LAST YEAR).

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HONG KONG TO CONTINUE SEEKING NEW HOMES OVERSEAS
FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HERE

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THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE PRESSING OTHER COUNTRIES TO TAKE AS MANY OF THE REMAINING 3,400-ODD VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AS POSSIBLE STILL IN SPECIAL CAMPS HERE, THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. DENYS ROBERTS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE BRITISH AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS, HE SAID, HAD ASKED ABOUT 20 COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT AS MANY OF THE REFUGEES AS POSSIBLE AND INITIAL REACTION HAD BEEN SYMPATHETIC.

ABOUT 450 OF THE REFUGEES HAD EITHER LEFT FOR OTHER COUNTRIES OR WERE BEING CONSIDERED OR PROCESSED FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT ELSEWHERE, BUT THIS STILL LEFT HONG KONG WITH THE HEAVY TASK OF CARING FOR OVER 3,400.

MR. ROBERTS WAS SPEAKING IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN WHO WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS BEING DONE TO ASSIMILATE SOME OF THE REFUGEES INTO THE HONG KONG SOCIETY, AND WHAT STEPS WERE BEING TAKEN TO URGE OTHER COUNTRIES TO TAKE THEM.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY SAID ABOUT 200 HAD EXPRESSED A WISH TO SETTLE IN HONG KONG, AND SO FAR PERMISSION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO 33 TO REMAIN IN HONG KONG.

+THOSE WHO CAN ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS WITH HONG KONG AND WHO CAN SUPPORT THEMSELVES OR HAVE SPONSORS WHO WILL SUPPORT THEM WILL BE PERMITTED TO STAY,+ HE SAID.

ALL THE 3,909 REFUGEES ACCOMMODATED IN THE SPECIAL CAMPS HAD BEEN ASKED WHETHER THEY CLAIMED CONNECTIONS WITH ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY AND WHERE THEY WOULD LIKE TO SETTLE.

MR. ROBERTS SAID CANADA HAD ALREADY RECEIVED 53 OF THEM AND ANOTHER 30 WOULD FLY THERE THIS WEEK. HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT CANADA WOULD TAKE MORE.

FRANCE HAD ALREADY APPROVED THE ISSUE OF VISAS FOR 42 AND WOULD ACCEPT OTHERS WHO HAVE CULTURAL LINKS WITH THAT COUNTRY, WHILE BELGIUM WAS CONSIDERING ISSUING VISAS TO 22.

THE UNITED STATES HAD ALREADY FLOWN OUT 67 REFUGEES FROM THE CAMPS, AND A FURTHER 200 HAD BEEN PROCESSED FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT TO THE U.S. IN THE NEAR FUTURE. SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO OFFERED TO CONSIDER ACCEPTING OTHER REFUGEES.

/MR. ROBERTS

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MR. ROBERTS EXPRESSED THE APPRECIATION OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT FOR THE SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE AND PRACTICAL HELP OF THE CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE AGREED TO ACCEPT REFUGEES.

IN A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION MR. CHEONG-LEEN ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INDICATION THAT A MUCH LARGER NUMBER OF REFUGEES COULD BE ABSORBED BY THE UNITED STATES.

MR. ROBERTS REPLIED: +NATURALLY WE VERY MUCH HOPE THE UNITED STATES WILL BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT VERY MUCH LARGER NUMBERS. AS HONOURABLE MEMBERS KNOW, THEY HAVE BEEN ACCEPTING VERY LARGE NUMBERS OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES DIRECTLY FROM SOUTH VIETNAM AND FROM OTHER COUNTRIES IN ASIA. CERTAINLY, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO PRESS THEM TO ACCEPT A MUCH-LARGER SHARE AND THE NUMBERS WHO ARE STILL WITH US.+

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NEW PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS EXPECTED SOON

THE REVISED PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE READY FOR PRESENTATION TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BEFORE THE END OF THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT SESSION, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR. THE HON. GERALD CHOA, SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. OSWALD CHEUNG, DR. CHOA SAID HE BELIEVED IT WAS TECHNICALLY POSSIBLE TO AMEND THE EXISTING POISONS LIST WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE NEW REGULATIONS TO BE MADE.

HOWEVER, TO AVOID CONFUSION AND IN VIEW THAT THE WHOLE OF THE REGULATIONS WOULD BE PRESENTED SOON, HE PROPOSED TO INTRODUCE THE PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS AND THE POISONS LIST REGULATIONS AT THE SAME TIME.

DR. CHOA ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SOME ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS HAD RECENTLY BEEN PROPOSED TO THE POISONS LIST AND IT WAS HOPED THAT THESE COULD BE INCLUDED IN THE LIST WHEN PRESENTED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+IF THIS CANNOT BE DONE, THE LIST WILL BE PRESENTED AS AT PRESENT AMENDED AND FURTHER AMENDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER,+ HE SAID.

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TREND OF INFECTIVE HEPATITIS
CLOSELY WATCHED BY MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON THE TREND OF INFECTIVE HEPATITIS, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, THE HON. GERALD CHOA TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. MRS. JOYCE SYMONS, HE POINTED OUT THAT HEALTH STAFF OF HIS DEPARTMENT WERE CARRYING OUT INVESTIGATIONS ON ALL REPORTED CASES IN AN EFFORT TO UNCOVER THE ORIGIN OF THE INFECTION, INTERRUPT THE ROUTE OF TRANSMISSION AND GIVE HEALTH EDUCATION TALKS.

DR. CHOA SAID THAT THERE WAS NO ACTIVE IMMUNIZATION AGAINST INFECTIVE HEPATITIS WHICH WAS TRANSMITTED BY CONTAMINATED FOOD AND WATER AND PERSON-TO-PERSON CONTACT AND THE ONLY WAY TO PREVENT THE DISEASE WAS BY INTERRUPTING THE ROUTE OF TRANSMISSION.

ON PREVENTIVE MEASURES, HE SAID THEY CONSISTED OF EDUCATING THE PUBLIC IN FOOD, PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE.

+THE DEPARTMENT HAS ISSUED REPEATED APPEALS AND ADVICE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH PRESS RELEASES AND RADIO INTERVIEWS. IN ADDITION, A WEEKLY BULLETIN IS PUBLISHED TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED OF THE SITUATION.+

BESIDES, A MEDICAL OFFICER HAD ALSO BEEN SPECIFICALLY ASSIGNED TO UNDERTAKE A DETAILED REVIEW OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE DISEASE.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE DEPARTMENT IS ALSO MAINTAINING CLOSE LIAISON WITH URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT WHICH LOOKS AFTER ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOOD HYGIENE, INCLUDING INSPECTION OF RESTAURANTS AND FOOD-STALLS.

DR. CHOA NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE INCIDENCE OF HEPATITIS CASES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR. HE ADDED THAT 80 PER CENT OF THE CASES WERE FOUND TO BE INFECTIVE HEPATITIS WHILE THE REMAINDER SERUM HEPATITIS.

SERUM HEPATITIS IS TRANSMITTED BY INJECTION, INOCULATION, TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD OR BLOOD PRODUCTS, ACUPUNCTURE AND TATTOO.

HE POINTED OUT THAT WARNING HAD BEEN ISSUED REGARDING STERILISATION OF SYRINGES AND NEEDLES WHILE FUNDS HAD NOW BEEN SET ASIDE FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE AUSTRALIA ANTIGEN TEST FOR ALL BLOOD SAMPLES COLLECTED BY THE BRITISH RED CROSS AS SOON AS ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WAS OBTAINED AND THE ANIMAL HOUSE OF THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL ENLARGED IN ABOUT TWO MONTHS' TIME.

DR. CHOA SAID THAT MEANWHILE TESTS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED OUT ON SELECTED SAMPLES INCLUDING BLOODS FROM DONORS WHO GAVE A HISTORY OF JAUNDICE.

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'SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITIES' FOR GOVT. JOBS
FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

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THERE WILL STILL BE SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE CIVIL SERVICE THIS YEAR FOR UNIVERSITY GRADUATES AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS BECAUSE ALL VACANCIES ARISING FROM WASTAGE WILL BE FILLED, IN ADDITION TO AN INCREASE IN STRENGTH OF THE CIVIL SERVICE OF 1,600.

THIS WAS STATED IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. DENYS ROBERTS, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN.

MR. ROBERTS EXPLAINED THAT SCHOOLLEAVERS AND UNIVERSITY GRADUATES ARE ASSISTED MAINLY BY THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, WHICH OPERATES FIVE REGIONAL OFFICES. THIS SERVICE MAINTAINS A SPECIAL REGISTER FOR GRADUATES, AND KEEPS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE APPOINTMENTS SERVICES OF THE TWO UNIVERSITIES AND WITH THE POLYTECHNIC.

+IN ANTICIPATION OF INCREASED PRESSURE DURING THE SUMMER, DUE TO THE PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR GRADUATES AND SCHOOL LEAVERS BEING POORER THAN IN THE PAST,+ HE SAID, +THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE WILL EXTEND THE HOURS OF OPERATION OF ITS OFFICES TO INCLUDE SATURDAYS AND LUNCH HOURS.

+THE SUCCESS OF THE SERVICE DEPENDS ON THE SUPPORT OF EMPLOYERS. THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL THEREFORE INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VISITS PAID BY ITS OFFICERS TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS. IT WILL ALSO GIVE PUBLICITY TO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE AND APPEAL TO EMPLOYERS TO NOTIFY IT OF VACANCIES WHENEVER THESE OCCUR.+

HE HOPED THAT THESE MEASURES WOULD HELP IN BRINGING PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES TOGETHER.

IN A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION, THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN ASKED WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VACANCIES ARISING FROM WASTAGE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATES AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS CATEGORY WHICH COULD ARISE THIS YEAR?

MR. ROBERTS REPLIED: +THE ESTIMATE OF THE LIKELY TOTAL WASTAGE OF THE SERVICE IS BETWEEN 4,000 AND 5,000, BUT IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SAY EXACTLY HOW MANY OF THOSE WILL BE SUITABLE FOR THE PARTICULAR CATEGORY THAT YOU MENTIONED. I WOULD HOWEVER, IF YOU WISH, TRY TO GET THE INFORMATION FOR YOU.+

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SMOOTHER TRAFFIC FLOW IN CENTRAL

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THERE HAS BEEN AN OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN TRAFFIC FLOW WITHIN AND THROUGH CENTRAL DISTRICT AND FEWER DELAYS AS A RESULT OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME INTRODUCED IN JANUARY 5 THIS YEAR.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. JAMES ROBSON, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. LI FOOK-WO IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON.

MR. ROBSON SAID TRAFFIC FLOW STUDIES WERE CARRIED OUT BEFORE AND AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SCHEME, IN NOVEMBER 1974, JANUARY 1975 AND FEBRUARY 1975.

ON CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL, HE SAID, JOURNEY TIMES FOR WESTBOUND TRAFFIC IMPROVED BY 25 PER CENT IN THE MORNING PEAK BUT DETERIORATED BY SIX PER CENT IN THE EVENING PEAK.

FOR EASTBOUND TRAFFIC, THE IMPROVEMENT WAS 41 PER CENT IN THE MORNING PEAK AND SIX PER CENT IN THE EVENING PEAK.

+THIS ROAD CARRIES MUCH MORE TRAFFIC THAN THE OTHERS PUT TOGETHER BUT IT SEEMS THAT VOLUMES MIGHT HAVE DECLINED AFTER THE SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED,+ HE SAID.

AS FOR QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL, WHICH HAS BEEN ROUTED ONE-WAY, JOURNEY TIMES DURING THE MORNING PEAK FOR WESTBOUND TRAFFIC DETERIORATED BY 22 PER CENT BUT DURING THE EVENING PEAK THERE WAS A 17 PER CENT IMPROVEMENT.

AT THESE HOURS THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC IN THE ROAD FELL BY 20 PER CENT IN THE MORNING AND EIGHT PER CENT IN THE EVENING.

MR. ROBSON ADDED THAT IN DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL ITSELF, THE STUDIES REVEALED THAT JOURNEY TIMES FOR WESTBOUND TRAFFIC IMPROVED BY 22 PER CENT IN THE MORNING PEAK AND 10 PER CENT IN THE EVENING PEAK= WHILE FOR EASTBOUND TRAFFIC, THE IMPROVEMENT WAS SIX PER CENT IN THE MORNING AND 13 PER CENT IN THE EVENING.

+AS THIS TRAFFIC IS NOW BASICALLY PUBLIC TRANSPORT VEHICLES, THE EFFECT HAS BEEN OBVIOUSLY BENEFICIAL IN SPEEDING UP THE FLOW OF PEOPLE THROUGH THE CENTRAL DISTRICT,+ HE SAID.

HE RECALLED THAT THE CENTRAL DISTRICT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME WAS ESSENTIALLY A PEAK HOUR BAN ON STOPPING FOR ALL VEHICLES, OTHER THAN FRANCHISED BUSES, IN DES VOEUX ROAD WESTBOUND FROM JACKSON ROAD TO JUBILEE STREET AND EASTBOUND FROM JUBILEE STREET TO PEDDER STREET.

THERE WERE ALSO MINOR MODIFICATIONS TO TRAFFIC ROUTING IN ICE HOUSE STREET.

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SECURITY IN OLD POLICE STATIONS BEING REVIEWED

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POLICE ARE CONDUCTING A FULL DEPARTMENTAL INQUIRY INTO THE ESCAPE OF A ROBBERY SUSPECT FROM CENTRAL POLICE STATION ON MAY 11.

THE ENQUIRY IS BEING CONDUCTED BY A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER AND IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. L.M. DAVIES, TOLD COUNCIL TODAY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. J.M. BREMRIDGE.

THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE HAD ALSO ORDERED A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF SECURITY AND MAINTENANCE IN ALL OLD POLICE STATIONS, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON CELL BLOCKS, AND HAD POSTED A \$10,000 REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE RECAPTURE OF THE PRISONER.

HE RECALLED THAT THE ROBBERY SUSPECT HAD TWICE BEFORE ESCAPED FROM CUSTODY - ONCE FROM VICTORIA REMAND CENTRE AND ONCE FROM AN OPEN WARD AT QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL.

THE PRISONER WAS RECAPTURED ON MAY 8 AND THE FOLLOWING DAY WAS CHARGED WITH ESCAPING FROM LEGAL CUSTODY, AND WAS REMANDED FOR THREE DAYS.

ON MAY 11, THE PRISONER WAS STILL PRESENT IN HIS CELL BLOCK OF CENTRAL POLICE STATION AT 7.45 AM BUT WAS FOUND TO BE MISSING AT 7.52 AM WHEN THE GUARD CONDUCTED HIS SECOND CHECK.

THE GUARD RAISED THE ALARM BUT DESPITE AN IMMEDIATE SEARCH THE PRISONER COULD NOT BE LOCATED.

AS FAR AS REVEALED BY CURRENT ENQUIRIES, THE PRISONER - WHO IS LITHE AND SLIGHTLY BUILT - HAD EFFECTED HIS ESCAPE BY LEVERING OUT AND BENDING A BAR IN HIS CELL AND THEN PUSHED OUT THE WIRE MESH COVERING THE WINDOWS UNTIL THERE WAS SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR HIM TO SQUEEZE THROUGH.

HE THEN SCRAMBLED ACROSS THE ROOF, ENTERED A DESERTED UPSTAIRS BARRACK ROOM WHERE HE PUT ON ARTICLES OF POLICE UNIFORM LEFT THERE BY OFF DUTY POLICE PERSONNEL BEFORE LEAVING THE CENTRAL POLICE STATION, PROBABLY VIA A SIDE STAIRCASE AND GATE.

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WASTAGE OF WATER REDUCED

THE WASTE DETECTION UNIT OF THE WATERWORKS OFFICE WHICH COSTS GOVERNMENT \$1.41 MILLION A YEAR TO RUN, IS SAVING ABOUT FOUR MILLION GALLONS OF WATER PER DAY, WHICH REPRESENTS AT LEAST \$4.38 MILLION PER YEAR IN REVENUE.

THE UNIT THEREFORE REPAYS ITS COST THREEFOLD.

HOWEVER, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, SAID THAT INVESTIGATIONS WERE IN HAND (AND WOULD BE COMPLETED LATER THIS YEAR) TO DETERMINE THE OPTIMUM STAFFING AND OPERATING LEVELS AT WHICH THE UNIT SHOULD WORK FOR THE GREATEST ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. OSWALD CHEUNG WHO ASKED WHAT STEPS IS GOVERNMENT TAKING TO REDUCE THE WASTAGE OF WATER AND LOSS OF REVENUE DUE TO THEFT.

MR. MCDONALD POINTED OUT THAT LOSS OF WATER OCCURRED THROUGHOUT THE SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS.

+TO REDUCE THE LOSS,+ HE SAID, +THE UNIT, WORKING LARGELY AT NIGHT OVER EACH AREA IN TURN, MONITORS WATER FLOW IN THE DISTRIBUTION MAINS, NOTES FLUCTUATIONS IN FLOW WHICH INDICATE LEAKS, AND SEEKS OUT AND REPAIRS THE LEAKS.+

REFERRING TO THEFT OF WATER, MR. MCDONALD SAID, IT COULD BE CARRIED OUT WITHIN A CONSUMER'S PREMISES BY ADOPTION OF MEANS TO BY-PASS THE METER OR BY MEANS OF ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS TO THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, OFTEN TO PUBLIC STANDPIPES.

+WHEN SUCH ILLEGALITIES COME TO LIGHT IN THE COURSE OF NORMAL INSPECTIONS BY WATERWORKS STAFF, ACTION IS TAKEN TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION AND TO BRING CRIMINAL CHARGES WHERE POSSIBLE,+ HE ADDED.

+UNFORTUNATELY, UNLESS THE ILLEGALITY IS CLEARLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO SOME PERSON, CHARGES CANNOT BE BROUGHT AND THE WATERWORKS OFFICE'S POWER IS LIMITED TO DISCONNECTION OF THE ILLEGAL APPARATUS.+

MR. MCDONALD SAID PROPOSALS HAD THEREFORE BEEN FORMULATED FOR THE SETTING UP, WITHIN WATERWORKS OFFICE, OF A SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS UNIT WHOSE MAIN DUTIES WOULD BE TO INVESTIGATE ILLEGALITIES AND ASSEMBLE INFORMATION WHICH WOULD ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF ACTION AGAINST OFFENDERS AND TO PURSUE SUCH ACTION THROUGH THE COURTS.

A PAPER EMBODYING THESE PROPOSALS IS NOW BEING PREPARED AND WILL SHORTLY BE SUBMITTED TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARIAT.

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EPCOM STILL STUDYING ANTI-NOISE CONTROLS

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INSPECTION OF NOISY VEHICLES WILL CONTINUE PENDING THE INTRODUCTION OF REVISED LEGISLATION WITH MORE EFFECTIVE POWERS TO CONTROL NOISE POLLUTION, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. JAMES ROBSON, TOLD COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. ROGER LOBO AS TO THE PROGRESS OF NEW REGULATIONS TO CONTROL EXCESSIVE NOISE BY VEHICLES, MR. ROBSON SAID THAT FOR THE TIME BEING THE BEST METHOD WAS TO CALL IN NOISY VEHICLES FOR INSPECTION AND TO REQUIRE THE OWNERS TO RECTIFY ANY DEFECTS FOUND.

LAST YEAR, HE SAID, THE POLICE CALLED IN FOR INSPECTION WELL OVER 1,000 VEHICLES REPORTED AS MAKING EXCESSIVE NOISE, AND THIS PACE WAS CONTINUING THIS YEAR.

MR. ROBSON SAID THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION (EPCOM) AGREED THAT THIS WAS THE BEST APPROACH FOR THE TIME BEING AND HAD RECOMMENDED THAT MORE INSPECTION STAFF AND OTHER RESOURCES SHOULD BE PROVIDED SO AS TO WIDEN THE NET WHICH ALSO CAUGHT SMOKING AND UNSAFE VEHICLES.

+HOWEVER, WHILE THIS APPROACH HAS MY FULL SUPPORT, INCREASED ACTION AGAINST DEFECTIVE VEHICLES IN THE NEAR FUTURE IS LIKELY TO BE FRUSTRATED BOTH BY LACK OF FUNDS AND THE LACK OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES FOR POSTS OF VEHICLE INSPECTOR,+ HE ADDED.

MR. ROBSON TOLD COUNCIL THAT REVISED LEGISLATION WAS STILL UNDER EXAMINATION BY THE NOISE POLLUTION SUB-COMMITTEE AND THE PROBLEM WOULD ALSO BE EXAMINED BY ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES LIMITED, THE CONSULTANTS APPOINTED TO REPORT ON ALL ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROLS.

INFORMATION FROM OVERSEAS, HE SAID, INDICATED THAT THE FORMULATION OF EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION WAS A DIFFICULT TASK. +NOISE LEVELS CAN BE MEASURED AND MAXIMUM PERMITTED LEVELS CAN BE SPECIFIED, BUT IF INSTRUMENT READINGS ARE USED AS EVIDENCE IN COURT IT IS NECESSARY TO CLEARLY IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF THE NOISE AND TO ELIMINATE EXTRANEIOUS SOUNDS.

+IN ROADSIDE CHECKS, THIS IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE,+ HE SAID.

MR. ROBSON SAID THE SPECIFICATION OF PERMITTED NOISE LEVELS PRESENTED NO PROBLEM IN RESPECT OF NEW VEHICLES AS MOST OF THEM ALREADY COMPLY WITH THE PRESCRIBED LIMITS IN THE COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE.

+IT IS THE VEHICLES ALREADY ON THE ROAD AND THE NEW VEHICLES, IN PARTICULAR SPORTS CARS AND MOTOR CYCLES, ON WHICH THE OWNER ALTERS EQUIPMENT AFTER IT IS PURCHASED, THAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEM.+

/IN A SUPPLEMENTARY

IN A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION, MR. LOBO ASKED WHETHER, IN THE INTERIM, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE STEPS TO CONTROL EXCESSIVE NOISE CAUSED BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF MOTORCYCLES ON HIRE.

MR. ROBSON REPLIED: +SIR, MY INQUIRIES SHOW THAT IT IS QUITE TRUE THERE ARE VERY LARGE NUMBERS OF MOTORCYCLES HIRED OUT ON A DAILY BASIS. AS FAR AS I AM AWARE, THESE CAUSE NO GREATER NOISE THAN THE OTHERS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS OBVIOUS MERIT IN APPROACHING PEOPLE WHO HIRE OUT MOTORCYCLES POINTING OUT THE LAW RELATING TO EXCESSIVE NOISE AND SEEKING THEIR CO-OPERATION IN REDUCING NOISE LEVELS. I WOULD ASK THE DIRECTOR OF TRAFFIC TO DO THIS.

+IN THE MEANTIME, OF COURSE, ANY HIRE VEHICLE MAKING A NOISE WILL BE CALLED IN JUST THE SAME AS OTHER VEHICLES.+

MR. LOBO THEN ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ENCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND MOTORISTS TO REPORT THE REGISTRATION NUMBERS OF NOISY VEHICLES SO THAT THEY CAN BE BROUGHT IN FOR EXAMINATION.

MR. ROBSON REPLIED: +I ATTEMPT TO DO SO, SIR.+

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NO CHANGE IN SUBVENTION POLICY FOR MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL
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THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR. THE HON. GERALD CHOA, TODAY RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUBVENTING PRIVATE HOSPITAL SERVICES NOT CONSIDERED TO BE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR. THE HON. HARRY FANG ABOUT A POSSIBLE REVISION OF SUBVENTION RULES AND POLICY IN RESPECT OF THE MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL, DR. CHOA SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF NOT SUBVENTING SUCH SERVICES WAS APPLIED TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS SUBVENTED ON A DISCRETIONARY GRANT AND AN EXEMPTION TO MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE HOSPITAL ALREADY RECEIVED A DISCRETIONARY SUBVENTION IN RESPECT OF THOSE SERVICES WHICH ARE REGARDED AS BEING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

+ON THIS BASIS THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDES THREE-QUARTERS OF THE COST OF 220 ACUTE BEDS AT A COST CEILING OF \$30,080 PER YEAR. THIS CEILING IS AMONG THE HIGHEST OF THE HOSPITALS SUBVENTED IN THIS WAY,+ HE SAID.

DR. CHOA ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE TOTAL SUBVENTION FOR THE MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL FOR 1975/76 AMOUNTED TO \$5,041,000 WHICH INCLUDED A REFUND OF RATES.

THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE HOSPITAL AND NOT REGARDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS BEING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR ARE: THE OUT-PATIENTS CLINICS, 42 PRIVATE AND MATERNITY BEDS, A SCHOOL FOR ENROLLED NURSES AND THE COMMUNITY NURSING SERVICE.

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THIRD PRESIDING OFFICER FOR LABOUR TRIBUNAL
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THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN HOBLEY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON THAT REMEDIAL ACTION IS BEING TAKEN IN AN EFFORT TO AVOID FUTURE DELAY IN THE HEARING AND FILING OF CLAIMS WITH THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. WILSON WANG, HE SAID AN APPLICATION FOR A THIRD POST OF PRESIDING OFFICER WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

MR. HOBLEY SAID SINCE JANUARY THIS YEAR, THE FILING WITH THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL OF CLAIMS PUT FORWARD THROUGH THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN DELAYED FOR BETWEEN 10 TO 14 DAYS BY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND THE TRIBUNAL.

+AS MOST CASES IN THE TRIBUNAL COME THROUGH THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT THIS MEANS THAT MOST CASES ARE BEING DELAYED,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID: +THERE IS OVERALL DELAY IN FIXING HEARING DATES ONCE A CLAIM IS FILED.

+THIS IS AN UNFORTUNATE SITUATION, WHICH DOES NOT ACCORD WITH THE CLEAR INTENT OF THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL ORDINANCE THAT CLAIMS SHOULD BE HEARD SWIFTLY. IT HAS ARISEN BECAUSE OF THE EVER INCREASING NUMBER OF CASES COMING TO THE TRIBUNAL.+

MR. HOBLEY SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL HAD BEEN EMPHASISED IN THE COUNCIL ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS AND THE SITUATION WHICH HAD NOW ARISEN STEMMED FROM THAT SUCCESS.

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COMMODITY EXCHANGE PROPOSED
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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TODAY MOVED A MOTION IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SEEKING COUNCIL APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE FOR SETTING UP A COMMODITY EXCHANGE IN HONG KONG.

DEBATE ON THE MOTION WAS ADJOURNED.

IN MOVING THE MOTION, MR. HADDON-CAVE TRACED THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SETTING UP SUCH AN EXCHANGE IN HONG KONG, AND OUTLINED THE CURRENT PROPOSALS AND BENEFITS OF A COMMODITY EXCHANGE.

THE FULL TEXT OF HIS SPEECH IS AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION FROM THE G.I.S. NEWS ROOM, 6TH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE. COPIES WILL ALSO BE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

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ASSESSABLE RENTAL VALUE OF FREE
AND SUBSIDISED QUARTERS RAISED
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THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL, WHICH RAISES THE ASSESSABLE RENTAL VALUE OF QUARTERS SUBSIDISED OR PROVIDED FREE BY AN EMPLOYER FROM 7-1/2 TO 10 PER CENT OF THE EMPLOYEE'S SALARY, WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE BILL WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON A DATE TO BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

IN SUPPORTING THE BILL, THE HON. WILSON WANG CALLED FOR FURTHER REVIEWS OF THE PERCENTAGE RATE AND URGED THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY +TO PLUG THIS HOLE IN THE SALARIES TAX BY AIMING AT BRINGING THE ASSESSABLE RENTAL VALUE TO THE FULL MARKET VALUE IN THREE YEARS.+

EVEN ON THE 10 PER CENT ASSESSMENT, MR. WANG SAID, A MARRIED MAN WITH TWO CHILDREN EARNING \$7,500 A MONTH AND LIVING IN A \$2,500 FLAT COULD PAY \$6,725 LESS SALARIES TAX BY HAVING AN ARRANGEMENT WITH HIS EMPLOYER TO PAY FOR HIS FLAT AND REDUCE HIS SALARY BY THE AMOUNT OF THE RENT.

+BECAUSE OF THE PROGRESSIVE RATE OF SALARY TAX BY PERSONAL ASSESSMENT, THE HIGHER THE INCOME, THE BIGGER SAVING IN TAX CAN BE CAUSED BY SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT,+ MR. WANG SAID.

THERE IS NOTHING TO DISCOURAGE EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES TO DO THIS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE GAP BETWEEN MARKET VALUE AND THE ASSESSABLE PERCENTAGE OF THE SALARY IS FAR TOO LARGE, AND THE ARRANGEMENT IS ALSO UNFAIR WHEN COMPARED WITH OTHER CASES WHERE EMPLOYEES RECEIVE BENEFITS IN OTHER KINDS WHICH ARE ASSESSABLE AS TAXABLE INCOME, HE ADDED.

SUCH A PRACTICE IS ALSO IN DIRECT CONTRAVENTION WITH CLAUSE 9 (2B) OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WHICH DEFINES INCOME AS INCLUDING THE RENTAL VALUE OF ANY PLACE OF RESIDENCE PROVIDED RENT FREE BY THE EMPLOYER, HE SAID.

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POSTAL SERVICES MAY BE EXTENDED
TO MORE LICENSED AREAS
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A DETAILED STUDY IS BEING MADE OF ALL LICENSED AREAS WITH A VIEW TO EXTEND MAIL DELIVERY SERVICES TO AS MANY OF THEM AS POSSIBLE, THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. DENYS ROBERTS SAID TODAY.

FROM THE INFORMATION OBTAINED SO FAR, MR. ROBERTS SAID, THE POST MASTER GENERAL WAS SATISFIED THAT, WITH ONE OR TWO POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE DOOR-TO-DOOR MAIL DELIVERIES IN ALL THOSE LICENSED AREAS WHERE THE STRUCTURES WERE SYSTEMATICALLY NUMBERED. +HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE STAFF IMPLICATIONS THIS WILL TAKE SOME TIME.+

MR. ROBERTS WAS SPEAKING IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. JAMES WU.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE POST OFFICE IS ALREADY DELIVERING MAIL TO 12 OUT OF THE 28 LICENSED AREAS WHICH ARE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

IN A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION THE HON. LO TAK-SHING ASKED WHAT HAPPENED TO MAIL ADDRESSED TO THE OTHER 16 LICENSED AREAS.

MR. ROBERTS REPLIED: +THE USUAL CUSTOM, THOUGH IT MAY VARY FROM AREA TO AREA, IS THAT THE POSTMAN LEAVES ALL MAIL WHICH IS ADDRESSED TO THE AREA AT ONE OR TWO COLLECTING POINTS WITHIN THE AREA, PERHAPS A WELFARE HUT OR SOMETHING OF THAT DESCRIPTION, AND THE RESIDENTS THEN COME TO THAT CENTRE AND COLECT THE LETTERS THEMSELVES.+

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BILLS PASSED
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THREE BILLS WERE PASSED INTO LAW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THEY WERE THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES (EXTENSION OF GRANTS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1975, THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1975 AND THE LOANS BILL 1975.

TWO OTHER BILLS -- THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1975 AND THE SUMMARY OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1975 -- WERE TODAY INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL. THEY BOTH RECEIVED THEIR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

AN UNOFFICIAL MEMBER'S BILL -- THE BISHOP OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HONG KONG INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1975 -- ALSO COMPLETED ITS PASSAGE THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO HELP
REDUNDANT TEACHERS FIND ALTERNATIVE POSTS

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THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (PRIMARY), MR. LAM TAT-LAU IS CONFIDENT THAT THE PLACEMENT SERVICE WILL BE ABLE TO HELP ALL REDUNDANT TEACHERS IN AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO FIND ALTERNATIVE POSTS IN OTHER AIDED PRIMARIES WHERE THERE ARE VACANCIES.

MR. LAM MADE THIS STATEMENT AT AN INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING THIS MORNING WITH SEVEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HONG KONG PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS' UNION.

THE MEETING, WHICH LASTED THREE HOURS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S CONFERENCE ROOM, WAS HELD IN A CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE.

AMONG THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S FOUR REPRESENTATIVES WAS MR. DAVID LEUNG, SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER WHO WILL HEAD THE PLACEMENT SERVICE WHICH WILL BEGIN OPERATIONS ON JUNE 2. TEACHERS WHO NEED HELP CAN REGISTER WITH THE SERVICE FROM JUNE 16.

ALTHOUGH IT IS LIKELY THAT THE NUMBER OF PRIMARY CLASSES TO BE REDUCED MAY EXCEED THE 237 FIGURE ANNOUNCED PREVIOUSLY, MR. LAM IS NEVERTHELESS CONFIDENT THAT THE SERVICE WILL BE ABLE TO HELP ALL THE REDUNDANT TEACHERS TO FIND EMPLOYMENT.

MR. LAM TOLD THE UNION REPRESENTATIVES THAT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WELCOMED THE SUGGESTION OF CO-OPERATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE UNION AND THE PLACEMENT SERVICE.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNION, MR. SZETO WAH SAID THAT HIS UNION WOULD GIVE THE PLACEMENT SERVICE ITS FULL SUPPORT.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE UNION FOR THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF NEW CLASSES TO BE OPENED, THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAID THAT SINCE MOST SCHOOL PREMISES IN NEW ESTATES HAVE NOT YET BEEN HANDED OVER TO SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE AT THE MOMENT TO GIVE AN EXACT FIGURE. MR. LAM SAID THAT IN JULY OR AUGUST HE WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF NEW CLASSES IN NEW ESTATES WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY MATCH THE NUMBER OF CLASSES THAT WOULD CLOSE IN THE URBAN AREAS.

THE UNION AGREED IN GENERAL TERMS WITH THE +LAST IN, FIRST OUT+ PRINCIPLE IN DETERMINING WHICH TEACHER WILL LEAVE AND WHICH WILL REMAIN.

ANSWERING A QUESTION AT AN INFORMAL JOINT PRESS BRIEFING AFTERWARDS, MR. LAM EXPLAINED THAT THIS PRINCIPLE WILL BE ADHERED TO AS IT IS A PRINCIPLE RECOGNISED INTERNATIONALLY. BUT IF THE +LAST IN+ TEACHER HAPPENS TO BE THE HEADMASTER OR SENIOR TEACHER OF THE SCHOOL, THEN THE +SECOND LAST IN+ TEACHER WILL BECOME REDUNDANT.

MR. SZETO EXPRESSED THE WISH TO CONTINUE CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF REDUNDANT TEACHERS IN FUTURE YEARS.

MR. LAM SAID THE DEPARTMENT WOULD MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE UNION TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

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FOODSTUFFS COST LESS LAST MONTH

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THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SALT WATER FISH, PORK AND EGGS WERE LOWER LAST MONTH THAN IN MARCH, BUT FRESH WATER FISH COST A BIT MORE, ACCORDING TO THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDICES ISSUED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

BOTH THE 'A' AND 'B' INDICES REMAINED STABLE AT 106, THE SAME AS IN MARCH, AND BOTH SHOWED A ONE-POINT DROP IN THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS.

IN THE 'A' INDEX, WHICH IS BASED ON WEIGHTS DERIVED FROM EXPENDITURE OF HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$400 AND \$1,499 A MONTH, AN INCREASE OF ONE POINT WAS RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR HOUSING AS A RESULT OF AN UPWARD REVISION IN THE RENTS OF SOME HOUSING SOCIETY AND HOUSING AUTHORITY GROUP A ESTATES.

THE INDEX FOR SERVICES ALSO ADVANCED BY ONE POINT, FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ON ADMISSION CHARGES TO CINEMAS AND HIGHER POSTAGE RATES FOR CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF LETTER MAIL.

IN THE 'B' INDEX, WHICH IS BASED ON WEIGHTS DERIVED FROM EXPENDITURE OF HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN \$1,500 AND \$2,999 A MONTH, INCREASES OF ONE POINT EACH WERE RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR FUEL AND LIGHT AND THE INDEX FOR ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO.

MOVEMENTS IN THE INDICES FOR OTHER SECTIONS OF COMMODITY WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

THE OLD GENERAL CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR APRIL REMAINED AT 184.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

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HONG KONG TO BE REPRESENTED AT
COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL SEMINAR ON EDUCATION
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TWO ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION WILL BE GOING TO KUALA LUMPUR ON MONDAY TO REPRESENT HONG KONG AT THE COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL SEMINAR ON EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION FROM MAY 27 TO JUNE 6.

THEY ARE MR. LAM TAT-LAU, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PRIMARY), AND MR. ARTHUR BROWN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS).

THE SEMINAR, WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE LANGUAGE CENTRE, IS BEING HOSTED BY THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT. IT IS THE THIRD IN THE SERIES ORGANISED BY THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT IN LONDON. TWO PREVIOUS SEMINARS OF THIS SERIES WERE HELD IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, IN MAY 1973, AND IN GEORGETOWN, GUYANA, IN JANUARY 1974.

THE HOLDING OF THE THIRD SEMINAR FOLLOWS THE RECOMMENDATION BY THE SIXTH COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION CONFERENCE HELD IN KINGSTON, JAMAICA IN JUNE LAST YEAR, THAT THE SERIES OF REGIONAL SEMINARS SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE ORGANISATION OF SUCH A MEETING FOR MEMBER COUNTRIES IN ASIA.

THE SEMINAR'S MAIN THEME IS EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION AND ATTENTION WILL BE FOCUSED ON THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE INSPECTOR, THE INSPECTOR AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

DURING THE SEMINAR DELEGATES WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE TRAINING OF INSPECTORS AND ADVISERS AS WELL AS VISIT A NUMBER OF SCHOOLS. THEY WILL ALSO DISCUSS COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL CO-OPERATION.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1975

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WEEKLY STATISTICS ON THE INCIDENCE OF VIRAL HEPATITIS

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A TOTAL OF 83 CASES OF VIRAL HEPATITIS WAS NOTIFIED TO THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT DURING THE WEEK ENDING MAY 17, AN INCREASE OF FIVE CASES OVER THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

ONE DEATH FROM THE DISEASE WAS RECORDED DURING THE WEEK. THERE WERE NO DEATHS IN THE MONTH OF APRIL.

AS REGARDS AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES NOTIFIED SO FAR THIS YEAR, HALF OF THE CASES WERE IN THE AGE GROUP 15-29, WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER RECORDED IN THE 20-24 AGE GROUP.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE INCIDENCE OF VIRAL HEPATITIS WAS EXPECTED TO REMAIN HIGH FOR THE NEXT WEEKS.

HE URGED THE PUBLIC TO CONTINUE PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE PARTICULARLY TO THE CHOICE OF FOOD AND DRINK.

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SHAU KEI WAN TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

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NEW TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED THIS WEEK IN SHAU KEI WAN DISTRICT ON HONG KONG ISLAND IN CONNECTION WITH THE OPENING OF THE A KUNG NGAM ROAD EXTENSION.

THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS WILL INVOLVE ONE-WAY RE-ROUTING OF CERTAIN STREET SECTIONS TO EASE VEHICLE PEDESTRIAN CONFLICTS AS WELL AS THE PROHIBITION OF TWO BUSY ROADS AGAINST PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW.

FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 23), THE SECTION OF SHAUKEIWAN MAIN STREET EAST FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH KAM WAH STREET TO A KUNG NGAM WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND.

A KUNG NGAM, BETWEEN SHAUKIWAN MAIN STREET EAST AND A KUNG NGAM ROAD, AS WELL AS THE SECTION OF A KUNG NGAM OF ABOUT 400 FEET LONG IMMEDIATELY TO THE EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH A KUNG NGAM ROAD, WILL BE ROUTED ONE-WAY EASTBOUND.

PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO USE THE SECTION OF SHAUKIWAN MAIN STREET EAST BETWEEN KAM WAH STREET AND A KUNG NGAM, AS WELL AS A KUNG NGAM ROAD.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE POSTED TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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