



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1991

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GOVT LOOKING INTO INNOVATIVE WAYS OF RAISING REVENUE

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THE GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED TO ENSURE THAT ITS OVERALL PUBLIC REVENUE DOES NOT REMAIN SO HEAVILY RELIANT ON SALARIES TAX AND BUSINESS PROFITS TAX, THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, SAID THIS (TUESDAY) EVENING.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE HONG KONG TOYS COUNCIL, MR MACLEOD SAID THESE TWO DIRECT TAXES ARE SO SENSITIVE BOTH TO HONG KONG'S OWN ECONOMY AND THAT OF THE WORLD AT LARGE, OVER WHICH WE HAVE NO CONTROL.

"THIS HAS SPURRED US TO KEEP LOOKING AT INNOVATIVE WAYS OF RAISING REVENUE," HE SAID.

"ONE IDEA WHICH HAS BEEN MOOTED IS A 'PREMIUM BOND' SCHEME ALONG THE LINES OF THE ONE WHICH HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS OR SO.

"IT IS, IN FACT, A KIND OF SOFT GOVERNMENT BORROWING THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE MIGHT ACCEPT AS WORTHWHILE TO PARTICIPATE IN, AND FUN.

"LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR, THOUGH, THAT THIS IS NOT ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS YEAR'S BUDGET.

"WHAT HAPPENS UNDER THE SCHEME IS THAT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BUY A BOND FROM THE GOVERNMENT AT A FACE VALUE OF, SAY \$100. THE BONDS CAN BE REDEEMED AT THEIR FACE VALUE AT ANY TIME AS LONG AS THEY HAVE BEEN HELD FOR AT LEAST FOUR MONTHS.

"THERE IS NO INTEREST PAID DIRECTLY ON THE BOND. INSTEAD, THE GOVERNMENT HOLDS THE PROCEEDS OF ALL SALES, AND PUTS PART OF THE INTEREST EARNED ON THE MONEY BACK INTO A PRIZE FUND.

"PRIZES ARE DRAWN ON THE BASIS OF THE BOND NUMBERS ONCE A WEEK. THE PRIZES WOULD BE LARGE ENOUGH TO MAKE THE BONDS AN INTERESTING PROPOSITION TO MOST HONG KONG PEOPLE."

MR MACLEOD STRESSED THAT THIS IS NOT A FORM OF GAMBLING, ADDING THAT UNLIKE THE MARK SIX LOTTERY, THE AMOUNT INVESTED IN THE BOND IS NEVER LOST: IT IS ALWAYS REDEEMABLE IN FULL, WHETHER THE BOND WINS A PRIZE OR NOT.

"AND THE SAME BOND CAN WIN PRIZES OVER AND OVER AGAIN: IT ALWAYS FORMS PART OF THE DRAW AS LONG AS THE HOLDER DECIDES NOT TO REDEEM IT," HE SAID.

MR MACLEOD POINTED OUT THAT SALARIES TAX AND BUSINESS PROFITS TAX ARE, OF COURSE, ALWAYS HOSTAGE TO CONTINUE EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE BY THE BUSINESS SECTOR.

"THANKFULLY, THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF ANY DIRE HAPPENINGS ON THAT FRONT IN THE NEAR FUTURE," HE ADDED.

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TAC DISCUSSES TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT OPTIONS
FOR CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL

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THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TODAY (TUESDAY) DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE MEASURES TO TACKLE THE CONGESTION PROBLEM AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL AND WAS BRIEFED ON THE 1991-95 FORWARD PLANNING PROGRAMME (FPP) OF KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY.

THE TAC MEMBERS WERE INFORMED THAT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WERE INTRODUCED TO ALLEVIATE THE CONGESTION AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL IN 1988, INCLUDING LANE MARKING, BUS STOP RELOCATIONS AND BUS BAY WIDENING.

HOWEVER, THESE MEASURES HAD PROVIDED SOME MARGINAL RELIEF BUT PROVED INSUFFICIENT TO CONTAIN CONGESTION MAINLY BECAUSE THE MAXIMUM CAPACITY OF THE TUNNEL HAS ALREADY BEEN EXCEEDED.

MEANWHILE, THE TOTAL VOLUME OF TRAFFIC IN THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL HAS INCREASED FROM 118,000 VEHICLES A DAY IN SEPTEMBER 1989 TO 122,000 VEHICLES A DAY IN DECEMBER 1990.

THIS INCREASE IS THE RESULT OF THE RELEASE OF SUPPRESSED DEMAND AND A SHIFT FROM FERRY TO TUNNEL TRAFFIC UPON THE OPENING OF THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING.

THE PRACTICAL CAPACITY OF THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL IS 100,000 VEHICLES PER DAY.

TRAFFIC USING THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING HAS INCREASED FROM 19,000 VEHICLES PER DAY IN SEPTEMBER 1989 WHEN IT FIRST OPENED TO 38,000 VEHICLES PER DAY IN DECEMBER 1990.

DESPITE SUCH GROWTH, THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING IS STILL VERY MUCH UNDER-UTILISED. THE SITUATION IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE SLIGHTLY UPON THE OPENING OF THE TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL IN MID 1991 WHEN AN EXTRA 4,000 VEHICLES ARE EXPECTED TO PASS THROUGH IT.

MUCH EFFORT HAS ALREADY BEEN PUT INTO IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING SUCH AS PUTTING UP MORE TRAFFIC SIGNS AND IMPROVING THE ACCESS ROADS. HOWEVER, ONLY 38,000 VEHICLES ARE USING IT EVERY DAY.

AT THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING TODAY, MEMBERS ADVISED THAT THE AIM OF ANY NEW MEASURES SHOULD BE TO FACILITATE THE EASIER MOVEMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT PASSENGERS, MAXIMISE THE USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES SUCH AS THE EASTERN ISLAND CORRIDOR AND SECOND CROSS-HARBOUR TUNNEL, AND REDUCING THE ECONOMIC DISBENEFITS ARISING FROM CONGESTION ON OUR ROADS AND ASSOCIATED ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE MORE DATA AND INFORMATION SO AS TO ENABLE THEM TO TENDER THEIR ADVICE ON THE BEST WAY TO TACKLE THESE PROBLEMS AT A FUTURE MEETING.

THE COMMITTEE WAS ALSO INFORMED OF THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY'S FIVE-YEAR PLAN AND ITS FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.

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THE PLAN INCLUDES PROGRAMMES ON BUS ROUTE, FLEET AND DEPOT DEVELOPMENT, AND FINANCIAL FORECASTS FOR THE FIVE YEARS ENDING 1995.

ON ROUTE DEVELOPMENT, MEMBERS NOTED THAT KMB, IN PREPARING THE LATEST PROGRAMME, HAS ALREADY TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION THE TAC'S ADVICE ON THE NEED FOR A CRITICAL REVIEW OF NETWORK EFFICIENCY, THEREBY MAKING FULLER USE OF ITS EXISTING FLEET.

KMB HAS PLANS FOR 29 NEW ROUTES AND 107 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ITEMS TO SERVE NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND TO MEET RISING DEMAND FOR CERTAIN EXISTING SERVICES.

THESE INCLUDE 10 AIR-CONDITIONED SERVICES AND THE CONVERSION OF FOUR EXISTING ROUTES TO AIR-CONDITIONED SERVICES. IN ADDITION, 48 AIR-CONDITIONED DOUBLE DECKERS ARE PROPOSED FOR DEPLOYMENT ON EIGHT EXISTING CROSS HARBOUR ROUTES IN THE SUMMER MONTHS.

MEMBERS NOTED THAT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS NOW CONDUCTING A STUDY ON THE OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS AND ECONOMICS OF AIR-CONDITIONED SERVICES WITH A VIEW TO FORMULATING A MORE BALANCED AND REALISTIC FARE SCALE FOR AIR-CONDITIONED BUS SERVICES, HAVING REGARD TO VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE DISTRICT BOARDS.

THE DISTRICT BOARDS WERE CONCERNED THAT SOME PASSENGERS MIGHT BE FORCED TO USE THE AIR-CONDITIONED SERVICES AT HIGHER FARES AS AND WHEN MORE CONVENTIONAL BUS SERVICES ARE GRADUALLY PHASED OUT.

TAC MEMBERS WERE ASSURED THAT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WOULD MONITOR CLOSELY THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF KMB'S AIR-CONDITIONED SERVICES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THEIR FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND CUSTOMER FEEDBACK.

THERE ARE PLANS FOR FURTHER RATIONALISING LOSS-INCURRING SERVICES OR SERVICES FOR WHICH THE DEMAND IS FALLING.

KMB HAS NOT IMPLEMENTED SOME SERVICE RATIONALISATION PROPOSALS IN THE LIGHT OF OBJECTIONS OR COUNTER-PROPOSALS FROM THE DISTRICT BOARDS. REVISED PROPOSALS ARE BEING FORMULATED AND THE DISTRICT BOARDS WILL BE FURTHER CONSULTED.

TAC MEMBERS WERE ALSO BRIEFED ON KMB'S FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND NOTED THAT, AT EXISTING FARE LEVELS, THERE WOULD BE A SHORTFALL IN PERMITTED RETURN IN ALL FIVE YEARS COVERED BY THE PLAN.

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ACTING RS URGES SUPPORT FOR DB ELECTIONS

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THE ACTING REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR FUNG KWOK-KEUNG, THIS (TUESDAY) EVENING URGED LOCAL RESIDENTS TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT THE FORTHCOMING DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT FESTIVAL CONCERT AT THE HONG KONG COLISEUM, MR FUNG SAID LOCAL RESIDENTS SHOULD EXERCISE THEIR CIVIC RIGHTS BY CASTING VOTES IN THE MARCH 3 ELECTIONS.

"THE SUCCESS OF A REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM DEPENDS VERY MUCH ON THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND RESIDENTS," HE STRESSED.

ON THE DISTRICT FESTIVAL, MR FUNG SAID ITS VARIOUS ACTIVITIES HAD ENABLED RESIDENTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THEIR DISTRICT AND ENHANCED THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE COMMUNITY.

"THE FESTIVAL ALSO ENCOURAGED THE RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL AFFAIRS SO AS TO BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY AND TO STRIVE FOR THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG.

"THIS SPIRIT OF UNITY AND ENTERPRISE IS EXACTLY WHAT HONG KONG NEEDS TO COPE WITH FUTURE CHALLENGES," MR FUNG NOTED.

MORE THAN 10,000 RESIDENTS ATTENDED THE CONCERT WHICH WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST EVENTS OF THE CURRENT DISTRICT FESTIVAL.

THE CONCERT FEATURED PERFORMANCES BY A POPULAR BAND AND SINGERS AS WELL AS OTHER PROGRAMMES FOCUSING ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT.

OTHER OFFICIATING GUESTS OF THE CEREMONY INCLUDED THE YAU TSIM DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR YIP WAH; YAU TSIM DISTRICT OFFICER, MISS ANNIE TANG; AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT FESTIVAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MR CHIU YU-HEI.

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DECEMBER SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL BEING CONDUCTED
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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT IS CONDUCTING THE DECEMBER 1990 ROUND OF THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL IN MAJOR SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY.

THE SURVEY COVERS ABOUT 40,000 ESTABLISHMENTS WHICH ARE DRAWN FROM VARIOUS SECTORS INCLUDING THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR (MINING AND QUARRYING; MANUFACTURING; ELECTRICITY AND GAS), THE DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES SECTOR (WHOLESALE, RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS) AND THE SERVICES SECTOR (TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION; FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES; COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SERVICES).

QUESTIONNAIRES WERE MAILED TO INDIVIDUAL SAMPLED ESTABLISHMENTS AT THE END OF DECEMBER 1990. REMINDERS ARE NOW BEING SENT TO ESTABLISHMENTS NOT RESPONDING TO THE INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT SAID THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ORDER 1982 GAZETTED ON MARCH 5, 1982, ESTABLISHMENTS RECEIVING QUESTIONNAIRES ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THEM TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE SPECIFIED PERIOD.

INFORMATION IS BEING SOUGHT ON THE NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED AND EXISTING VACANCIES ON DECEMBER 31, 1990 FOR EACH SAMPLED ESTABLISHMENT.

SOME 10,000 ESTABLISHMENTS HAVE BEEN RANDOMLY SELECTED FROM THIS SAMPLE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAYROLL IN EACH OF THE THREE MONTHS DURING THE REFERENCE PERIOD OF OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1990.

SHOULD RESPONDENTS FIND DIFFICULTIES IN COMPLETING THE FORMS, THEY ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANCE ON TEL. 823 5076.

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REGISTRATION OF A DEPOSIT-TAKING CO. REVOKED
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THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING ANNOUNCED TODAY (TUESDAY) THAT THE REGISTRATION OF CHINA INVESTMENT AND FINANCE LIMITED AS A DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY HAS BEEN REVOKED AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON JANUARY 8 AT ITS OWN REQUEST UNDER SECTION 31(2) OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE.

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CYC WORKS TOWARDS BETTER ENVIRONMENT

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THE COMMUNITY YOUTH CLUB (CYC) WILL CONTINUE TO PROMOTE ITS COMMUNITY SERVICES IN THE 1990s UNDER THE THEME "ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND CREATION OF BETTER ENVIRONMENT."

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR LI YUET-TING, SAID THIS TODAY (TUESDAY) WHEN LAUNCHING THE CYC CITY GAMES TELEVISION SERIES.

HE SAID THE CLUB FORMED PART OF THE SCHOOL EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND IS A POPULAR YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE GROUP.

THE 13-PART TV SERIES, JOINTLY PRESENTED BY RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG (RTHK) AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, IS TO ENCOURAGE MORE YOUTHS TO CARE AND SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AND TO KNOW BETTER ABOUT THE DISTRICT IN WHICH THEY LIVE.

THE 30-MINUTE PROGRAMME WILL BE TELEVISED ON ATV HOME CHANNEL EVERY SATURDAY, STARTING FROM JANUARY 12.

ALSO OFFICIATING AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WAS THE CONTROLLER (EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION), RTHK, MR CHU PUI-HING.

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LABOUR COMMISSIONER VISITS KNITTING FACTORY

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THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR TONY HAMMOND, TODAY (TUESDAY) VISITED THE FANG BROTHERS KNITTING LTD IN KWAI CHUNG TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN THE LABOUR SCENE.

ESTABLISHED IN 1972, THE FACTORY MANUFACTURES LADIES' KNITWEARS MAINLY FOR EXPORT TO THE UNITED STATES. IT HAS A WORKFORCE OF ABOUT 800, MOSTLY EXPERIENCED WORKERS WITH LONG YEARS OF SERVICE.

MR HAMMOND WAS RECEIVED ON ARRIVAL BY THE COMPANY'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR KENNETH FANG, WHO BRIEFED HIM ON THE GENERAL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN THE FACTORY.

MR HAMMOND WAS TOLD THAT THE LABOUR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS ARE HARMONIOUS AND THE FACTORY HAS SUCCEEDED IN MAINTAINING A SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT.

NO PROSECUTION UNDER INDUSTRIAL SAFETY REGULATIONS HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT AGAINST IT IN RECENT YEARS WHILE MOST INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS RECORDED WERE ALL OF A MINOR NATURE.

MR HAMMOND LATER TOURED THE PLANT TO SEE EMPLOYEES AT WORK.

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