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PLAN TO UPDATE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED A NUMBER OF MEASURES TO REFINE AND UPDATE THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE UNDER WHICH THE MAJORITY OF DOMESTIC TENANTS ENJOY THE PROTECTION OF SECURITY OF TENURE AND CONTROL AGAINST LARGE RENT INCREASES.

IN ANNOUNCING THESE MEASURES TODAY THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, MR DONALD LIAO, EXPLAINED THAT THEY WERE DRAWN UP FOLLOWING A REVIEW OF THE WORKING OF THE ORDINANCE AND OF THE RENTAL MARKET SITUATION IN 1983 AND HAVING REGARD TO THE INTERESTS OF BOTH LANDLORDS AND TENANTS. THEY WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S PREVIOUSLY STATED INTENTION THAT AS SOON AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT, EVERY EFFORT CONSISTENT WITH THE NEED TO AVOID ADVERSE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES SHOULD BE MADE TO ACCELERATE THE PHASING OUT OF RENT CONTROL.

IT WAS STRESSED HOWEVER THAT THE MAJORITY OF PROTECTED TENANTS WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY THESE CHANGES AND THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE PROTECTION OF SECURITY OF TENURE AND THE CONTROL ON RENT INCREASES.

THE PROPOSED MEASURES, CONTAINED IN THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, ALSO INCLUDE IMPROVEMENTS TO SIMPLIFY AND CLARIFY SOME OF THE EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MAY 16 WHILE THE RESUMED SECOND READING AND THE THIRD READING WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL JUNE 13.

PUBLIC VIEWS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AND REPRESENTATIONS MAY BE MADE TO UMELCO, AT SWIRE HOUSE, 12TH FLOOR, CHATER ROAD, OR TO THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, AT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG.

MR LIAO RECALLED THAT EXCLUSION OF LUXURY PREMISES FROM RENT CONTROL WAS INTRODUCED IN PHASES BEGINNING IN DECEMBER, 1981 EXCLUDING PREMISES WHICH HAD A RATEABLE VALUE OF OR ABOVE $80 000. THIS POINT WAS LOWERED TO $60 000 IN 1982 AND TO $50 000 LAST YEAR.

TO CONTINUE THIS PROCESS, IT IS NOW PROPOSED THAT FROM DECEMBER 19 THIS YEAR, PREMISES WITH A RATEABLE VALUE OF $35 000 OR ABOVE AS AT JUNE 10, 1983 (I.E. THE OLD RATEABLE VALUE BEFORE THE RECENT REVALUATION) SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM PART II OF THE ORDINANCE, WHICH PROVIDES SECURITY OF TENURE AND RENT CONTROL, TO PART IV, WHICH PROVIDES SECURITY OF TENURE AT THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT. IT IS INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO USE THE OLD RATEABLE VALUES FOR THIS PURPOSE BECAUSE THE NEW RATEABLE VALUES WHICH TOOK EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1984 HAVE YET TO BE ESTABLISHED.

/+ABOUT 2 000 .....

+ABOUT 2 000 TENANCIES WILL BE AFFECTED, OF WHICH ABOUT 73 PER CENT ARE HELD IN THE NAME OF CORPORATIONS. IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT THEY WILL SUFFER ANY UNDUE HARDSHIP BECAUSE RENTS FOR THIS SECTOR HAVE BEEN DECLINING AND THEIR AVERAGE LEVEL OF CONTROLLED RENT IS ALREADY CLOSE TO THE PREVAILING MARKET LEVEL. FURTHERMORE, NO HARDENING OF RENTS SEEMS LIKELY FOR THIS SECTOR IN THE COMING YEAR, AND THERE ARE MANY VACANT LARGE FLATS AND A GOOD SUPPLY FORECAST FOR BOTH THIS AND NEXT YEAR,+ MR LIAO SAID.

+A NEW PROVISION IN THE BILL IS THE PROPOSAL TO REMOVE FRESH LETTINGS OF FULLY FURNISHED PREMISES FROM BOTH TENANCY AND RENT CONTROLS. IT IS THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD BE AN INCENTIVE TO THOSE LANDLORDS WHO WISH TO PROVIDE SUCH ACCOMMODATION, ON A SHORT-TERM BASIS, TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF ORGANISATIONS BRINGING IN OVERSEAS STAFF FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS. SUCH TENANCIES WOULD BE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE YEAR AT A TIME AND, IN ORDER TO AVOID ABUSE, THE AGREEMENTS WOULD REQUIRE ENDORSEMENT BY THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION. HE MUST BE SATISFIED THAT THE TENANT UNDERSTANDS THE EFFECT OF THE EXCLUSION, THE PREMISES ARE FULLY FURNISHED AND THAT THE LANDLORD ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING AND REPAIRING THE PREMISES, FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS,+ MR LIAO SAID.

ON THE PROPOSALS TO REVISE THE MECHANISM FOR PERMITTING RENT INCREASES, MR LIAO EXPLAINED THAT; AT PRESNET, WHEN A LANDLORD APPLIES FOR A RENT INCREASE, THE AMOUNT OF INCREASE IS THE LESSER OF EITHER THE DIFFERENCE, DIVIDED BY THE FACTOR 2, BETWEEN THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT AND THE CURRENT CONTROLLED RENT OR 30 PER CENT OF THE CURRENT RENT. HOWEVER, IF THE CONTROLLED RENT IS EXCEPTIONALLY LOW, ANOTHER PROVISION, INTRODUCED IN 1983, IS TO ALLOW THE PERMITTED INCREASE TO BE AN AMOUNT NECESSARY TO BRING THE CURRENT RENT TO AT LEAST 30 PER CENT OF THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT.

ONE OF THE PROPOSALS IS TO REMOVE THE DIVIDING FACTOR. THIS IS DESIGNED TO SIMPLIFY THE MECHANISM AND TO REMOVE THE EFFECT OF THE FACTOR FOREVER REPRESSING CONTROLLED RENTS BELOW MARKET LEVELS WHICH HINDERS THE RESTORATION OF A FREE DOMESTIC MARKET. AS THE PROCESS OF DECONTROL IS WELL ADVANCED, THE AVERAGE OF CONTROLLED RENTS BEING 64 PER CENT OF PREVAILING MARKET RENT, IT IS OPPORTUNE TO ABOLISH THE DIVIDING FACTOR SO THAT DECONTROL IS NOT IMPEDED.

+REMOVING THE DIVIDING FACTOR WILL AFFECT ABOUT 23 500 TENANCIES (17 PER CENT OF TOTAL CONTROLLED TENANCIES) WHOSE CONTROLLED RENTS ARE ALREADY RELATIVELY CLOSE TO THE PREVAILING MARKET LEVEL. IN SUCH CASES, THE INCREASE IN RENT, WHILE BRINGING RENTS UP TO THE PREVAILING MARKET LEVEL, WILL STILL BE LESS THAN 30 PER CENT OF THE CURRENT RENT,+ MR LIAO SAID.

/ANOTHER PROPOSAL .....

ANOTHER PROPOSAL IS TO RAISE THE MINIMUM PERCENTAGE COMPONENT OF THE RENT CONTROL MECHANISM FROM 30 PER CENT TO 45 PER CENT OF PREVAILING MARKET RENTS AND THIS WILL MEAN THAT ABOUT 22 000 TENANCIES (16 PER CENT OF CONTROLLED TENANCIES) WITH LOW CONTROLLED RENTS WILL HAVE INCREASES, MANY ONLY MARGINALLY, EXCEEDING 30 PER CENT OF THEIR CURRENT RENTS. HOWEVER, SUCH INCREASES BEING BASED ON VERY LOW CONTROLLED RENTS, WOULD NOT BE EXCESSIVE COMPARED WITH THE GENERAL LEVEL OF INCREASES PERMITTED UNDER THIS LEGISLATION.

MEASURES IN REGARD TO PRE-WAR PREMISES ENACTED IN 1979 HAVE ALSO BEEN RE-EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES.

PRE-WAR BUSINESS PREMISES ARE ALREADY SCHEDULED FOR EXCLUSION FROM CONTROL FROM JULY 1, 1984 AND WILL BECOME SUBJECT TO PART V WHICH REQUIRES, GENERALLY, SIX MONTHS NOTICE TO TERMINATE A TENANCY. LANDLORDS AND TENANTS OF THESE PREMISES - WHICH NUMBER ONLY ABOUT 1 700 - WOULD BE IN THE SAME POSITION AS THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN POST-WAR BUSINESS PREMISES AND FREE TO NEGOTIATE RENTS ACCORDING TO PREVAILING MARKET CONDITIONS. THE BILL PROPOSES TO EXTEND THIS EXCLUSION TO BUSINESS SUB-TENANCIES IN ALL PRE-WAR DOMESTIC PREMISES. ONLY A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF SUB-TENANTS WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS PROPOSAL.

FOLLOWING THE POLICY ESTABLISHED IN 1978 OF ALLOWING ANNUAL INCREASES TO THE PERMITTED RENT OF PRE-WAR DOMESTIC PREMISES, THE FACTOR TO BE APPLIED TO THE STANDARD RENT (RENT AS AT DECEMBER 25, 1941) TO ARRIVE AT THE PERMITTED RENT WILL BE RAISED FROM 16 TO 21.

+FOR AN AVERAGE UPPER FLOOR TENEMENT, THE PROPOSED CHANGE WILL RESULT IN AN INCREASE OF ABOUT 31 PER CENT OR $200 PER MONTH ON ITS CURRENT RENT AND WILL BRING UP ITS LEVEL TO ABOUT 45 PER CENT OF THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT. ONLY ABOUT 2 700 UNITS WHICH ARE EFFECTIVELY UNDER CONTROL WILL BE AFFECTED,+ MR LIAO SAID.

IT IS ALSO PROPOSED TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO TRANSFER TENANCIES FROM PART II TO PART IV UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

(A) UPON THE JOINT APPLICATION OF A LANDLORD AND A TENANT,

(B) UPON THE APPLICATION OF A LANDLORD OR A TENANT WHOSE RENT HAS REACHED AT LEAST 77 PER CENT OF THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT (AT WHICH LEVEL A 30 PER CENT INCREASE WOULD BRING THE RENT UP TO THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT).

BY CHANGING THE STATUS OF THE TENANCY TO PART IV, TENANTS CAN BE ASSURED THAT THEY NEED IN FUTURE PAY NO MORE THAN THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT IN RETURN FOR SECURITY OF TENURE; THUS, THESE PROPOSALS SHOULD BE WELCOMED BY THOSE TENANTS CURRENTLY PAYING RENT ABOVE THE PREVAILING MARKET LEVEL WHERE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE TENANCY AGREEMENT WAS SETTLED BEFORE MARKET RENTS DECLINED. LANDLORDS TOO MAY WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY OF ENTERING INTO A NEW FIXED TERM LEASE UNDER PART IV RATHER THAN RELYING ON A MONTHLY TENANCY STATUTORILY CONTINUED UNDER PART II.

/THE EXISTING .....

THE EXISTING LEGISLATION PROVIDES FOR MINIMUM COMPENSATION, WHICH EQUALS ONE TO TWO TIMES THE RATEABLE VALUE (AS AT JUNE 10, 1983) DEPENDING ON THE LENGTH OF RESIDENCE, TO BE ORDERED BY THE LANDS TRIBUNAL TO TENANTS DISPOSSESSED BY BUILDING REDEVELOPMENT.

THE BILL PROPOSES CHANGES TO THE BASIS FOR CALCULATING COMPENSATION BY REFERENCE TO THE SUM OF :

(A) A FIXED AMOUNT EQUAL TO TWICE THE RATEABLE VALUE AS AT JUNE 10, 1983, REGARDLESS OF THE LENGTH OF OCCUPATION BY THE TENANT; AND

(B) AN AMOUNT TO COVER RELOCATION COSTS, INCLUDING ANY LOSS ON THE TENANT'S FITTINGS, TO BE DETERMINED BY THE LANDS TRIBUNAL IN THE EVENT OF A DISPUTE.

THIS PROVIDES A CLEAR GUIDELINE WHICH, IT IS HOPED, WOULD FACILITATE AND ENCOURAGE EARLY SETTLEMENT BETWEEN LANDLORDS AND TENANTS IN REGARD TO COMPENSATION.

THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES SOME TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO FACILITATE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCE. THESE INCLUDE: SIMPLIFIED REQUIREMENTS AND EXTENDED TIME LIMITS FOR SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS TO THE COMMISSIONER; THE IMPOSITION OF A FINE FOR FALSE STATEMENTS AND AN ADMINISTRATION FEE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF LATE NOTICES; AND, STRENGTHENING THE COMMISSIONER'S POWERS OF ENTRY TO INSPECT PREMISES FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCHARGING HIS FUNCTIONS UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

IN EXPLAINING THE PROPOSALS EMBODIED IN THE BILL, MR LIAO REITERATED THAT THEY WERE PART OF AN ONGOING EXERCISE WITH THE AGREED OBJECTIVE OF GRADUALLY PHASING OUT RENT CONTROL. HE EMPHASISED THAT, DESPITE THE CHANGES PROPOSED, THE MAJORITY OF CONTROLLED TENANCIES WOULD CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE PROTECTION OF THE RENT CONTROL MECHANISM WHEREBY RENT INCREASES ARE NORMALLY LIMITED TO A MAXIMUM OF 30 PER CENT OF CURRENT (CONTROLLED) RENT OVER TWO YEARS, THE EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE BEING TENANCIES HAVING VERY LOW CONTROLLED RENT WHERE THE PERMITTED INCREASE WILL BE AN AMOUNT NECESSARY TO BRING THE CURRENT RENT UP TO 45 PER CENT OF THE PREVAILING MARKET RENT.

+GIVEN THE GENERAL SOFTENING OF THE RENTAL MARKET, NOW IS THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS WHEN RENT CONTROL PROTECTION IS LEAST NEEDED. FURTHERMORE, THE IMPROVING ECONOMY SHOULD STIMULATE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCE MORE HOUSING FOR THE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THESE PROPOSALS CAN SEEK HELP FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICES AND THE RATING AND VALUATION DEPARTMENT.

THE WORKING OF THE LANDS TRIBUNAL HAS ALSO BEEN REVIEWED AND MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE PROPOSED TO THE LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE JUDICIAL SERVICE COMMISSION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, ALL PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE TODAY.

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MONETARY STATISTICS FOR MARCH

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HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPOSITS WITH THE MONETARY SECTOR FELL MARGINALLY IN MARCH, FOLLOWING SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN THE PREVIOUS FIVE MONTHS, ACCORDING TO STATISTICS RELEASED TODAY.

BY CONTRAST, FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY.

THE SWITCH WAS PROBABLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE SUBSIDING OF THE SPECULATIVE EXPECTATION OF AN IMMINENT ALTERATION OF THE PRESENT LINKED EXCHANGED RATE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR WITH THE US DOLLAR.

REFLECTING THIS CHANGE, HONG KONG DOLLAR MONEY SUPPLY FELL (ON THE BROADER DEFINITIONS, HK$M2 AND HK$M3) BUT THE TOTAL MONEY SUPPLY ROSE.

LOANS TO FINANCE VISIBLE TRADE OF HONG KONG PICKED UP SOMEWHAT DURING THE MONTH BUT OTHER LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG CONTINUED TO RECORD ONLY MARGINAL INCREASES.

TABLE 1 SETS OUT SUMMARY FIGURES FOR MARCH 1984 AND COMPARISONS WITH EARLIER MONTHS. TABLE 2 SETS OUT SOME FIGURES FROM THE QUARTERLY ANALYSIS OF LOANS AND ADVANCES FOR USE IN HONG KONG BY SECTOR.

DEPOSITS

HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPOSITS FELL SLIGHTLY, BY 0.7 PER CENT, AFTER A CUMULATIVE INCREASE IN THE PREVIOUS FIVE MONTHS OF $38.1 BILLION OR 28.5 PER CENT. IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH, HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPOSITS INCREASED BY 11.1 PER CENT AND OVER THE 12 MONTHS THE INCREASE WAS 27.7 PER CENT.

FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS ROSE SHARPLY BY 5.0 PER CENT AFTER A DECLINE OF 1.2 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY. IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH, THE INCREASE WAS 4.7 PER CENT AND OVER THE TWELVE MONTHS THE INCREASE WAS 32.8 PER CENT.

HONG KONG DOLLAR MONEY SUPPLY

THE NARROWEST DEFINITION OF MONEY SUPPLY, HK$M1, GREW BY 4.6 PER CENT IN MARCH, AFTER A FALL OF 8.2 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY.

ON THE BROADER DEFINITIONS, HK$M2 AND HK$M3 DECLINED BY 0.5 PER CENT AND 0.7 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY. THEIR CORRESPONDING INCREASES IN FEBRUARY WERE 5.6 PER CENT AND 4.3 PER CENT.

IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH, HK$M1 AND HK$M2 BOTH INCREASED BY 13.1 PER CENT WHILE HK$M3 INCREASED BY 10.6 PER CENT. OVER THE TWELVE MONTHS, THE CORRESPONDING GROWTH RATES WERE 18.6 PER CENT, 28.5 PER CENT AND 24.8 PER CENT.

/TOTAL MONEY .....

TOTAL MONEY SUPPLY

TOTAL MONEY SUPPLY ON ALL DEFINITIONS GREW.

TOTAL M1 ROSE BY 3.9 PER CENT, IN CONTRAST WITH A DECLINE OF 8.1 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY. TOTAL M2 ROSE BY 2.4 PER CENT AND TOTAL M3 BY 1.7 PER CENT, FOLLOWING INCREASES IN FEBRUARY OF 1.5 PER CENT AND 2.0 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH, TOTAL M1 ROSE BY 11.2 PER CENT, TOTAL M2 BY 8.5 PER CENT AND TOTAL M3 BY 7.9 PER CENT. DURING THE 12 MONTHS TO MARCH, THE CORRESPONDING GROWTH RATES WERE 20.1 PER CENT, 27.7 PER CENT AND 28.1 PER CENT.

LOANS AND ADVANCES

TOTAL LOANS AND ADVANCES EXTENDED BY BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ROSE BY 1.2 PER CENT FOLLOWING A RISE OF 0.4 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY. IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH THE INCREASE WAS 1.9 PER CENT AND OVER THE 12 MONTHS 15.4 PER CENT.

LOANS TO FINANCE VISIBLE TRADE OF HONG KONG ROSE BY A MORE RAPID 2.6 PER CENT WHILE OTHER LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG RECORDED A MODEST GROWTH OF 0.5 PER CENT.

THE GROWTH RATES OF THESE LOANS IN THE THREE MONTHS TO MARCH WERE 1.8 PER CENT AND 1.2 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY. OVER THE 12 MONTHS THEIR CORRESPONDING GROWTH RATES WERE 15.1 PER CENT AND 8.1 PER CENT.

QUARTERLY ANALYSIS OF LOANS AND ADVANCES FOR USE IN HONG KONG BY SECTOR

IN THE FIRST QUARTER, LOANS AND ADVANCES EXTENDED TO THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR ROSE BY 4.0 PER CENT FOLLOWING A CONTRACTION OF 0.2 PER CENT IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1983.

LOANS TO THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE SECTOR FELL BY 2.0 PER CENT AFTER A STRONG GROWTH OF 7.8 PER CENT IN THE PREVIOUS QUARTER.

LOANS TO THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTOR CONTINUED TO FALL, BY 0.6 PER CENT, BUT THE FALL WAS SUBSTANTIALLY SMALLER THAN THE PREVIOUS QUARTER'S 8.6 PER CENT.

BORROWING BY INDIVIDUALS TO PURCHASE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OTHER THAN FLATS IN THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME RECORDED A FASTER GROWTH OF 4.8 PER CENT, COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER'S 2.6 PER CENT.

/FOREIGN CURRENCY .....

FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS AND LIABILITIES OF THE MONETARY SECTOR CONTINUED TO INCREASE IN MARCH.

HOWEVER, SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY LIABILITIES OF THE SECTOR GREW FASTER THAN SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS.

AS A RESULT, THE NET SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY LIABILITIES OF THE MONETARY SECTOR ROSE TO $4.9 BILLION AT THE END OF MARCH FROM $4.1 BILLION AT THE END OF FEBRUARY.

BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES HAD NET SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY LIABILITIES OF $2.2 BILLION AND $2.7 BILLION RESPECTIVELY.

STATISTICS COLLECTED (ON THE BASIS OF SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS) BY THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES SHOWED AN INCREASE IN NET SPOT FOREIGN CURRENCY LIABILITIES OF $2.8 BILLION TO $6.3 BILLION IN MARCH. THE SECTOR'S FORWARD FOREIGN CURRENCY POSITION SHOWS NET ASSETS OF $33.4 BILLION.

LIQUIDITY RATIOS

THE AVERAGE LIQUIDITY RATIO (AS DEFINED IN S. 18 OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE) FOR ALL BANKS ROSE TO 49.3 PER CENT FROM 48.6 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY.

THE AVERAGE LIQUIDITY RATIO (AS DEFINED IN S. 24 OF THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCES) FOR ALL DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES FELL TO 52.5 PER CENT FROM 54.5 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY.

NUMBER OF REPORTING INSTITUTIONS

THE NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS REPORTING MONETARY STATISTICS REMAINED UNCHANGED IN MARCH WITH 134 LICENSED BANKS, 30 LICENSED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES AND 317 REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

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/TABEL 1 : .....

TABLE 1 : MONETARY STATISTICS - March 1984

(HK$mn)

Money Supply	Mar 1984	Earlier months (% change to March 1984) Feb 1984	Dec 1983	Mar 1983
M1 - HK$	31,984	30,583 (+ 4.6%)	28,277 (+13.1%)	26,963 (+18.6%)
Foreign currency	2,370	2,487 (- 4.7%)	2,619 (- 9.5%)	1,647 (+43.9%)
Total	34,354	33,071 (+ 3.9%)	30,896 (+11.2%)	28,610 (+20.1%)
M2 - HK$	157,042	157,779 (- 0.5%)	138,818 (+13.1%)	122,220 (+28.5%)
Foreign currency	122,454	115,223 (+ 6.3%)	118,867 (+ 3.0%)	96,735 (+26.6%)
Total	279,497	273,002 (+ 2.4%)	257,685 (+ 8.5%)	218,955 (+27.7%)
M3 - HK$	185,838	187,095 (- 0.7%)	168,020 (+10.6%)	148,869 (+24.8%)
Foreign currency	150,016	143,065 (+ 4.9%)	143,125 (+ 4.8%)	113,320 (+32.4%)
Total	335,855	330,160 (+ 1.7%)	311,146 (+ 7.9%)	262,189 (+28.1%)
Deposits				
Demand deposits	21,057	19,817 (+ 6.3%)	18,182 (+15.8%)	15,706 (+34.1%)
Savings deposits	80,792	82,647 (- 2.2%)	71,156 (+13.5%)	67,899 (+19.0%)
Time deposits with banks	159,441	152,336 (+ 4.7%)	150,535 (+ 5.9%)	117,262 (+36.0%)
Time deposits with dtcs	54,569	55,373 (- 1.5%)	52,377 (+ 4.2%)	42,052 (+29.8%)
All HK$ deposits	170,480	171,762 (- 0.7%)	153,401 (+11.1%)	133,457 (+27.7%)
All foreign currency deposits	145,379	138,411 (+ 5.0%)	138,849 (+ 4.7%)	109,463 (+32.8%)
Total	315,859	310,173 (+ 1.8%)	292,250 (+ 8.1%)	242,920 (+30.0%)
Loans and advances				
To finance Hong Kong's visible trade	30,023	29,273 (+ 2.6%)	29,482 (+ 1.8%)	26,085 (+15.1%)
To finance merchandising trade not touching Hong Kong	3,337	2,848 (+17.2%)	2,887 (+15.6%)	2,585 (+29.1%)
Other loans for use in Hong Kong	211,448	210,368 (+ 0.5%)	208,931 (+ 1.2%)	195,617 (+ 8.1%)
Other loans for use outside Hong Kong	134,435	131,854 (+ 2.0%)	131,497 (+ 2.2%)	105,808 (+27.1%)
Other loans where the place of use is not known	19,415	19,502 (- 0.4%)	18,555 (+ 4.6%)	15,357 (+26.4%)
All loans in HK$	201,569	199,206 (+ 1.2%)	197,175 (+ 2.2%)	187,731 (+ 7.4%)
All loans in foreign currencies	197,088	194,638 (+ 1.3%)	194,177 (+ 1.5%)	157,722 (+25.0%)
Total	398,657	393,844 (+ 1.2%)	391,352 (+ 1.9%)	345,452 (+15.4%)

/TABLE 2 : .....

TABLE 2 : QUARTERLY ANALYSIS OF LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG BY SECTOR - MARCH 1984

(HK$mn)

	Ending Mar 1984	Earlier quarters (% change to Mar 1984) Ending Dec 1983	Ending Sep 1983	Ending Mar 1983
Manufacturing	19,422	18,667 (+4.0)	18,698 (+ 3.9)	18,016 (+ 7.8)
Transport and transport equipment	21,086	20,778 (+1.5)	20,408 (+ 3.3)	16,607 (+27.0)
Building, construction and property development	46,821	47,120 (-0.6)	51,536 (- 9.1)	50,307 (- 6.9)
Wholesale and retail trade	25,727	26,264 (-2.0)	24,364 (+ 5.6)	21,980 (+17.0)
Financial concerns*	15,975	17,217 (-7.2)	14,151 (+12.9)	13,665 (+16.9)
Individuals				
to purchase flats in the Home Ownership Scheme and Private Sector Participation Scheme	3,501	3,211 (+9.0)	3,038 (+15.2)	2,762 (+26.8)
to purchase other residential property	22,945	21,884 (+4.8)	21,331 (+ 7.6)	18,682 (+22.8)
other purposes	20,485	21,054 (-2.7)	25,524 (-19.7)	23,138 (-11.5)
Others	35,486	32,737 (+8.4)	33,752 (+ 5.1)	30,460 (+16.5)
Total	211,448	208,931 (+1.2)	212,802 (- 0.6)	195,617 (+ 8.1)

* This excludes funds advanced to banks and deposit-taking companies

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PROPOSED NEW ELECTRICITY ORDINANCE SUPPORTED
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THERE HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY STRONG AND POSITIVE SUPPORT FOR THE NEW ELECTRICITY ORDINANCE THE GOVERNMENT IS PROPOSING, THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES, MR GRAHAM OSBORNE, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

MR OSBORNE, WHO WAS SPEAKING AT THE 39TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON ELECTRIC TRADE ASSOCIATION, SAID FORMAL CONSULTATIONS ABOUT THE ORDINANCE WITH THE SUPPLY COMPANIES AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES HAD GOT OFF TO A SMOOTH START LAST DECEMBER.

IN ADDITION TO THE TWO SUPPLY COMPANIES, SUMMARIES OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS HAD ALSO BEEN FORWARDED TO SOME 12 TRADE, INDUSTRY OR CONTRACTING ASSOCIATIONS, WORKERS' UNIONS OR OTHER INTERESTED BODIES.

+I AM PLEASED TO TELL YOU THAT, ON THE BASIS OF THE REPLIES I HAVE RECEIVED AND DISCUSSIONS HELD, THE SUPPORT HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY STRONG AND POSITIVE,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, THERE WERE STILL A FEW OUTSTANDING RESPONSES AWAITED, MAINLY BECAUSE SOME GROUPS HAD SET UP SPECIAL WORKING PARTIES TO STUDY AND EXAMINE THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS. HE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING THOSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AS THE GOVERNMENT WAS WORKING TO A FAIRLY TIGHT SCHEDULE TO PREPARE THE MAIN BILL AND THE MORE IMPORTANT REGULATIONS.

AFTER CONSOLIDATING THE INITIAL COMMENTS FROM ALL INTERESTED PARTIES, THE NEXT STEP WOULD BE TO CIRCULATE DETAILED DISCUSSION PAPERS FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION, BEFORE THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT BEGAN LAW DRAFTING ACTION, HE SAID.

MR OSBORNE SAID THE PROPOSED NEW ELECTRICITY BILL WOULD INCLUDE SEVERAL MAIN ISSUES, SOME OF WHICH WOULD BE EMBODIED IN THE MAIN BILL, WHILE OTHERS, BECAUSE OF THEIR COMPLEXITY, WOULD BE INCLUDED IN SEPARATE REGULATIONS, ANNEXED TO THE BILL.

NOT ALL THE REGULATIONS WOULD BE ENACTED WITH THE NEW BILL= A FEW WOULD BE ON AN +AS AND WHEN REQUIRED+ BASIS.

THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD ALLOW THE GOVERNMENT MORE TIME TO DISCUSS EACH REGULATION WITH INTERESTED PARTIES BEFORE IT WAS FINALISED AND ENACTED.

HE SAID THE REGISTRATION OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS AND CONTRACTORS WAS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THOSE IN THE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING BUSINESS.

'BASICALLY, WHEN THE NEW BILL WAS ENACTED, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD REGISTER ALL SKILLED AND EXPERIENCED WORKERS AND ALSO ALL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING COMPANIES.

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AT THE SAME TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DRAW UP A CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE CONTRACTING INDUSTRY TO USE AS BASIC STANDARDS FOR ALL ELECTRICAL WIRING INSTALLATION WORK, AND IT WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE SUITABLE TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR APPRENTICES OR UNSKILLED WORKERS WHO MAY WISH TO BE REGISTERED.

ON THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR BOTH LOCALLY MANUFACTURED AND IMPORTED ELECTRICAL FITTINGS, APPLIANCES AND DEVICES IN THE INTERESTS OF SAFETY, MR OSBORNE SAID ABOUT HALF THE 54 ELECTROCUTIONS RECORDED BY HIS DEPARTMENT OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS HAD BEEN DUE TO UNSAFE ELECTRICAL WIRING, APPARATUS OR APPLIANCES.

STATISTICS FROM THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT ALSO SHOWED THAT ROUGHLY 2 000 FIRES A YEAR WERE OF ELECTRICAL ORIGIN.

+A HIGH PROPORTION OF THESE FIRES ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY DUE TO SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL FITTINGS, APPLIANCES AND DEVICES,+ MR OSBORNE SAID.

+THOUGH HUMAN ERROR WILL ALWAYS PLAY A PART IN ELECTRICAL MISHAPS, A GREAT DEAL CAN BE DONE TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM THE HAZARDS INHERENT IN SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.+

HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PROPOSALS WOULD TAKE SOME TIME AND, INITIALLY, WOULD INVOLVE A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE VARIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL INDUSTRY, THE AVAILABILITY OF TESTING FACILITIES, THE ASSESSMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND THE SELECTION OF STANDARDS.

+I AM CERTAIN THAT YOUR ASSOCIATION WILL, IN DUE COURSE, PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE INTRODUCTION OF THESE STANDARDS,+ MR OSBORNE SAID.

+HOWEVER, IN THE INTERIM PERIOD, BEFORE THE ENACTMENT OF NEW REGULATIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF YOUR MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE INVOLVED IN IMPORTING ELECTRICAL GOODS= WHERE PRACTICABLE, EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES OF AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED STANDARD ONLY SHOULD BE IMPORTED.+

IT WAS EQUALLY IMPORTANT FOR ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS TO USE IN ALL BUILDINGS WIRING INSTALLATIONS, CABLES, WIRING ACCESSORIES OR OTHER APPARATUS WHICH WAS CAPABLE OF MEETING ACCEPTABLE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

+YOUR CONTRACTING MEMBERS SHOULD FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH RELEVANT STANDARDS AND TEST CERTIFICATE PROCEDURES AND SHOULD DEMAND PROOF FROM THE SUPPLIERS WHEN NECESSARY,+ HE SAID.

SELF-REGULATION IN AVOIDING THE IMPORTING, SELLING AND INSTALLING OF SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL FITTINGS, APPLIANCES AND DEVICES WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS RESOLVING THE PROBLEM.

IT HAD ALREADY PROVED MOST SUCCESSFUL IN THE TOWN GAS AND LPG INDUSTRY, SO HE SAW NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD NOT BE EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL IN THE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING INDUSTRY, MR OSBORNE SAID.

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TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER MEETS TAXI OPERATORS

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THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR JAMES SO, TODAY HELD A MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL NEW TERRITORIES TAXI ASSOCIATIONS TO HEAR THEIR VIEWS ON THE 1983 TAXI REVIEW REPORT.

THE MEETING WAS CALLED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT TO EXPLAIN THE POLICY ISSUES RAISED IN THE REVIEW AND TO GIVE TAXI OPERATORS AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT AND AIR THEIR VIEWS.

THEIR VIEWS TOGETHER WITH THOSE OF VARIOUS DISTRICT BOARDS AND INTERESTED PARTIES WILL BE PROCESSED AND SUBMITTED TO THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION.

MR SO WILL ALSO MEET REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON TAXI ASSOCIATIONS ON MAY 9.

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MORE LOCAL LEADERS BEING SOUGHT FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

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THE GOVERNMENT WAS +CLEARLY SEEKING OUT MORE LOCAL LEADERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION,+ THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN AND WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICER, MR LAM KAM-KWONG, SAID TODAY.

ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD WOULD NOT ONLY GROW IN TERMS OF NUMBERS BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG, HE SAID.

MR LAM REFERRED TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN FEBRUARY THAT THE RATIO OF ELECTED TO APPOINTED UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS WOULD BE INCREASED FROM 1 - 1 TO 2 - 1 WHEN THE ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE IN MARCH 1985.

+IN EFFECT, THIS MEANS A DOUBLING OF THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF ELECTED UNOFFICIALS IN MANY DISTRICTS,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO NEXT YEAR'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS, MR LAM SAID IT WOULD BE ANOTHER MILESTONE +IN THE EVOLUTION OF A FRAMEWORK WHEREBY HONG KONG PEOPLE WILL BE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN MAINTAINING THE ORDER AND PROSPERITY OF THE TERRITORY+.

VOTING IN THE ELECTIONS, HE SAID, WAS ALSO AN INDICATION OF RESIDENTS' SUPPORT FOR SYSTEM WHICH HAD WORKED, AND WOULD WORK TO THE BEST OF THEIR INTEREST.

SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE LIONS CLUB OF HONG KONG EAST, MR LAM SAID THAT MUCH PROGRESS BEING MADE IN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND REPRESENTATION OF PUBLIC OPINION THROUGH DISTRICT BOARDS.

/+THE PROVISION .....

+THE PROVISION FOR ELECTIONS TO DISTRICT BOARDS, WHICH WAS FIRST PUT INTO PRACTICE IN THE 1982 ELECTIONS, WAS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE ON THE ROAD TO REPRESENTATIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

THE DISTRICT BOARDS, HE SAID, HAD MATURED IN THE LAST TWO YEARS WITH EXPERIENCE.

CITING THE +STUDY ON THE TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MID-LEVELS AND THE CENTRAL DISTRICT+ AS AN EXAMPLE, HE POINTED OUT THAT UNOFFICIAL BOARD MEMBERS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN CONSULTING LOCAL OPINION, AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT FELT MORE RE-ASSURED OF THE CHANNELS WHEREBY PUBLIC OPINION COULD BE TAPPED.

+APART FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS, YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE THAT DISTRICT BOARDS ARE ALSO MAKING SINCERE EFFORTS IN REACHING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE LOCAL POPULATION,+ HE SAID.

+THE LIVELY DISCUSSION ON MANY BOARDS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN PURSUIT OF THE FAMOUS +LOBO MOTION+ LEND THE BEST TESTIMONY.

+THEY DO NOT ONLY WAIT THERE TO BE CONSULTED; THEY NOW TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN SEEKING TO DISCUSS MAJOR POLICY ISSUES RATHER THAN RESPONDING THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUESTS FOR VIEWS.+

MR LAM ADDED THAT THE BOARDS WERE BEGINNING TO ACT AS WATCHDOGS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND DESCRIBED THIS AS A HEALTHY TREND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCREASINGLY REPRESENTATIVE ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG.

AS TO THE BOARD MEMBERS THEMSELVES, HE SAID, THEY WERE UNIFIED BY THEIR CONCERN FOR THE INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY, AND BY THEIR WILLINGNESS TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS AND BELIEFS AS THEY GAINED INSIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION.

MR LAM APPEALED TO THE COMMUNITY LEADERS TO REGISTER AS VOTERS, TO INFLUENCE THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES TO FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE, AND TO STEP FORWARD TO STAND FOR NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS.

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ADDITIONAL FLOOR FOR QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL

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AN ADDITIONAL FLOOR IS TO BE BUILT ABOVE THE TWO-STOREY CLINICAL BUILDING AT QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL TO PROVIDE OFFICE SPACE AND LECTURE FACILITIES.

QUEEN MARY IS THE REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOR HONG KONG ISLAND AND A TEACHING HOSPITAL FOR THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF HONG KONG UNIVERSITY.

IT PROVIDES CLINICAL TEACHING FACILITIES FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS, INCLUDING LECTURE THEATRES, SEMINAR ROOMS, LABORATORIES AND OFFICES WHICH ARE LOCATED IN THE PROFESSORIAL BLOCK AND THE CLINICAL BUILDING WITHIN THE HOSPITAL COMPOUND.

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AS A RESULT OF STAFF INCREASES, BOTH BUILDINGS HAVE BECOME OVERCROWDED.

THE ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE OF THE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW FLOOR WHICH WILL PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 720 SQUARE METRES OF FLOOR SPACE.

WORK IS EXPECTED TO START IN JULY AND TAKE 12 MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

THE ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE IS ALSO INVITING TENDERS FOR BUILDING LIFT SHAFTS AND INSTALLING LIFTS IN BLOCK B OF THE SEVEN-STOREY MAIN BUILDING OF THE HOSPITAL.

TENDERS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY MAY 25 TO THE CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL TENDER BOARD, AND PLACED IN THE SECRETARIAT TENDER BOX SITUATED IN THE LIFT LOBBY ON THE LOWER GROUND FLOOR OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES (EAST WING), LOWER ALBERT ROAD.

TENDER FORMS AND FURTHER PARTICULARS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE, BUILDING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, MURRAY BUILDING, 13TH FLOOR, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG.

ONLY CONTRACTORS ON THE APPROVED CONTRACTORS FOR PUBLIC WORKS: BUILDING, CIVIL ENGINEERING AND WATER WORKS LIST I IN GROUPS A, B AND C FOR BUILDING WORKS WILL BE PERMITTED TO TENDER.

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NOTE TO EDITORS :

HOW THE YOUNG SEE HONG KONG
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+HONG KONG AS I SEE IT+ AND +THE FUTURE WORLD AS I SEE IT+ WILL BE THE THEMES OF A DRAWING COMPETITION FOR CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN FOUR AND 13 ON SUNDAY (MAY 6).

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD, THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE HARBOUR JAYCEES, THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN DRAWING CONTEST WILL BEGIN AT 9 AM AT THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT IN CENTRAL.

WINNING ENTRIES WILL BE DISPLAYED IN HONG KONG FOR A WEEK IN MID-JULY AND WILL THEN BE EXHIBITED OVERSEAS.

AMONG THE OFFICIATING GUESTS WILL BE THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR FRANK YUE; THE DISTRICT BOARD'S COMMUNITY BUILDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, MR CHOW YIN-SUM; THE PRESIDENT OF HARBOUR JAYCEES, MR ALFRED LEUNG; AND THE CONTEST CHAIRMAN, MR ANTHONY LUK.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

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BIG CROWDS EXPECTED AT BUN FESTIVAL

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THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO FLOCK TO CHEUNG CHAU TO SEE THE TRADITIONAL MAIN PROCESSION OF THE ISLAND'S ANNUAL BUN FESTIVAL ON MONDAY (MAY 7).

THE 90-MINUTE PROCESSION WHICH BEGINS AT 2 PM, WILL FEATURE A PARADE OF ALL THE SHRINES FROM THE ISLAND'S TEMPLES, THE TREASURE SWORD OF PAK TAI, FLOATS, UNICORN AND LION DANCES, GONG AND DRUM PERFORMANCES, AND TRADITIONAL CHINESE MUSIC AND DANCES.

MORE THAN 1 600 PEOPLE FROM 24 ORGANISATIONS, SCHOOLS AND SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS WILL TAKE PART IN THE PARADE WHICH IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE FESTIVAL.

THE PROCESSION WILL SET OFF FROM THE PAK TAI TEMPLE, PASSING THROUGH PRAYA STREET TO THE GUEST STAND IN TAI SUN PRAYA FRONT BEFORE RETURNING TO THE TEMPLE VIA OTHER MAIN STREETS ON THE ISLAND.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR NEW TERRITORIES, MR IAN MACPHERSON, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING CEREMONY.

THIS YEAR, THE GUEST STAND WILL BE LOCATED ON A RECLAIMED SITE. THE BIGGER STAND WILL ACCOMMODATE MORE GUESTS AND PROVIDE A BETTER VIEW.

THE PARADE WILL BE REPEATED THE NEXT DAY, BUT TAKE A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT ROUTE.

AS IN PAST YEARS THERE WILL BE NO SCRAMBLE OF BUNS WHICH, ACCORDING TO LEGEND, WILL BRING LUCK TO THE RECIPIENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

INSTEAD, THE BUNS ON THREE 12-METRE-TALL BUN TOWERS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO PEOPLE ON TUESDAY AT 9 AM. THE GOVERNMENT HAS PAID FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOWERS.

SPONSORED BY THE ISLANDS DISTRICT BOARD AT A COST OF $20 000, THE WEEK-LONG FESTIVAL WILL END ON THURSDAY (MAY 10). IT IS HELD EVERY YEAR TO PLACATE THE SPIRITS OF PEOPLE KILLED BY PIRATES IN PAST CENTURIES.

DURING THE FESTIVAL PERIOD, ISLANDERS WILL ABSTAIN FROM EATING FISH AND MEAT AS A TOKEN OF SINCERITY AND SOLEMNITY. THERE WILL ALSO BE NO SLAUGHTERING OF ANIMALS FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE DAYS, FROM TOMORROW (SATURDAY).

OTHER ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE CANTONESE OPERA PERFORMANCES EVERY NIGHT DURING THE PERIOD.

TAOIST PRIESTS WILL CHANT PRAYERS AT THE PAK TAI TEMPLE AT 12 NOON ON SUNDAY (MAY 6) WHILE THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICER, MR WILLIAM YAP, WILL OFFICIATE AT A LION AND UNICORN EYE-DOTTING CEREMONY AT THE TEMPLE AT 3 PM ON THE SAME DAY.

/THE FESTIVAL .....

THE FESTIVAL IS CO-ORDINATED BY AN ORGANISING COMMITTEE COMPRISING CHEUNG CHAU RESIDENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

THE HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION IS ALSO SPONSORING PART OF THE COST FOR THE BUN FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CHEUNG CHAU BUN FESTIVAL GRAND PROCESSION ON MONDAY (MAY 7).

A HONG KONG AND YAUMATI FERRY, THE MAN LAI WILL TAKE THE PRESS AND INVITED GUESTS TO CHEUNG CHAU. IT WILL LEAVE QUEEN'S PIER AT 12.30 PM ON MONDAY (MAY 7) AND WILL RETURN TO HONG KONG AT 4 PM ON THE SAME DAY.

PRESS BADGES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO PRESS MEMBERS BY CNTA INFORMATION OFFICERS ON BOARD THE FERRY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

BOARDS TO MEET
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THE YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK DISTRICT BOARDS WILL DISCUSS THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED REVIEWS ON TAXI AND PUBLIC HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICIES AT A SPECIAL JOINT MEETING ON MONDAY (MAY 7) AT 3 PM.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE TRANSPORT AND HOUSING DEPARTMENTS WILL BRIEF MEMBERS ON THE REVIEW.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE 1ST FLOOR OF THE MONG KOK DISTRICT OFFICE, 157 PRINCE EDWARD ROAD.

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NEW LIFE FOR FALLOW VILLAGE LAND

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THROUGH HELP FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, ABOUT 20 HECTARES OF FALLOW LAND IN YUEN LONG IS BEING CULTIVATED AGAIN.

THE LAND AT MONG TSENG, A VILLAGE AT THE NORTHWEST OF YUEN LONG, HAD BEEN LYING IDLE FOR A LONG TIME DUE TO LACK OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION.

ON LEARNING ABOUT THIS FROM VILLAGERS, THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY BEGAN PROJECT TO IMPROVE IRRIGATION IN THE AREA, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY.

THE WORK INCLUDED THE SINKING OF A WELL AND CONSTRUCTION OF A WATER TANK AND A METER ROOM, AND THE LAYING OF 800 METRES OF PIPES, AS WELL AS INSTALLATION OF TWO SETS OF SUBMERSIBLE PUMPS -- AT A COST OF $260 000.

THE PROJECT WAS OFFICIALLY HANDED OVER TO VILLAGERS EARLIER THIS WEEK.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOUNG MARTINS BATTING FOR TROPHY

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THE FINALS OF THE ALL HONG KONG BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP, POSTPONED LAST SUNDAY BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY DOWNPOUR, WILL NOW BE STAGED ON SUNDAY (MAY 6) AFTERNOON AT THE KGV SPORTSGROUND.

THE SHA TIN MARTINS, A YOUNG BASEBALL TEAM FORMED LAST SEPTEMBER BY THE SHA TIN SPORTS ASSOCIATION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LOCAL DISTRICT BOARD, WILL BE COMPETING FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

THROUGH IN ITS FIRST SEASON, THE TEAM HAS DONE WELL AND HAS MADE ITS WAY INTO THE FINAL, AND WILL BE PLAYING AGAINST THE +BUFFALOES+ - A JAPANESE TEAM.

THE SHA TIN MARTINS IS MADE UP OF 30 YOUNG PLAYERS AGED BETWEEN SEVEN AND 11.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE GAME WHICH WILL START AT 1 PM AT THE KGV SPORTSGROUND IN TIN KWONG ROAD, KOWLOON.

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NEW CLINIC OPENS IN TO KWA WAN

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THE SHUN TAK FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION LEUNG KAU KUI CLINIC WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED THIS AFTERNOON BY THE HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION, MR LEUNG KAU KUI.

MR LEUNG HAD MADE A DONATION OF MORE THAN $1 MILLION TO COVER ABOUT 50 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT COSTS OF THE CLINIC.

SPEAKING AT THE CEREMONY, DR K.L. THONG, DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, THANKED MR LEUNG FOR MAKING THE DONATION TOWARDS THE CLINIC, WHICH WILL IMPROVE THE MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THE PEOPLE IN TO KWA WAN DISTRICT.

LOCATED ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE TO KWA WAN MARKET AND GOVERNMENT OFFICES AT 165, MA TAU WAI ROAD, THE NEW CLINIC PROVIDES GENERAL OUT-PATIENT SERVICES.

IT HAS SIX CONSULTATION ROOMS, AND IS OPEN FROM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS BETWEEN 9 AM AND 1 PM AND FROM 2 PM TO 5 PM AND ON SATURDAYS FROM 9 AM TO 1 PM. IT IS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

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MA ON SHAN PROJECT TO START

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ROADS AND OTHER MAJOR FACILITIES WILL BE READY IN GOOD TIME FOR THE RESIDENTS WHO WILL MOVE INTO MA ON SHAN'S FIRST HOUSING ESTATE IN LATE 1986.

THEY ARE PART OF A PROJECT FOR WHICH THE NEW TERRITORIES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS.

THE WORK WILL INCLUDE BUILDING A 3.8-KILOMETRE LONG TWO-LANE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY PLUS FOOTPATHS AND CYCLETRACKS.

THE ROAD WILL FORM PART OF THE FIRST PERMANENT ACCESS TO THE MA ON SHAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS.

ABOUT 16 HECTARES OF LAND WILL BE RECLAIMED UNDER THE CONTRACT AND FORMED TO PROVIDE SITES FOR THE MAJOR FACILITIES, INCLUDING A FIRE STATION AND AN AMBULANCE DEPOT.

A 180-METRE LONG SEAWALL WILL ALSO BE BUILT, IN ADDITION TO STORM WATER DRAINS AND SEWERS, AND EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING.

WORK ON THE PROJECT WILL START IN AUGUST AND TAKE TWO YEARS TO COMPLETE.

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CANTON ROAD SECTION TO BE WIDENED

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A SECTION OF CANTON ROAD BETWEEN JORDAN ROAD AND KOWLOON PARK DRIVE WILL BE WIDENED TO FORM PART OF A DUAL CARRIAGEWAY LINKING TSIM SHA TSUI WITH LAI CHI KOK.

THE WORK WILL INCLUDE CONSTRUCTING A DUAL THREE-LANE CARRIAGEWAY ABOUT 600 METRES IN LENGTH, WITH ASSOCIATED DRAINAGE AND ROAD LIGHTING WORKS.

THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SIGNALS AT THE JUNCTIONS OF CANTON ROAD-KOWLOON PARK DRIVE AND CANTON ROAD-AUSTIN ROAD WILL BE MODIFIED TO INCORPORATE CONTROLLED CROSSING FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS.

LANDSCAPING WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT WHICH WILL START IN JULY AND BE COMPLETED IN 15 MONTHS.

THE ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE PROJECT.

THE TENDERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL TENDER BOARD, AND PLACED IN THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT TENDER BOX IN THE LIFT LOBBY ON THE LOWER GROUND FLOOR OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EAST WING, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, BEFORE 12 NOON ON MAY 25.

TENDER FORMS AND FURTHER PARTICULARS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER, HIGHWAYS (KOWLOON) DIVISION, ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT BRANCH OFFICES BUILDING, 11 FARM ROAD, 5TH FLOOR, KOWLOON.

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TSZ WAN SHAN ROAD CLOSURE

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THE SECTION OF WAN WAH STREET BETWEEN WAI WAH STREET AND YUK WAH STREET HAS BEEN CLOSED TO TRAFFIC TO FACILITATE WATERMAINS REPAIR WORK. THE ROAD CLOSURE IS EXPECTED TO LAST FOR ABOUT 10 DAYS.

THE FOLLOWING TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED:-

* THE SECTION OF WAN WAH STREET BETWEEN SHEUNG FUNG STREET AND WAI WAH STREET HAS BEEN RE-ROUTED FROM TWO-WAY TO ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND.

* MOTORISTS TRAVELLING TO AND FROM TSZ WAN SHAN ARE ADVISED TO USE TSZ WAN SHAN ROAD AND PO KONG VILLAGE ROAD.

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ROAD CLOSURE

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THE SECTION OF ROAD L2 BETWEEN ROAD D5 AND THE FANLING ROUNDABOUT WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FOR RESURFACING WORK BETWEEN 12.30 AM AND 4.30 AM TOMORROW AND ON SUNDAY.

DURING THE CLOSURE, VEHICLES TRAVELLING BETWEEN FANLING KCR STATION AND LUEN WO HUI SHOULD GO VIA ROAD D5 AND ROAD D1.

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ABERDEEN TAPS OFF

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN THE ABERDEEN AREA WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM 11 PM ON MONDAY (MAY 7) TO 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR LEAKAGE TESTS.

THE AFFECTED AREA IS BOUNDED BY ABERDEEN MAIN ROAD, OLD MAIN STREET ABERDEEN, TSUNG MAN STREET, CHENG TU ROAD, WU NAM STREET, WU PAK STREET, SAI ON STREET, LOK YEUNG STREET AND TUNG SING ROAD.

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