



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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CALL TO IMPROVE KINDERGARTEN, TERTIARY EDUCATION
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS WHICH CHILDREN FACE BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THEY RECEIVE THEIR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

SPEAKING AT THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, THE HON PETER C. WONG CALLED FOR A MORE SERIOUS EFFORT TO IMPROVE KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION AND TO RATIONALISE THE CONFUSING SIXTH-FORM PUBLIC EXAMINATION SYSTEM.

HE ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO DO MUCH MORE THAN IT WAS DOING NOW IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION GENERALLY, THEREBY ENSURING THAT ALL OUR CHILDREN WOULD HAVE A GOOD START IN EDUCATION.

ON THE QUESTION OF SIXTH-FORM EXAMINATIONS, HE SAID HE FULLY APPRECIATED THAT THIS WAS NOT A SIMPLE MATTER GIVEN THE DIFFERENT COURSE STRUCTURES OF OUR TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.

+HOWEVER, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT A SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND AND FOUND QUICKLY TO RESOLVE THIS MATTER,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A THIRD UNIVERSITY, MR WONG SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PROCEED WITH THE PLANNING OF THE PROJECT AND THEREBY INCREASE THE PROVISION OF FIRST YEAR, FIRST DEGREE PLACES TO 7 500.

+I AM SURE THAT THIS IS WHAT HONG KONG NEEDS AND WANTS AS IT ENTERS THE 1990'S,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO COMPUTER EDUCATION, MR WONG SAID HE WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED THAT APART FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF COMPUTER STUDIES AS AN OPTIONAL SUBJECT IN FORMS 4 TO 5, THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT YET APPEAR TO HAVE ANY CONCRETE PLANS TO INTRODUCE COMPUTER AWARENESS COURSES FOR ALL CHILDREN DURING THE COMPULSORY EDUCATION PERIOD.

+IN MY VIEW, THIS MUST BE REMEDIED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF WE ARE TO PREPARE OUR NEXT GENERATION SUCCESSFULLY FOR THE SOCIETY OF TOMORROW,+ HE SAID.

+SIMILARLY, I WOULD URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO PROCEED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WITH THE EXPANSION OF OPEN EDUCATION AS IT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF ENABLING PEOPLE TO UPDATE AND UPGRADE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, THEREBY BENEFITTING THEMSELVES AS WELL AS THE COMMUNITY GENERALLY,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE SUBJECT OF LEGAL AID, MR WONG WAS IN FAVOUR OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION ADMINSTRATING THE LEGAL AID SCHEME.

+I AM NOT ALONE IN BELIEVING THAT THE DIRECT PROVISION OF LEGAL AID BY GOVERNMENT IS NOT REALLY DESIRABLE.

/+IT IS

+IT IS OF CARDINAL IMPORTANCE THAT LEGAL AID IS SEEN TO BE INDEPENDENTLY ADMINISTERED,+ HE SAID.

+HOWEVER MISTAKEN THEY MAY BE, THE PUBLIC WILL CONTINUE TO ENTERTAIN DOUBTS ABOUT DIRECT GOVERNMENT PROVISION OF LEGAL AID IN CRIMINAL CASES WHERE BOTH THE PROSECUTION AND THE DEFENCE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO THE SAME EMPLOYER.

+IT IS VITAL FOR OUR CITIZENS TO BE REASSURED OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THOSE DEFENDING THEIR INTERESTS IN THE FACE OF STATE PROSECUTION,+ HE ADDED.

MR WONG HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONVINCED THAT THERE WAS MERIT IN THE PROPOSAL THAT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE LEGAL AID SHOULD BE INDEPENDENTLY ADMINISTERED BY THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

HE ALSO PRAISED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS EFFORTS IN EXPANDING THE LEGAL AID AND FREE LEGAL ADVICE SCHEMES IN RECENT YEARS.

+DURING THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, I HAVE WATCHED AND ENCOURAGED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHEMES WHICH HAVE, WITH MINIMAL EXPENDITURE, BROKEN NEW GROUND IN THE PROVISION OF MUCH NEEDED FREE LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE SECTOR OF OUR COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT UNDER THE TELEPHONE-LAW SCHEME, 60 000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR WERE NOW ABLE TO OBTAIN, IN CANTONESE AND ENGLISH, AUTHORITATIVE LEGAL INFORMATION ON 52 LEGAL TOPICS RANGING FROM THE LAW ON GAMBLING, TO DIVORCE, WILLS AND CONTRACTS, AND HOW TO FIND A SOLICITOR.

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CO-ORDINATION NECESSARY FOR FUTURE TECHNICAL EDUCATION
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TO MEET THE NEED OF PREVOCATIONAL STUDENTS FOR FURTHER STUDIES, THERE SHOULD BE GREATER AND MORE EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATION OF PREVOCATIONAL AND POST-SECONDARY TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE LONG TERM, THE HON CHAN YING-LUN SAID ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

+AT PRESENT, PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS COME UNDER THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TECHNICAL INSTITUTES UNDER THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL AND POLYTECHNICS UNDER THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE.

+I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT GOVERNMENT HAS DONE IN THE CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN THE THREE BODIES CONCERNING RECOGNITION OF THE ACADEMIC LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT AND QUALIFICATION OF PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING A LINK IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION FROM SECONDARY TO TERTIARY LEVEL,+ HE SAID.

/HE RECALLED

HE RECALLED THAT A SIMILAR QUESTION HAD BEEN RAISED BY DR HO KAM-FAI AND THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER HAD REPLIED THAT IT WOULD BE GIVEN DUE REGARD BY THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

+I CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ALSO LOOK AT THE TERTIARY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRADUATES WHEN THE REVIEW IS UNDERTAKEN,+ MR CHAN SAID.

EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE CHANCES OF PREVOCATIONAL STUDENTS OBTAINING ADMISSION TO POST-SECONDARY TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS, HE SAID THE PROBLEM WOULD AFFECT MORE AND MORE GRADUATES EACH YEAR WITH GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO EXPAND PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

HE FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT FACED WITH KEEN COMPETITION FROM FORM 6 AND 7 STUDENTS OF GRAMMAR SCHOOLS FOR PLACES IN THE POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTES, THE CHANCE OF PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRADUATES TO GET IN WAS INDEED VERY SLIM.

MR CHAN SAID HE CONSIDERED THIS TO BE EXTREMELY UNFAIR TO GRADUATES OF PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS.

+IN TERMS OF APTITUDE, PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE GEARED TO A CAREER IN THE TECHNICAL FIELD RIGHT FROM THE START,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS NOT UNREASONABLE TO GIVE PREFERENCE TO PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRADUATES WHO HAD SATISFIED THE ADMISSION CRITERIA.

+AFTER ALL, THE POLYTECHNICS AND THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ARE THE ONLY AVENUES OF POST-FORM 5 EDUCATION AVAILABLE TO THEM IN HONG KONG.

+IT IS TO SOCIETY'S BENEFIT TO INVEST ON FURTHER EDUCATION FOR PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRADUATES SO THAT THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION WHICH IS SO VITAL TO OUR ECONOMY,+ MR CHAN SAID.

TURNING TO THE PROBLEM OF URBAN SQUATTERS, HE SAID THE LONG-TERM SOLUTION WAS NON-DEVELOPMENT CLEARANCE.

HE SAID THE EARLIER WE COULD MAKE A START ON THE RESTRUCTURED SQUATTER CLEARANCE PROGRAMME, THE SOONER WOULD THE PROBLEM OF URBAN SQUATTERS BE ELIMINATED.

AS HALF OF THE SQUATTER AREAS IN EASTERN AND KWUN TONG DISTRICTS WERE NOT COVERED BY THE SQUATTER AREA IMPROVEMENT SCHEME, HE SAID PROBLEMS WERE STILL AFFECTING THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE RESIDENTS.

HE IDENTIFIED THREE PROBLEMS WHICH REQUIRED URGENT ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT -- ILLEGAL TAPPING OF WATER AND ELECTRICITY, THE INCREASING NUMBER OF HUTS LEFT VACANT BY OCCUPANTS AFTER MOVING INTO PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AND THE UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHEN THE CLEARANCE WOULD TAKE PLACE.

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HK'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS NEEDS TO BE MAINTAINED
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THE MAINTENANCE AND STRENGTHENING OF HONG KONG'S STATUS AS AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE MUST ALWAYS BE AN OBJECTIVE OF THE HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR THE GOVERNMENT, NOW AND IN FUTURE, THE HON RITA FAN SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE, MRS FAN SAID THE REALISATION OF THIS OBJECTIVE WAS ALSO THE MOST PRACTICAL AND SENSIBLE WAY TO PRESERVE OUR FREEDOM AND LIFE STYLE, AND TO IMPROVE THE LIVING STANDARD OF ALL OUR CITIZENS.

MRS FAN SAID THE TAXATION SYSTEM AND SIXTH FORM EDUCATION WERE TWO OF THE NECESSARY AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE.

SHE SAID SHE WELCOMED THE STATEMENT THAT +BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY REMAIN IN FULL AGREEMENT ON THE NEED FOR A SIMPLE AND EQUITABLE SYSTEM+, SAYING IT WAS WITH THESE BASIC FEATURES IN OUR TAXATION SYSTEM THAT HONG KONG MIGHT STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE.

+THE FACT THAT WE ONLY LEVY TAX ON PROFITS 'ARISING IN OR DERIVED FROM' HONG KONG IS PARTICULARLY WELCOMED AND HAS BEEN RECOGNISED BY BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS THAT OUR TAXATION SYSTEM IS EQUITABLE,+ SHE SAID.

NOTING THAT TAXING PROFITS AT SOURCE HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF HONG KONG AS A MAJOR FINANCIAL CENTRE, SHE URGED THAT THIS TERRITORIAL SOURCE CONCEPT IN OUR TAX SYSTEM MUST BE PRESERVED.

SHE RECALLED THAT SHE HAD EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1984 WHICH COULD REPRESENT A DEPARTURE FROM THE TERRITORIAL SOURCE CONCEPT AND CREATE COMPLEXITIES IN THE TAX SYSTEM.

MRS FAN SAID SHE REGRETTED TO NOTE THAT THE 1985 DRAFT BILL CREATED FURTHER COMPLICATIONS TO THE SYSTEM.

SHE CALLED ON THE ADMINISTRATION TO GIVE DUE CONSIDERATION TO THE MANY REPRESENTATIONS TO UMELCO AND TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE NEED TO AMEND THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1984 REGARDING THE TAXING OF OFF-SHORE INTEREST.

SHE SAID HONG KONG MIGHT NEED AN INCREASE IN REVENUE AND IT WAS PROBABLY DUE TO THIS REASON THAT RAMIFICATIONS HAD BEEN MADE TO OUR TAX SYSTEM.

HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT MUST WEIGH CAREFULLY THE VALUE OF OUR INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AGAINST THE SHORT TERM INCREASE IN REVENUE, MRS FAN SAID.

TURNING TO THE COMMITMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, SHE SAID SIXTH FORM EDUCATION WAS AN AREA WHERE THIS COULD BE MADE.

/IN VIEW

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE MAJORITY OF SIXTH FORM LEAVERS WENT TO WORK AFTER HAVING FAILED TO GAIN ADMISSION TO TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, MRS FAN SAID IT WAS LOGICAL TO BROADEN THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM SO THAT STUDENTS COULD BE BETTER PREPARED FOR WORK.

IT WAS ALSO NECESSARY TO UPGRADE THEIR LANGUAGE ABILITY IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE, SO THAT THEY COULD WORK IN BOTH LANGUAGES AT AN ACCEPTABLE STANDARD, SHE SAID.

+THE ECONOMIC NEED OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE USEFULNESS OF THE EDUCATION OFFERED TO THE STUDENTS SHOULD, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THE EXISTING ADMISSION SYSTEM ADOPTED BY INDIVIDUAL TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.

+ON BALANCE, I FAVOUR A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED TWO-YEAR COURSE FOR SIXTH FORM WITH ONE EXAMINATION TAKEN IN EITHER CHINESE OR ENGLISH AT THE END OF THE COURSE,+ MRS FAN SAID.

SHE ALSO ADVOCATED THE INCLUSION OF PRACTICAL ORIENTATED SUBJECTS AS OPTIONS IN THE CURRICULUM.

IN ADDITION, SHE SUGGESTED THE LEVEL OF +USE OF ENGLISH+ SHOULD BE UPGRADED AND +USE OF CHINESE+ SHOULD BE INTRODUCED.

BOTH SUBJECTS SHOULD BE COMPULSORY FOR ALL SIXTH FORM STUDENTS WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS CHINESE, SHE SAID.

+HOPEFULLY, THESE IMPROVEMENTS IN SIXTH FORM EDUCATION WILL ENCOURAGE EMPLOYERS TO GIVE MORE RECOGNITION TO SIXTH FORM LEAVERS, SINCE THEY WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO CONTRIBUTE IN THEIR WORKING ROLE.

+IN ANOTHER DIMENSION, A BROADER AND PRACTICAL CURRICULUM WILL ALSO MAKE IT EASIER FOR SIXTH FORM LEAVERS TO TAKE UP PART-TIME VOCATIONALLY ORIENTATED COURSES WHICH CAN HELP THEIR CAREER DEVELOPMENT,+ SHE SAID.

AS THE RATIONALISATION OF SIXTH FORM EDUCATION WITH A MORE PRAGMATIC CURRICULUM WOULD AFFECT TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, MRS FAN SAID THE POSSIBILITY OF INTRODUCING A MORE SYSTEMATIC ADMISSION SYSTEM UNDER THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE (UPGC) DESERVED SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.

SHE SAID THE UPGC HAD RECOMMENDED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD HAVE A BODY OF ITS OWN TO MAINTAIN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED STANDARD.

MRS FAN SAID IT WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD AND HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO GIVE SUPPORT TO IT AT AN EARLY DATE.

SHE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WHILE PUTTING EFFORTS INTO THE UPGRADE OF THE STANDARD OF CHINESE, SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE STANDARD OF ENGLISH WAS IMPROVED SO THAT HONG KONG'S POSITION AS AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE COULD BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED.

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SET UP PROPER EDUCATION POLICIES, PRINCIPLES
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THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO HAVE A SET OF PROPER EDUCATION POLICIES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES, IN ADDITION TO THE PROVISION OF SUFFICIENT ECONOMIC RESOURCES, IF IT WANTS TO UPGRADE THE STANDARD AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, THE HON PAULINE NG SAID AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

COMMENTING ON SOME OF THE EXISTING EDUCATION POLICY, MRS NG SAID SHE SHARED THE VIEW OF OTHER PEOPLE IN THE EDUCATION CIRCLE THAT EVER SINCE THE CURRENT SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION SYSTEM CAME INTO PRACTICE IN 1978, THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF PRIMARY STUDENTS IN VARIOUS FUNDAMENTAL SUBJECTS, INCLUDING CHINESE, ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS, HAD TENDED TO DECLINING.

+THE REASON IS PERHAPS THAT THE CURRICULA OF SOME PRIMARY SCHOOLS ARE ORIENTATED SOLELY TO EQUIP STUDENTS WITH VARIOUS TECHNIQUES TO COPE WITH THE APTITUDE TEST, AND HAVE NEGLECTED THE TRANSMISSION OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE,+ SHE SAID.

THEREFORE, SHE SUGGESTED THE GOVERNMENT MODIFY THE PRESENT APTITUDE TEST TO THAT OF A TEST IN THREE SUBJECTS - CHINESE, ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS.

AS FOR OTHER SUBJECTS, SHE PROPOSED TO KEEP THE MARKING SYSTEM PRESENTLY ADOPTED BY TEACHERS TO ASSESS THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF STUDENTS.

MRS NG ALSO URGED THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER, DURING ITS REVIEW OF THE MEASURE TO CONTROL THE ADMISSION OF PRIMARY ONE PUPILS, COUNTER-MEASURES ON PARENTS PROVIDING FALSE INFORMATION ON RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

IN ADDITION, SHE ADVOCATED CHANGES TO THE EXISTING POINTS SYSTEM WHERE APPLICANTS WITH AN ELDER BROTHER OR SISTER STUDYING IN THE SCHOOL TO WHICH THE APPLICATIONS WERE FILED, WERE AWARDED HIGHER MARKS.

THE SYSTEM WAS GROSSLY UNFAIR TO THE ELDEST SON OR DAUGHTER OF A FAMILY, WHO SHOULD BE GIVEN EXTRA POINTS IN ORDER TO CHECK THE IMBALANCE, SHE ADDED.

ON THE SUBJECT OF FULL-TIME BASIC CRAFT COURSES, MRS NG SAID SHE FULLY ENDORSED THE EXTENSION OF THE PRESENT ONE-YEAR COURSES TO 18 OR 24 MONTHS, SO THAT STUDENTS COULD PROCEED BY MEANS OF BRIDGING UNITS TO TECHNICIAN COURSES AND ENJOY EXEMPTION FROM MORE THAN ONE YEAR OF AN APPRENTICESHIP.

+THIS IS A CONSTRUCTIVE RECOMMENDATION AND IS IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT'S SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY,+ SHE SAID.

/TURNING TO

TURNING TO GOVERNMENT'S CHINESE LANGUAGE POLICY, MRS NG SAID SHE HOPED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE USE OF BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH IN ALL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WOULD BE DRAFTED BEFORE 1997.

SPEAKING ON THE SUBJECT OF LAW AND ORDER, SHE SAID THE POLICE HAD OVERLOOKED THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE UNIT SCHEME WHILE PROMOTING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME RECENTLY.

SHE SAID THE TWO SCHEMES WERE COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER AND NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, AND HOPED THAT THE POLICE WOULD CONDUCT A REVIEW IN THIS RESPECT.

MRS NG FINALLY URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN THE GRASSROOT ORGANISATIONS UNDER THE DISTRICT BOARDS WHICH INCLUDED 100-ODD AREA COMMITTEES, 5 000-ODD MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND OWNERS' CORPORATIONS.

+AS THE COMMON SAYING GOES, 'LOFTY TOWERS ARE ALL BUILT UP FROM THE GROUND'.+

+IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A POLITICAL SYSTEM WHICH IS FIRMLY ROOTED IN HONG KONG, THE GOVERNMENT MUST PROVIDE MANPOWER AND MATERIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THESE GRASSROOT ORGANISATIONS SO THAT THEY MAY GIVE FULL PLAY TO THEIR FUNCTIONS IN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION,+ SHE ADDED.

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ENSURE THAT QUALITY OF EDUCATION IMPROVES
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A LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, THE HON LIU LIT-FOR, TODAY (THURSDAY) CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND DAY DEBATE ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR LIU SAID THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION WAS IMPORTANT AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT IN BOTH GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

HE SAID ALL THE AIDED SCHOOL PLACES SHOULD BE OF A GOOD STANDARD AND THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE STANDARD OF PLACES BOUGHT FROM PRIVATE SCHOOLS WERE FURTHER IMPROVED TO MEET THE STANDARD REQUIRED FOR GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

HE ALSO ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE ONE-YEAR FULL-TIME CRAFTSMAN COURSE TO A TWO-YEAR COURSE WITH MORE EMPHASIS ON THE ACADEMIC STANDARD OF THE STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY ON LANGUAGE.

/+PROFICIENCY IN

+PROFICIENCY IN BOTH THE ENGLISH AND CHINESE LANGUAGES IS AN INDISPENSABLE TOOL FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF OUR STUDIES AND WORK,+ HE SAID.

MR LIU GAVE FULL SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION OF COMBINING THE AIDED FORM 4 PLACES AND THE ONE-YEAR FULL-TIME BASIC CRAFTSMAN PLACES BASED ON THE EXISTING PROJECTED DEMAND FOR SCHOOL PLACES.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMBINED SCHOOL PLACES SO THAT SUITABLE ADJUSTMENTS COULD BE MADE IN THE COMING YEARS TO MEET THE EVER-CHANGING NEEDS OF THE TIME.

HE SAID THE MATRICULATION COURSE HAD BECOME AN IMPORTANT LINK IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF HONG KONG.

+ALTHOUGH THE COURSE IS STILL BEING REGARDED BY QUITE A NUMBER OF STUDENTS AS THE AVENUE LEADING TO UNIVERSITY, NOT MANY OF THEM WOULD BE ABLE TO ENTER ANY OF THE UNIVERSITIES OR POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES AND THE MAJORITY OF THE MATRICULANTS HAVE TO TAKE UP A JOB IN SOCIETY,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD THEREFORE THINK ABOUT REFORMING THE MATRICULATION COURSE SO THAT MORE PRACTICAL SUBJECTS COULD BE INTRODUCED AND MORE ALTERNATIVES COULD BE OFFERED TO STUDENTS.

MR LIU EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF DEGREE PLACES IN THE TWO UNIVERSITIES COULD NOT SATISFY THE PRACTICAL DEMAND OF LOCAL STUDENTS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION AT THE MOMENT AND IN THE FUTURE.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONDUCT A REVIEW ON THE EXPANSION OF THE TWO UNIVERSITIES AND THE TWO POLYTECHNICS, AS WELL AS ON THEIR ABILITY TO MAKE USE OF THEIR RESOURCES.

+IT IS ONLY BY SO DOING CAN PUBLIC NEED FOR TERTIARY PLACES BE MET,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY, MR LIU URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO DO ITS BEST TO PROVIDE MORE HOSTELS FOR THEM THOUGH THERE HAD BEEN A COMMENDABLE RATE OF GROWTH IN THE PROVISION OF SUCH HOSTELS.

HE ADDED THAT MORE ACTIVITY CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY SHOULD BE BUILT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL STABILITY.

HE SAID MANY HOMES OR HOSTELS FOR THE AGED IN HONG KONG WERE RUN BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND MOST OF THEM PROFIT-MAKING.

AS THESE HOMES WERE NOT GOVERNED BY SPECIFIC LEGISLATIONS AND THEIR STANDARD OF SERVICE COULD NOT BE ENSURED, MR LIU SAID THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SHOULD CONDUCT SURVEYS ON THESE PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS AND INTRODUCE MEASURES TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF THESE HOMES TO AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL.

/HE SAID

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALLOCATE MORE FUNDS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS PROVIDED BY SUBVENTED AGENCIES.

+PERSONALLY, I THINK PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN BY GOVERNMENT TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO PROVIDE HOUSING UNITS FOR THE ELDERLY ON AN EFFECTIVE AND ECONOMIC BASIS, INSTEAD OF RELYING ON DIRECT ADMINISTRATION BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT,+ HE SAID.

+OUR PRESENT OBJECTIVE IS TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY AND PROPER MANAGEMENT,+ HE ADDED.

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FACTORS THAT ENSURE CONTINUED PROSPERITY
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MANPOWER AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE TWO FACTORS NECESSARY TO CREATE CONDITIONS THAT WOULD ENSURE THE CONTINUED PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG AND OUR ABILITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES IN 1997 AND BEYOND, PROFESSOR THE HON C.K. POON SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE, PROF POON SAID TERTIARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN HONG KONG VERY SUCCESSFULLY PROVIDED PERSONNEL OF HIGH QUALITY WITH BASIC TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT IN VARIOUS FIELDS.

+OUR UNIVERSITY GRADUATES HAVE THE UNIQUE FEATURE OF BEING ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR EXPERTISE IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE -- A UNIQUENESS ADMIRER AND APPRECIATED BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

+WE MUST ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF OUR UNIVERSITIES AND PRESERVE THEIR UNIQUENESS AMONG THE MANY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN CHINA,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT ONE ASPECT WHICH REQUIRED ATTENTION WAS THE STANDARD OF ENGLISH OF STUDENTS.

+VIEWS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED THAT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION SHOULD BE THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE MOTHER TONGUE.

+IF THIS IS ACCEPTED AND IMPLEMENTED IN HONG KONG, IT WOULD BE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO STRENGTHEN THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT THE SAME TIME IN SCHOOLS BECAUSE A REMEDIAL ENGLISH COURSE WHEN STUDENTS REACH THE UNIVERSITY IS REALLY TOO LATE TO BE EFFECTIVE, PARTICULARLY FOR THOSE ADMITTED TO COURSES IN SCIENCE-RELATED DISCIPLINES,+ HE SAID.

THERE WOULD BE NO TIME TO SPARE AT THAT STAGE ON LEARNING LANGUAGES, HE STRESSED.

/PROF POON

PROF POON NOTED THAT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WERE ADVANCING VERY RAPIDLY, AND TO KEEP ABREAST WITH LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE FLUENCY IN ENGLISH WHICH WAS THE LANGUAGE IN WHICH A MAJORITY OF PUBLICATIONS WAS AVAILABLE.

IN FACT, ALL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES IN SCIENCE-RELATED FIELDS WERE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF ENGLISH WHETHER THEY WERE HELD IN NORTH AMERICA, EASTERN EUROPE OR CHINA, HE ADDED.

+ANOTHER ASPECT WHICH REQUIRES SPECIAL ATTENTION IS THE STUDENT INTAKE IN UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS,+ HE SAID.

WHILE RECOGNISING THE TARGET FIGURE OF 7 500 FIRST-YEAR FIRST DEGREE PLACES IN 1994 HAD BEEN ARRIVED AT AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, PROF POON SAID HE CONSIDERED IT CONSERVATIVE AND ASKED FOR A RECONSIDERATION.

ON THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO PROCEED WITH THE PLANNING OF A THIRD UNIVERSITY, HE SAID ITS INAUGURATION WOULD BE VERY TIMELY INDEED AS THE TWO UNIVERSITIES COULD NOT GROW BEYOND A CERTAIN SIZE AND BY THE TIME THEY HAD REACHED THEIR OPTIMUM SIZE.

HE OBSERVED THAT SOME SCEPTICISM CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION MIGHT RELATE TO A POSSIBLE SHORTAGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE GRADUATING.

+I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT WHEN WE REACH THAT STAGE, WE SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO RE-DEPLOY OUR MANPOWER RESOURCES IN A MANNER THAT WOULD BE CONDUCIVE TO MUCH HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY THAN AT PRESENT,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE SECOND FACTOR OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, PROF POON SAID RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE A PRE-CONDITION FOR ECONOMIC SELF-RELIANCE AND THE CONTINUED PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG.

+IF HONG KONG HAS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ITS PRODUCTS, DIVERSIFY ITS ECONOMY AND VENTURE INTO NEW FIELDS SUCH AS HIGH-TECHNOLOGY, AND CONTINUE TO BE COMPETITIVE, IT WILL HAVE TO ACT NOW TO STRENGTHEN ITS RESEARCH BASE,+ HE SAID.

HE REFERRED TO A REPORT BY LORD FLOWERS WHICH SAID THAT WITH A STRENGTHENING OF THE RESEARCH BASE, HONG KONG SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEVELOP ITS OWN CAPABILITY TO TACKLE MANY OF THE CONSULTANCY PROJECTS FOR WHICH IT NOW TURNED OVERSEAS TO FIND THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE.

PROF POON ALSO OBSERVED THAT THERE WAS A GLARING AND SERIOUS DEFICIENCY IN THE FUNDS EARMARKED FOR RESEARCH IN HONG KONG AS COMPARED WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES AND HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE FLOWERS' REPORT ON AN EXTENDED SCALE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

+RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WILL INITIALLY BE VERY EXPENSIVE BUT WE MUST REMEMBER THAT WE HAVE TO CATCH UP WITH LOST TIME AND ALSO THAT ONCE WE START REAPING THE RESULTS OF OUR INVESTMENT, THE REWARDS WILL BE GENEROUS AND OF LASTING CONSEQUENCE,+ HE SAID.

HE FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A COORDINATING BODY, SUCH AS A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH COUNCIL, TO IDENTIFY OUR RESEARCH STRENGTHS AND POTENTIAL, TO STIMULATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, TO IDENTIFY RESEARCH AREAS WHICH HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, AND TO ALLOCATE FUNDS AS NECESSARY.

IT SHOULD BE AN INDEPENDENT BODY WITH A MUCH WIDER SCOPE OF ACTIVITY THAN ENVISAGED BY THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE, HE ADDED.

+AS A START, PERHAPS AN AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CAN CONSIDER THE MATTER AND REPORT ON IT TO THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SUGGESTED.

PROF POON SAID THE AD HOC COMMITTEE COULD ALSO LOOK INTO THE RECRUITMENT OF A REPLACEMENT FOR THE RETIRED GOVERNMENT SCIENTIST.

+RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT NOT ONLY HAVE VERY WIDE IMPLICATIONS FOR HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIES BUT ALSO FOR FINANCE AND SERVICES, AND CONSEQUENTLY ON THE CONTINUED PROSPERITY FOR HONG KONG, WHICH IN TURN, IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN MAKING HONG KONG VALUABLE TO CHINA.

+ACHIEVEMENTS IN THIS AREA SHOULD PROVIDE A SENSE OF PRIDE AND IDENTITY TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ PROF POON SAID.

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+ATTACH EQUAL WEIGHT TO ENGLISH AND CHINESE+
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THE HOPE TO USE MORE CHINESE AS THE TEACHING LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IS TANTAMOUNT TO DECEIVING OURSELVES IF NOTHING IS DONE TO THE EXISTING WIDESPREAD PHENOMENON OF ATTACHING MORE IMPORTANCE TO ENGLISH AND THE REFUSAL TO RAISE THE STATUS OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

STATING THIS AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY), THE HON SZETO WAH SAID THE PUBLICATION OF A SET OF STATUTORY LAW IN CHINESE WHICH HAD LEGAL STANDING AND THE PRODUCTION OF THE FIRST BILL IN BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH DURING THE CURRENT SESSION GAVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE USE OF CHINESE AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION.

/APART FROM

APART FROM THIS, FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE +POLICY OF ATTACHING EQUAL WEIGHT TO BOTH LANGUAGES+ IN THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION, THE JUDICIARY, THE CIVIL SERVICE, OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE PROTECTION OF CONSUMER RIGHTS WOULD ALSO HELP TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE, HE SAID.

+IF WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN ENGLISH WELL, WE SHOULD FIRST IMPROVE ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH ESPECIALLY DURING THE NINE YEARS OF FREE EDUCATION.

+IT IS POINTED OUT IN THE LLEWELLYN REPORT THAT FOR THE MAJORITY, HONG KONG IS A SOCIETY IN WHICH ONLY ONE LANGUAGE IS USED, AND YET A SECOND LANGUAGE IS BEING USED AS A MEANS TO PROVIDE COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

+THIS IS NO DOUBT A HINDRANCE TO THE PROMOTION OF THE QUALITY OF THE NINE-YEAR FREE EDUCATION AND HAS RESULTED IN WASTAGE OF INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION.

+I WOULD THEREFORE STRESS THE WIDER USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION DURING THE NINE YEARS OF FREE EDUCATION,+ HE SAID.

MR SZETO SAID IT WAS SURPRISING THAT THERE WAS NO MENTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE ANNUAL ADDRESS.

IF WE WERE TO DEVELOP A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT, PREPARE FOR THE RESTORATION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER HONG KONG TO CHINA, PREPARE FOR 'HONG KONG PEOPLE ADMINISTERING HONG KONG' AND HAVE A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO BECOME A HIGHLY AUTONOMOUS SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION, THE STRENGTHENING OF CIVIC EDUCATION SHOULD BE TREATED AS A MATTER OF GREAT URGENCY, HE SAID.

HE CRITICISED THE +GUIDELINES ON CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS+ FOR LACKING IN THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE AND SENSE OF PARTICIPATION.

+NOT ENOUGH EMPHASIS IS LAID ON NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW, AN UNDERSTANDING OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS, POSITIVE PARTICIPATION, WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ON COMMITMENTS AND SO ON.

+STUDENTS CANNOT POSSIBLY ASSOCIATE WHAT THEY LEARN WITH THE CHANGING SOCIAL BACKGROUND IN WHICH THEY LIVE,+ HE SAID.

IN PARTICULAR, MR SZETO SAID, THE LACK OF CULTIVATION OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, WHETHER OVERLOOKED INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY, WAS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE FUTURE.

HE REGRETTED THAT THE SUGGESTION TO INTRODUCE CIVICS AS A COMPULSORY SUBJECT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAD NOT BEEN ACCEPTED AND THAT NO CONCRETE ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THOSE SCHOOLS WHICH VOLUNTARILY INTRODUCED SUCH A SUBJECT IN THEIR CURRICULUM.

THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED WERE ALSO REFUSING TO REVISE CERTAIN PROVISIONS IN THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE AND EDUCATION REGULATIONS WHICH HINDERED THE PROMOTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION, HE ADDED.

MR SZETO URGED THE EDUCATION COMMISSION TO CONSIDER AND PLAN FUTURE REFORMS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION FROM A MORE FAR-SIGHTED VIEWPOINT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT NEW FACTORS APART FROM THE LLEWELLYN REPORT.

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THIRD UNIVERSITY COULD TRAIN COMMUNITY LEADERS
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HONG KONG IS CURRENTLY IN URGENT NEED OF AN INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION WHICH IS SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO TAKE UP THE IMPORTANT TASK OF SOLVING NEW PROBLEMS AND COMING UP WITH SOLUTIONS THROUGH ACADEMIC RESEARCHES, DR THE HON DANIEL TSE SAID AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

DR TSE SAID HE WELCOMED GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PLAN FOR THE SETTING UP OF A THIRD UNIVERSITY AND RECOMMENDED THAT IT SHOULD BE PURPOSELY DESIGNED TO BE CLOSELY TIED TO THE TOTAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG.

HE SAID: +THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES WHICH MODERN HONG KONG IS FACING ARE DIVERSIFIED AND INTRICATE.

+REFORM OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM, ECONOMY PLANNING, LAW ENFORCEMENT, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS, SOCIAL CHANGES, CULTURAL IMPACTS AND EVEN THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE INTERRELATED AND INTERACTIVE.+

+WE MUST MAKE IT A POINT TO TRAIN UP LEADERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY WHO ARE INTELLECTUALLY CAPABLE OF INTEGRATION IN THE SPHERE OF KNOWLEDGE, PSYCHOLOGICALLY ALERT TO THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE COMMUNITY, EMOTIONALLY COMMITTED TO THE DEMANDS OF THE SOCIETY WITH A SENSE OF BELONGING,+ HE STRESSED.

DR TSE ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP A RESEARCH GRANTS COMMITTEE TO DEAL SPECIALLY WITH ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO EXISTING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SUPPORT OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL RESEARCHES, SO AS TO UPGRADE THEIR QUALITY AND STANDARD.

+SINCE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY SPENT A SUBSTANTIAL SUM TO FINANCE THE FIVE EXISTING INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION, IT WILL BE A WASTE NOT TO LET THEM ACTIVELY DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIALS IN ACADEMIC RESEARCHES SIMPLY FOR THE SAKE OF ECONOMISING,+ HE SAID.

/+WHEN FUNDS

+WHEN FUNDS ARE ALLOCATED FOR RESEARCHES, THEY SHOULD NOT BE SOLELY USED FOR RESEARCHES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. INNOVATIVE RESEARCHES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS SHOULD ALSO BE ENCOURAGED,+ HE ADDED.

DR TSE SAID HE FELT THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ESTABLISH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE A LOCAL BODY TO ASSESS ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

HE SAID POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, WITH RESPECT TO THE SYSTEM OF NON-DEGREE COURSES AND THE RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, STILL REMAINED IN A CHAOTIC AND CONFUSING STATE UP TO THE PRESENT MOMENT.

+WITHOUT AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT, THE QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED TO SOME PEOPLE WHO HAVE RECEIVED FIVE YEARS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION ARE DOWNGRADED TO A LEVEL WHICH IS LOWER THAN THOSE AWARDED TO OTHERS WHO HAVE TAKEN TWO-YEAR OR THREE-YEAR COURSES,+ HE SAID.

+THE SITUATION HAS ALSO CREATED OBSTACLES INDIRECTLY FOR INSTITUTIONS IN ACADEMIC COOPERATION,+ HE ADDED.

WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL BODY TO ASSESS ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, DR TSE SAID HE HOPED THAT THE DISCREPANCIES WHICH HAD CONFUSED THE PUBLIC, FRUSTRATED YOUTHFUL STUDENTS AND DISAPPOINTED EDUCATIONAL WORKERS BE REMOVED QUICKLY.

SPEAKING ON THE FUNCTIONS OF DISTRICT BOARDS, DR TSE SAID THAT IN ORDER TO UPGRADE THE EFFICIENCY AND INFLUENCE OF BOARD MEMBERS IN EXECUTING THEIR DUTIES, GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER ACCEPTING THEIR REQUEST FOR SETTING UP OFFICES IN THEIR DISTRICTS, AND PROVIDING REASONABLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THOSE MEMBERS WHO WERE IN NEED OF IT IN THE FORM OF A RENT REDUCTION, A SUBSIDY FOR CLERICAL SERVICE AND A COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE.

+I HOPE GOVERNMENT WILL INVESTIGATE INTO AND MAKE AN ASSESSMENT OF BOTH THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF DB MEMBERS' WORK IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS, AND THEN CONSIDER THE ABOVE PROPOSAL ON THIS FACTUAL BASIS,+ HE SAID.

HE FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT IN FUTURE, APART FROM CONTINUING TO REFLECT PUBLIC OPINION, THE DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD, ON THE MAJOR PREMISE THAT CENTRAL POLICIES WERE NOT VIOLATED, TAKE UP MORE SUPERVISORY AND DECISION-MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE HANDLING OF DISTRICT AFFAIRS BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

BY SO DOING, THE VARIOUS DAY-TO-DAY MEASURES ADOPTED IN THE DISTRICTS COULD SATISFY THE NEEDS AND WISHES OF THE PUBLIC IN A BETTER WAY, HE ADDED.

SET UP AD HOC GROUP FOR PROVIDENT FUND

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER SETTING UP AN AD HOC GROUP OR COMMITTEE DURING THE CURRENT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SESSION TO EXAMINE THE FEASIBILITY AND RELATED TECHNICAL ISSUES REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME.

THIS WAS ONE OF THE THREE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI TODAY (THURSDAY) DURING THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE.

HIS OTHER TWO RECOMMENDATIONS WERE:

- * THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REVIEW THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY ORDINANCE, WITH A VIEW TO EXTENDING ITS SCOPE OF PROTECTION TO INCLUDE TERMINATION AND SEVERANCE PAY.
- * THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO REVIEW AND AMEND ANY LABOUR LEGISLATION IN WHICH LOOPHOLES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

MR PANG SAID IT WAS NOW TIME TO CONSIDER SETTING UP A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME, NOTING THAT THIS WAS THE EARNEST DESIRE OF THE LABOUR SECTOR AND THOSE WHO WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF THE MASSES IN OUR SOCIETY.

+MOREOVER, ENHANCING LABOUR WELFARE MEASURES NOT ONLY HELPS TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL STABILITY, BUT WOULD ALSO REDUCE EXCUSES BY TRADE PROTECTIONISTS OVERSEAS FOR ATTACKING HONG KONG AS ENGAGING IN 'UNFAIR COMPETITION' OR EVEN DESCRIBING HONG KONG AS A LABOUR-EXPLOITING 'SWEAT SHOP',+ HE ADDED.

MR PANG SAID OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, WORKERS IN HONG KONG HAD OFTEN BEEN SUBJECT TO THREATS OF SUFFERING LOSSES CAUSED BY THE SUDDEN CLOSURES OF BADLY MANAGED OR IMPROPERLY OPERATED COMPANIES.

+DESPITE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE 'PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND', THERE IS STILL NO SAFEGUARD THAT WORKERS WILL GET THEIR TERMINATION AND SEVERANCE PAY BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED SCOPE OF PROTECTION COVERED BY THE FUND,+ HE SAID.

AS A MEMBER OF THE LABOUR FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY, MR PANG SAID IT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY AND UNDERTAKING TO SEE THAT LABOUR RIGHTS AND INTERESTS IN HONG KONG WERE BEING FIRMLY SAFEGUARDED NOW AND IN FUTURE.

HE STRESSED THAT THE LABOUR SECTOR DID EARNESTLY HOPE THAT SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE MADE FOR LABOUR ISSUES SO THAT THEY COULD CONTINUE TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS IN A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS ENVIRONMENT.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1985

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GREATER CONCERN FOR INDUSTRY URGED
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO SHOW GREATER CONCERN TOWARDS LOCAL INDUSTRY WHICH HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING A DECREASE IN EXPORTS THIS YEAR.

THE CALL CAME FROM THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG DURING THE POLICY DEBATE IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

WHILE THE DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY THE LOCAL MANUFACTURING SECTOR WERE RELATED TO WORLDWIDE RECESSION, INTERNATIONAL PROTECTIONISM AND COMPETITION FROM SOUTH-EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, MR TAM SAID IT WAS UNDENIABLE THAT THE WEAKNESSES WHICH EXISTED IN OUR LOCAL INDUSTRY ITSELF HAD ALSO DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTED TO THESE DIFFICULTIES.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE BEST WAY TO ENHANCE OUR COMPETITIVE POWER WITH OTHER OVERSEAS COUNTRIES WAS TO IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF OUR TECHNOLOGY AND THE QUALITY OF OUR PRODUCTS.

+ACTIVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN THIS FIELD IS CERTAINLY REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF OUR INDUSTRY AND TRADE NOT ONLY CONCERNED THE GROWTH OF OUR ECONOMY, BUT ALSO DIRECTLY AFFECTED THE OVERALL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION AND THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

ON THE ISSUE OF LABOUR, MR TAM SAID HONG KONG LAID EMPHASIS ON THE MARKET-ADJUSTMENT FUNCTION OF A FREE ECONOMY, BUT HAD NO COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.

HENCE, WHENEVER OUR ECONOMY EXPERIENCED STRUCTURAL CHANGES OR READJUSTMENTS, THE GENERAL LABOUR FORCE WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE TO BEAR MOST OF THE COST FOR ECONOMIC READJUSTMENT, HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THE SECURITY PROVIDED FOR THE MAJORITY OF HONG KONG'S LABOUR FORCE WAS VERY INADEQUATE, MR TAM SAID A DOWN-TURN IN THE LOCAL MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN RECENT YEARS HAD CAUSED WORRIES ON EMPLOYMENT AMONG MANY WORKERS, PARTICULARLY THE ELDER ONES.

THEREFORE, MR TAM SAID, THERE WAS A NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME TO HELP THE ELDERLY WORKERS, WHO HAD MADE LIFE-LONG CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR PROSPERITY, TO SOLVE THEIR RETIREMENT PROBLEMS.

+AS HONG KONG HAS ENTERED THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, AND OUR ECONOMIC STRUCTURE IS UNDERGOING CHANGES, I HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE PLIGHT OF OUR WORKERS AND THE LABOUR PROTECTION THEY REQUIRE SO AS TO FACILITATE THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STABILITY OF OUR SOCIETY,+ HE SAID.

/TURNING TO

TURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF HOUSING, MR TAM ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO EXPRESS ITS VIEWS ON THE MUCH DEBATED GREEN PAPER ON HOUSING SUBSIDY TO TENANTS OF PUBLIC HOUSING, AND TO FORMULATE A MORE REASONABLE AND COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY.

OWING TO THE UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES, OUR LOWER ECONOMIC CLASSES NEEDED APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLE STANDARD OF LIVING, HE SAID.

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HOUSING REVIEW TO COPE WITH CHANGES URGED
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THE HOUSING AUTHORITY SHOULD REVIEW OTHER POLICIES IN THE SAME MANNER AS IT HAD DONE WITH HOUSING SUBSIDY TO COPE WITH CHANGING SITUATIONS, THE HON F.K. HU SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE, MR HU RECALLED THAT DURING THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON THE REVIEW OF PUBLIC HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICIES IN 1984, IT WAS APPARENT THAT PUBLIC OPINION WAS GENERALLY IN FAVOUR OF INTRODUCING MEASURES TO REDUCE PUBLIC HOUSING SUBSIDIES TO THE BETTER-OFF TENANTS, TO ACCORD PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING TO THOSE IN NEED OF IT, AND TO ACHIEVE BETTER ALLOCATION OF LIMITED RESOURCES.

+THIS RAISED AN IMPORTANT POLICY ISSUE WHETHER OUR HEAVILY SUBSIDISED PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING SCHEME SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO TENANTS AS AN ELEMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE BY RIGHT, OR ONLY TO THOSE IN NEED,+ HE SAID.

MR HU NOTED THAT A SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE ISSUE WAS FORMED TO STUDY THE PROBLEM IN SEPTEMBER 1984 AND, BASED ON ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY ISSUED IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR A GREEN PAPER ON HOUSING SUBSIDY TO TENANTS OF PUBLIC HOUSING TO SEEK PUBLIC VIEWS BEFORE MAKING A FINAL DECISION.

HE STRESSED THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS EVENTUALLY MADE BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY MUST TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE OVERALL LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE OF MAINTAINING THE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG.

+HONG KONG HAS ONLY LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES WHICH MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL KINDS OF SERVICES FAIRLY AND EVENLY.

+WE MUST ALSO ENSURE THAT OUR AMBITIOUS AND COMMENDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME, WITH INCREASED PRODUCTION IF FEASIBLE, WILL CONTINUE TO CATER FOR THOSE IN NEED IRRESPECTIVE OF GOVERNMENT BUDGETARY SURPLUS OR DEFICIT,+ HE SAID.

/HE OBSERVED

HE OBSERVED THAT PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE GREEN PAPER ON HOUSING SUBSIDY HAD ATTRACTED A LOT OF COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS DIRECTED AT MANY DIFFERENT ANGLES, AND MANY OF THEM WITH JUSTIFICATIONS.

+HOWEVER, IT IS EVIDENT THAT A GREAT MAJORITY SUPPORTS THE SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER.

+MANY ORGANISATIONS ARE IN FAVOUR OF PROVIDING THE TENANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME FLATS UNDER MORE FAVOURABLE TERMS,+ HE SAID.

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY SHOULD SERIOUSLY REVIEW ALL THE COMMENTS AND THEN SUBMIT ITS FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS WITH NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO MAKE THEM MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT LARGE, HE ADDED.

TURNING TO THE ELECTRONIC ROAD PRICING SCHEME (ERP), MR HU CONSIDERED IT TO BE THE BEST LONG-TERM SOLUTION IN CONTROLLING CONGESTION.

HE SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THE SCHEME HAD MET WITH NUMEROUS OPPOSITIONS, BUT HE FELT THE GOVERNMENT MUST DECIDE WHETHER TO DROP ERP COMPLETELY AND CONTINUE WITH RESTRAINTS ON CAR OWNERSHIP, OR TO POSTPONE A DECISION ON IT AND TO RECONSIDER THE POSITION IN FUTURE.

+IF ERP IS TO BE DEFERRED NOW AND INTRODUCED IN FUTURE, THE DELAY WOULD CERTAINLY INCREASE THE COST OF IMPLEMENTATION AND UNAVOIDABLY RESULT IN ROAD CONGESTION FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD BEFORE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME,+ MR HU WARNED.

IN VIEW OF THE MIXED REACTION TO THE ERP SCHEME, HE SAID HE BELIEVED THE BEST SOLUTION WAS TO INTRODUCE IT AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY AND AS A COMPROMISE, OFFERED THE MOTORIST A CHOICE OF EITHER THE ERP OR A HIGH LEVEL OF FIRST REGISTRATION TAX AND ANNUAL LICENCE FEE.

+THE LATTER MAY BE FURTHER INCREASED IF CONGESTION GETS WORSE.

+THIS PROPOSAL OFFERS FLEXIBILITY AND WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE TRANSITION TO A FULL ERP SYSTEM.

+ERP IN AUTOMATIC TUNNEL TOLLS COLLECTION TO IMPROVE THE TRAFFIC FLOW WILL BE A BONUS ACHIEVEMENT,+ HE ADDED.

ON SPORTS PROMOTION, MR HU SAID IT WAS ABOUT TIME TO REVIEW AGAIN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOMANTIN FOOTBALL STADIUM WITH SIMPLE, SPACE FRAMED COVERED STANDS FOR 15 000 TO 20 000 SPECTATORS, CAPABLE OF FURTHER EXPANSION IN FUTURE IF NECESSARY.

/+PROVISION OF

+PROVISION OF THIS FOOTBALL STADIUM WILL CERTAINLY STIMULATE THE PROMOTION OF FOOTBALL IN HONG KONG, AND WILL ALSO GREATLY RELIEVE THE PRESSURE ON MONGKOK STADIUM WHICH MANY SCHOOLS HAVE DIFFICULTY IN BOOKING FOR THEIR ANNUAL SPORTS DAY,+ HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT HONG KONG HAD BEEN LOSING TALENTED JUNIOR ATHLETES FOR VARIOUS REASONS AND HE ASKED FOR A THOROUGH STUDY OF ALL RELEVANT FACTORS IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

+ON THE FINANCIAL SIDE, WE CAN CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A SPORTS AID FOUNDATION WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESOLVING PROBLEMS RELATED TO FINANCE FACED BY OUR PROMISING JUNIOR ATHLETES,+ MR HU SUGGESTED.

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TEMPORARY FREEZE ON HOUSING GREEN PAPER PROPOSED
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REVIEW ITS LONG-TERM POLICY ON PUBLIC HOUSING BEFORE DRAWING UP RENTAL AND SUBSIDY POLICIES, DR THE HON RICHARD LAI SAID DURING THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

DR LAI PROPOSED THAT IT SHOULD BE TEMPORARILY SHELVED BY THE GOVERNMENT SINCE THERE WERE MANY LOOPHOLES AND CONTROVERSIAL POINTS IN THE HOUSING SUBSIDY GREEN PAPER, WHERE ALL THINGS WERE MIXED UP AND THE LOGIC WAS CONTRADICTIONARY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NO UNITY OF VIEWS ABOUT THE SO-CALLED SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER.

BEFORE SEPTEMBER THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAD NEVER MENTIONED ANY SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER, AND EVER SINCE THE TERM +SPIRIT+ WAS REFERRED TO, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAD NEVER OFFICIALLY POINTED OUT SPECIFICALLY WHAT THE SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER WAS.

+UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF UNCLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERM SPIRIT, IT IS UNBELIEVABLE FOR THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO DECLARE THAT MORE THAN HALF OF THE PEOPLE SUPPORT THE SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER,+ HE SAID.

+FURTHERMORE, WITH REGARD TO THE BINARY SYSTEM OF SPIRIT AND CRITERIA ADOPTED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AS DISPLAYED IN THE GREEN PAPER IN ORDER TO STRESS THAT MORE THAN HALF OF THE PEOPLE SUPPORT THE SPIRIT, I AM NOT AT ALL FOR IT.

+FIRST, WE HAVE NOT SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF WHAT SPIRIT IS.

/+SECONDLY,

+SECONDLY, WITHOUT SOLID AND PRACTICABLE CONTENTS TO SUBSTANTIATE THE SO-CALLED SPIRIT WILL BE OUT OF THE CONTEXT OF REALITY,+ HE SAID.

IF THE CONTENTS OF THE GREEN PAPER WERE NOT REASONABLE, NOTWITHSTANDING THAT THE WHOLE POPULATION MIGHT SUPPORT THE SPIRIT, THE GREEN PAPER WAS NOTHING BUT A SCRAP OF WASTE PAPER, HE SAID.

LOOKING BACK ON THE CURRENT SITUATION, DR LAI SAID HE HAD COME TO THREE CONCLUSIONS.

FIRSTLY, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS REGRESSING IN ITS POLICY ON SUBSIDISING PUBLIC HOUSING, WHICH WAS HIGHLY CONTRARY TO THE 10-YEAR HOUSING PLAN PROPOSED IN 1973. HE URGED THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO MAKE PUBLIC ITS REAL INTENTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

SECONDLY, HE SAID IT WAS INACCURATE FOR THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO SAY THAT PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS WERE ENJOYING HEAVY GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES.

HE SAID IF WE RECOGNISED THAT PUBLIC HOUSING WAS PART OF OUR COMMUNITY WELFARE AS A WHOLE AND THAT EVERYBODY HAD A SHARE IN IT, THEN IT WAS AGAINST THE FAIR PRINCIPLE OF DISTRIBUTION AND REDISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES IN A CAPITALIST SOCIETY TO SHIFT THE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS RESPECT ONTO PUBLIC HOUSING OR THE +WELL-OFF+ TENANTS.

LASTLY, HE SAID JUDGING FROM THE ARGUMENTS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THERE WAS A SERIOUS LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND TRUST BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OVER THE POLICY ON PUBLIC HOUSING.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE EARLY STEPS TO ALLOW MORE PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS TO TAKE PART IN THE POLICY-MAKING OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

HE ALSO URGED THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO MAKE PUBLIC ITS ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, FOR EXAMPLE, ITS ALLOCATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND ITS METHOD OF ACCOUNTING, SO THAT THE PUBLIC COULD SEE WHETHER THERE WERE ANY UNREASONABLE ELEMENTS.

HE THEN APPEALED TO ALL THOSE WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE GREEN PAPER TO REVIEW SERIOUSLY WHETHER THERE WAS ANY EMOTIONAL CONTENT OR PREJUDICE IN THEIR ARGUMENTS.

WITH REGARD TO THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC HOUSING DUE TO STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS, DR LAI SAID, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD APPOINT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AN INDEPENDENT BODY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAD BEEN COVERED UP, TO INVESTIGATE AND APPORTION RESPONSIBILITY AND TO EXPLAIN THE WHOLE THING TO THE PUBLIC.

+OTHERWISE THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE FURTHER DIMINISHED.

+IN ADDITION, I HOPE THAT IN LAYING DOWN ANY POLICIES, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO ITS BEST TO CONSULT AND CONSIDER THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC SO AS TO AVOID CAUSING ANY SOCIAL DISCONTENT,+ HE SAID.

SPEAKING ON SOCIAL WELFARE, DR LAI SAID THE MEASURE ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN THE PAST TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE FACILITIES WAS TO MONITOR THE SPENDING OF PUBLIC FUNDS.

+THOUGH IT ALSO TOOK ACCOUNT OF THE STATISTICAL FIGURES IN RESPECT OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED AS A GUIDING INDEX FOR QUANTIFYING THE RESULTANT EFFECTS, THE QUALITY OF SERVICE WAS OFTEN NEGLECTED,+ HE SAID.

HE BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD IMBUE THE PUBLIC WITH THE CORRECT CONCEPT OF +SOCIAL WELFARE+, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE MAKING THE PUBLIC FULLY REALISE WHAT +SOCIAL WELFARE+ REALLY WAS= THAT THOSE RECEIVING SOCIAL WELFARE BENEFITS WERE NOT INFERIOR PARTIES= THAT +SOCIAL WELFARE+ IN ITSELF WAS A FORM OF CARE AMONG FELLOW PEOPLE, AND THAT RECEIVING SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICE WAS A CITIZEN'S RIGHT.

+THUS, NEEDY PEOPLE WILL KNOW BETTER HOW TO MAKE USE OF THE SERVICES AND FACILITIES CURRENTLY PROVIDED,+ HE SAID.

DR LAI ADDED THAT THE ADVOCACY OF THIS FORM OF RE-EDUCATION COULD BE CARRIED OUT THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA AND BY CIVIC EDUCATION.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IF WELFARE SERVICE WAS REALLY MEANT TO CATER FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEEDY, THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SHOULD CONSIDER OPENING THE SOCIAL WELFARE CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY TO TAKE IN RECIPIENTS OF WELFARE BENEFITS.

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GOVT QUESTIONED ON RESOURCES ALLOCATION
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THE ARGUMENT OF +PROVIDING SUBSIDY TO THOSE MOST IN NEED OF IT TO ACHIEVE A BETTER ALLOCATION OF LIMITED RESOURCES+ WAS QUESTIONED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE POLICY DEBATE, DR THE HON CONRAD LAM SAID THIS ARGUMENT WAS NOT ONLY APPLICABLE TO PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY BUT MIGHT ALSO BE APPLIED TO OTHER SOCIAL PROGRAMMES.

/+BUT WHAT

+BUT WHAT IS 'A BETTER ALLOCATION' AND WHO IS 'THE MOST IN NEED'?+ HE ASKED.

+SOME PEOPLE ARE IN URGENT NEED OF PUBLIC HOUSING WHILE OTHERS CRAVE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. STILL OTHERS DEMAND MOSTLY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES, SMOOTH TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT OR WELFARE.

+PERHAPS SOME PEOPLE WANT AN INCREASE IN DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS' HONORARIUM,+ HE SAID.

PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND REPRESENTING DIFFERENT FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES MIGHT HAVE DIVERSIFIED OPINIONS ON THE DEMANDS FOR AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, HE ADDED.

+AS REVEALED FROM PAST EXAMPLES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS HAS BEEN UNABLE TO KEEP PACE WITH THAT OF PUBLIC HOUSING.

+I WONDER IF THIS IMPLIES THAT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ALSO HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE ALLOCATION OF AND DEMAND FOR RESOURCES DURING THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS,+ DR LAM SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS EASIER SAID THAN DONE TO REALISE THE SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER ON HOUSING SUBSIDY TO TENANTS OF PUBLIC HOUSING, WHICH WAS +IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A BETTER ALLOCATION OF LIMITED RESOURCES, THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SUBSIDISED HOUSING SHOULD BE CONFINED TO THOSE MOST IN NEED OF IT+.

WITH THE ADDITION OF THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE STRUCTURAL SAFETY OF SOME PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AS DISCLOSED RECENTLY, DR LAM SAID THE LOSS MIGHT OUTWEIGH THE GAIN IF THE GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTED THIS PLAN.

NEVERTHELESS, DR LAM COMMENDED THE GOVERNMENT FOR CONDUCTING PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN THE FORM OF GREEN PAPERS.

+IN FORMULATING OR REVISING A POLICY, THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT CONCERNED NORMALLY STATES CLEARLY THE REASONS AND MERITS OF SUCH A MOVE BUT SOMETIMES AVOIDS TOUCHING ON OR SIMPLY MENTIONS CASUALLY THE INCONVENIENCE CAUSED TO THE PUBLIC.

+SUCH PRACTICE WILL NOT GIVE THE GOVERNMENT ANY CREDIT.

+INSTEAD, IT WILL ACHIEVE A NEGATIVE RESULT AS IT WILL GIVE THE PUBLIC AN IMPRESSION THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS COVERING UP THE FACTS INTENTIONALLY OR EVEN CHEATING THEM,+ HE SAID.

ON PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY, DR LAM SAID BOTH ITS FORMULATION AND REVISION SHOULD BE BASED ON AN ULTIMATE TARGET AND THE RESOURCES.

THE GOVERNMENT MUST WIDELY PUBLICISE THE POLICY SO THAT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC COULD UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE POLICY, ITS OBJECTIVE AS WELL AS THE RESOURCES, HE SAID.

+IN THIS WAY THE CHANCES OF THE GOVERNMENT BEING MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE PUBLIC WILL BE REDUCED,+ HE SAID.

DR LAM SAID THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME FLATS WERE WELCOMED BY THE PUBLIC AND THIS PROVED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THESE FLATS. BUT, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER PROBLEMS OF RESOURCES AND PRIORITY.

+FROM AN ECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW, THOSE WHO ARE IN THE GREATEST DEMAND FOR HOUSING WILL BE MOST UNLIKELY TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD HOS FLATS.

+HENCE, THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF HOS FLATS SHOULD BE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE PROGRESS OF PUBLIC HOUSING CONSTRUCTION WILL NOT BE AFFECTED,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO MEDICAL SERVICES, DR LAM SAID SOME PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WERE NOW WORRYING WHETHER THE SPIRIT OF THE GREEN PAPER, THAT +SUBSIDY SHOULD ONLY BE GIVEN TO THOSE MOST IN NEED OF IT+, WOULD BE APPLIED TO THE MEDICAL SERVICE, THEREBY BRINGING ABOUT GREATER FINANCIAL PRESSURE ON THE PUBLIC.

IN THE PAST YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATED HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO EXPAND SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WHICH WAS A PIECE OF GOOD NEWS TO THOSE IN NEED OF INEXPENSIVE MEDICAL SERVICES, HE SAID.

+PEOPLE HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE A STEP FURTHER SO THAT PATIENTS IN THE SUBVENTED HOSPITALS WILL NOT BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AS FAR AS MEDICAL SERVICES ARE CONCERNED,+ HE ADDED.

DR LAM SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASSIST IN EXPEDITING THE SETTING UP OF AN ACADEMY OF MEDICINE TO COORDINATE POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND TO CONFER INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED DEGREES TO SPECIALISTS WHO HAD ATTAINED INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

HE ALSO ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH STUDIES ON THE MEDICAL INSURANCE SYSTEM, WHICH, IF PROVED TO BE BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLIC, SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

LASTLY, HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE DECISION ON PUBLIC HOUSING SUBSIDIES, PRIVATISATION OF HOSPITALS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DIRECT ELECTION AND ITS TIMING BASED ON PEOPLE'S CONCERN AND ASPIRATIONS, SAYING THAT CONSULTATIVE PROCESS WAS A CARDINAL ELEMENT IN HONG KONG'S SUCCESS.

COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY NEEDED
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR THE HON POON CHI-FAI TODAY (THURSDAY) EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THERE WAS NO MENTION IN THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS OF GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS AND POLICIES CONCERNING PUBLIC TRANSPORT, OTHER THAN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY.

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE, HE STRESSED THAT NO SINGLE SERVICE SHOULD BE SPECIALLY FAVOURED.

+A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT SHOULD BE ONE WHICH COVERS EVERY ASPECT AND WHICH CONTAINS DIVERSIFIED CONSIDERATIONS, SO AS TO ENSURE COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN DIFFERENT MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND MAXIMUM UTILISATION,+ HE SAID.

HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO PAY ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.

MR POON SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING PROJECT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROUTE 5 LINKING SHA TIN AND TSUEN WAN.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR TRUNK ROADS MIGHT BRING ABOUT A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS SUCH AS ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, HEAVIER TRAFFIC, TRAFFIC JAMS AND NOISE POLLUTION.

+TO AVOID THESE PROBLEMS, THE DESIGN OF THE TWO ROAD SYSTEMS MUST THEREFORE BE CAREFULLY DEvised IN CONFORMITY WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEIGHBOURING AREAS,+ HE SAID.

TO SOLVE TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEM, MR POON SAID THAT APART FROM RESTRICTING THE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES, A COMPREHENSIVE AND OVERALL STRATEGY SHOULD BE ADOPTED.

THE STRATEGY SHOULD INCLUDE WELL-COORDINATED TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, EXPANSION OF AND IMPROVED DESIGNS FOR ROADS, COORDINATION BETWEEN ROAD PROJECTS, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, A SYSTEM OF SCHOOL AND OFFICE STAGGERING HOURS, EXPANSION OF THE SCHOOL/FACTORY COACH SCHEME, IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROPRIATE CAR-PARKING POLICIES AND PROVISION OF ADEQUATE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES.

ON EDUCATION, MR POON SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD LOSE NO TIME IN FORMULATING A POLICY FOR KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION SO THAT IT COULD BECOME PART OF THE BASIC EDUCATION WITH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

WITH THE RISING STANDARD OF LIVING IN HONG KONG, KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION HAD ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERED A NECESSITY FOR THE CHILDREN NOWADAYS, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO OFFER POSITIVE ASSISTANCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS, HE ADDED.

TURNING TO HOUSING POLICY, MR POON SAID HE HOPED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD FROM TIME TO TIME REVIEW THE PROGRESS OF SQUATTER CLEARANCE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ITS TARGET AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

+FURTHERMORE, AS SQUATTER CLEARANCE TAKES TIME TO COMPLETE, GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT ITS SQUATTER AREA IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AND TO IDENTIFY EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ILLEGAL USE OF ELECTRICITY AND WATER AND UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENTS,+ HE SAID.

MR POON ALSO DREW THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION TO THE RECENT RAPID RISE IN PROPERTY VALUES.

+THE FACT THAT PEOPLE REGAINING CONFIDENCE AND A DRASTIC DROP OF PRICES IN THE PAST CAN ONLY FORM PART OF THE REASONS FOR THE UP-SURGE OF PRICES FOR PROPERTIES, SPECULATION IS THE OBVIOUS CAUSE FOR SUCH PHENOMENON,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IF SPECULATION SHOULD PERSIST, PRICES OF PROPERTIES WOULD CONTINUE TO RISE RAPIDLY AND PEOPLE EARNING AN INCOME THAT FELL WITHIN THE MIDDLE BRACKET GROUP WOULD SUFFER HEAVY BLOWS WHEN THEY PURCHASED THEIR OWN PROPERTY.

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ADDRESS COVERAGE ON SOCIAL SERVICES LIMITED
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A LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR TODAY (THURSDAY) EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE LIMITED COVERAGE ON SOCIAL SERVICES, IN PARTICULAR SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES, IN THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT CRITICISED GOVERNMENT PLANS AS +LOPSIDED+ AS THEY PLACED EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AT THE EXPENSE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

HE SAID FINANCIAL STRINGENCY CAUSED BY ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY ACCOUNTED FOR GOVERNMENT'S RESERVED ATTITUDE TOWARDS SOCIAL PROGRAMMES, RESULTING IN A SLOW-DOWN IN DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES.

MR HUI POINTED OUT THAT SOCIAL WELFARE IMPROVED THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE DEPRIVED, THE DEVIANT, THE POOR AND THE UNEMPLOYED IN OUR MIDST.

+IT ALSO INCREASES THE EFFICIENCY, SKILLS AND PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR TOTAL WORK FORCE WHICH FORMS THE BACKBONE OF HONG KONG'S ROBUST ECONOMY.

/+TO GIVE

+TO GIVE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL PROTECTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE STABILITY OF HONG KONG BECOMES THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND ADVOCATED BY MAJOR LABOUR AND SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS.+ HE SAID.

MR HUI SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT HONG KONG'S EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL WELFARE FOR 85/86 STOOD AT \$2.22 BILLION, REPRESENTING A MEAGRE 5.79 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL EXPENDITURE AND SOCIAL WELFARE SUBVENTION AMOUNTING TO \$421.2 MILLION WAS ONLY 1.1 PER CENT OF THIS YEAR'S BUDGET.

+SURELY, HONG KONG CAN SHOW MORE MAGNANIMITY IN ITS SOCIAL WELFARE SPENDING,+ HE SAID.

MR HUI PRAISED THE WORK OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN HONG KONG, SAYING THAT IT WAS THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHICH LAUNCHED A WHOLE RANGE OF ESSENTIAL WELFARE SERVICES AS WELL AS PIONEERED MANY PREVENTIVE SERVICES DESIGNED TO MEET SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE HONG KONG COMMUNITY.

+WITH THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND WISDOM, VOLUNTARY AGENCIES PROVIDE A COST-EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO DIRECT GOVERNMENT SERVICES, FULFILLING A UNIQUE, HISTORICAL ROLE,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MR HUI SAID HE FELT THAT PROVISIONS TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE FAR FROM MEETING THE SOCIAL NEEDS.

ON THE PIVOTAL QUESTION OF SUBVENTION FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HE SAID SHORTAGE OF FUNDS GAVE RISE TO THE UNDESIRABLE CATEGORISATION OF WELFARE SERVICES BY WHICH ONLY THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES RECEIVED FULL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT WHILE INSUFFICIENT ALLOCATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE ALSO COMPELLED GOVERNMENT TO SET MINIMUM STANDARDS IN CALCULATING THE UNIT COSTS WHICH HAD NOT BEEN WORKED OUT TO THE SATISFACTION OF BOTH GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.

HE SAID SUGGESTIONS FOR THE AGENCIES TO SEEK OTHER FUNDING SOURCES INSTEAD OF RELYING SOLELY ON GOVERNMENT SUPPORT CARRIED WITH THEM PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES NEGATING THE ADVANTAGES PUT FORWARD.

MR HUI RECALLED A PROPOSAL BY THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN 1980 WHICH RECOMMENDED A CONTRACT SYSTEM UNDER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT PURCHASED UNITS OF SERVICES FROM VOLUNTARY AGENCIES FOR A FIXED AMOUNT OF FEES.

+VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HAVE A FREE HAND IN MANAGING THEIR OWN BUDGETS AND SECURING INCOME FROM OTHER SOURCES IN DELIVERING THE PURCHASED SERVICES.

+SURPLUS ACCRUED IS RETURNED TO GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS NO OBLIGATION TO PLEDGE FURTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO COVER DEFICITS APART FROM THE LUMP SUM GRANTED ON A THREE-YEAR BASIS,+ HE ELABORATED.

+THE MERIT OF THE SYSTEM LIES IN ENSURING VOLUNTARY AGENCIES' ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL COMMITMENT SO MUCH NEEDED FOR LONG TERM PLANNING, AS WELL AS ACHIEVING THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP.+ MR HUI SAID.

IN CONNECTION WITH SUBVENTION SYSTEM REFORMS, MR HUI SAID THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAD LONG BEEN A BONE OF CONTENTION.

+WHILE THE COMMITTEE HAS NO AUTHORITY OVER RESOURCE ALLOCATION, THE APPOINTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON PERSONAL BASIS DOES NOT FALL IN LINE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

+IT IS BELIEVED THAT NOMINATED MEMBERS FROM THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR REPRESENTING EXPERTISE OF VARIOUS TYPES OF SERVICES COULD BETTER REFLECT SERVICE NEEDS AND FACILITATE CONSULTATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES,+ HE SAID.

MR HUI NOTED THAT THE PAST DECADES HAD WITNESSED MAJOR STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO GIVE HONG KONG PEOPLE HIGHER LIVING STANDARDS AND BETTER ACCESS TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

+HOWEVER, HONG KONG CAN AFFORD TO DO MORE FOR ITS PEOPLE PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME WHEN THE VEIL OF UNCERTAINTY HANGING OVER OUR FUTURE HAS BEEN LIFTED.

+AS HONG KONG STEERS STEADILY INTO THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD BEFORE 1997, IT IS TIME FOR US TO CHART MORE BALANCED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS,+ HE SAID.

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YOUTH SERVICE PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION STRESSED
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH SERVICES, THE HON ROSANNA TAM SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE POLICY DEBATE ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS, MRS TAM SAID YOUNG PEOPLE WERE AN IMPORTANT ASSET TO HONG KONG AS WELL AS A STRONG SOCIAL FORCE.

+IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD FORMULATE A LONG-TERM POLICY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND PROVIDE A GOOD ENVIRONMENT FOR THEM TO GROW UP, I BELIEVE THEY WILL MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONG KONG'S POLITICS, SOCIETY AND ECONOMY,+ SHE SAID.

MRS TAM SAID SHE WAS PLEASED WITH THE FACT THAT MANY YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY WERE DUTIFUL AND HELPFUL IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, WHILE SOME WERE ALSO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN VARIOUS SOCIAL SERVICES.

/SHE SAID

SHE SAID THE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WAS EQUALLY ENCOURAGING IN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

+IT IS BEYOND DOUBT THAT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE AN ACTIVE ROLE TO PLAY IN SOCIETY,+ SHE SAID.

HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME, YOUNG PEOPLE WERE BEING CONFRONTED WITH VARIOUS PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES, MRS TAM SAID.

SHE SAID THESE HAD LED TO DISTURBANCES AND YOUTH PROBLEMS IN SOCIETY AND FELT THAT IF HONG KONG WAS TO PROGRESS AMID STABILITY, WE MUST TRY TO MINIMISE THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROMOTE THEIR CONSTRUCTIVE AND ENTERPRISING NATURE.

+THE FIRST AND FOREMOST TASK, THEREFORE, IS TO REASSESS THE OBJECTIVES OF VARIOUS YOUTH-ORIENTED SERVICES= AND FROM THERE, TO FORMULATE LONG-TERM PLANS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY,+ SHE SAID.

MRS TAM POINTED OUT THAT THE CONCEPTS OF +REMEDY+ AND +PREVENTION+ HAD ALL ALONG BEEN THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN LOCAL YOUTH SERVICES BUT FELT THAT SUCH SERVICES COULD NO LONGER ADEQUATELY MEET THE FUTURE NEEDS OF HONG KONG.

+IT IS TIME FOR US TO INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT OF 'SOCIAL INVESTMENT' ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING YOUTH SERVICES,+ SHE SAID.

SHE PROPOSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SHOULD STRENGTHEN THEIR COORDINATION UNDER THE COMMON GOAL THAT YOUTH SERVICES WAS AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT.

+JOINT EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO STUDY AND ANALYSE MORE THOROUGHLY THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF YOUTHS.

+FURTHERMORE, LONG-TERM AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS SHOULD BE FORMULATED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN AREAS LIKE EDUCATION, RECREATION, CULTURE, SPORTS, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, WELFARE, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, CIVIC EDUCATION, MEDICAL SERVICE, REHABILITATION, CORRECTIONAL SERVICE, SOCIAL SECURITY AND SO ON,+ SHE SAID.

MRS TAM ALSO SUGGESTED THAT GOVERNMENT SET UP A CENTRAL COORDINATING BODY FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS, WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES CONCERNED.

SHE SAID THE WORK OF THIS BODY SHOULD INCLUDE THE MODERATION OF YOUTH AFFAIRS HANDLED BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES CONCERNED, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TO ENHANCE THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS AND ESTABLISHING HOW YOUNG PEOPLE COULD BE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING OUR SOCIETY, AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNMENT ON LONG-TERM TARGETS AND STRATEGIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE FORMULATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH POLICY.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1985

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HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME ADVOCATED

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HEALTH INSURANCE IS THE ONLY MEANS WHEREBY THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG CAN AFFORD PRIVATE MEDICAL SERVICES, DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND DAY DEBATE ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS, DR IP SAID THAT IN A LOW TAX COMMUNITY SUCH AS OURS, THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE HEALTH SERVICES TO THE MAJORITY OF THE SELF-SUFFICIENT ABLE-BODIED PERSONS SHOULD LIE WITH THE INDIVIDUAL HIMSELF AND PARTLY HIS EMPLOYERS RATHER THAN WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

SHE SAID HOSPITAL SERVICE WAS TOO EXPENSIVE FOR THE AVERAGE MAN ON THE STREET.

AS A RESULT, WHERE AS 90 PER CENT OF PEOPLE REQUIRING MEDICAL CLINICAL SERVICE WENT TO PRIVATE DOCTORS, 90 PER CENT OF PEOPLE REQUIRING HOSPITAL SERVICE TURNED TO THE GOVERNMENT, RESULTING IN OVERCROWDING IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS, UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF DOCTOR TO PATIENT RATIO, AND UNDER-SUBSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS, SHE SAID.

ON WAYS TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO PURCHASE MEDICAL INSURANCE, DR IP SUGGESTED THE GOVERNMENT TO OFFER TAX CONCESSIONS TO BOTH THE INSURANCE COMPANIES AND THE INDIVIDUALS.

HOWEVER, SHE SAID SHE FELT NOT ALL MEDICAL INSURANCE SHOULD BE OFFERED TAX CONCESSION.

SHE PROPOSED THAT A COMMITTEE BE SET UP TO WORK OUT THE CRITERIA FOR A +BASIC STANDARD MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEME+ WHICH WOULD BE TAX EXEMPTED.

ON THE OTHER HAND, DR IP SAID, THERE SHOULD BE SCHEMES OTHER THAN THE BASIC ONE TO COMPLEMENT IT.

+TO ENSURE THAT MEDICAL INSURANCE BENEFITS THE WELL-OFF AND THE LESS-WELL-OFF EQUALLY, THERE SHOULD BE A CEILING TO THE LEVEL OF TAX CONCESSION APPROPRIATELY AIMED TO BENEFIT THE SANDWICH CLASS,+ SHE SAID.

DR IP SAID SHE BELIEVED HOSPITAL INSURANCE WOULD BE MORE SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THE NEED TO PURCHASE INSURANCE FOR HOSPITAL SERVICES FAR EXCEEDED THAT FOR CLINIC SERVICES.

SHE SAID HOSPITAL INSURANCE WOULD BENEFIT THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE IT WAS IN THIS AREA THAT THE GOVERNMENT SPENT MOST OF ITS MONEY.

/+I HONESTLY

+I HONESTLY BELIEVE, THAT, FOR THE SMALL AMOUNT OF TAX CONCESSION GOVERNMENT GRANTS, GOVERNMENT GAINS FINANCIALLY A LOT MORE BY LITERALLY HAVING A LARGE SECTOR OF OUR COMMUNITY LOOKING TOWARDS MEETING THEIR MEDICAL NEEDS THROUGH PRIVATE MEANS,+ SHE SAID.

TURNING TO LEGAL ISSUES SHE SAID THAT SINCE JANUARY 1984, THE JURISDICTION FOR CIVIL CLAIMS IN THE DISTRICT COURTS HAD BEEN RAISED TO \$60 000, RESULTING IN AN INCREASED NUMBER OF CASES WHICH SHOULD PREVIOUSLY BE HEARD IN THE HIGH COURT GOING TO THE DISTRICT COURTS.

+HOWEVER, IT GIVES NO JOY TO THE SUCCESSFUL LITIGANT AT THE END OF THE TRIAL BECAUSE THE TAXED COST WAS VERY LOW AND USUALLY ONLY REPRESENTED 30 TO 60 PER CENT OF THE ACTUAL COST, AND THE BALANCE WOULD HAVE TO BE PAID OUT BY THE SUCCESSFUL LITIGANT TO HIS OWN SOLICITORS AND COUNSEL,+ SHE SAID.

SHE SAID SHE FELT IT WAS TIME THE DISTRICT COURT COSTS BE REVISED UPWARDS TO A MORE REALISTIC SCALE TO REFLECT CLOSELY THE TRUE COST.

DR IP ALSO SUGGESTED THAT MORE MINOR OFFENCES SHOULD BE FINED BY FIXED PENALTIES.

SHE SAID THE STARTING PENALTY SHOULD NOT BE HIGH SO THAT PEOPLE WOULD BE MORE PREPARED TO PLEAD GUILTY WHEN APPROPRIATE.

+THEREAFTER, THE DETERENT EFFECT WOULD BE MUCH STRONGER IF THE FINES COULD BE INCREASED ON A FIXED SCALE ON REPEATED CONVICTIONS SO THAT THE OFFENDER WILL REFRAIN FROM BREAKING THE LAW WHEN IT BECOMES TOO COSTLY FOR HIM TO DO SO,+ SHE ADDED.

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ACTION AGAINST UNDESIRABLE MEDICAL ADS NEEDED
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS URGED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE AND PROMPT ACTION AGAINST UNDESIRABLE MEDICAL ADVERTISEMENTS BY DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR CHIU SAID THE PUBLIC WAS EASILY AND FREQUENTLY MISLED BY THESE ADVERTISEMENTS AND CONSEQUENTLY MANY PATIENTS DID NOT RECEIVE PROPER TREATMENT TO THE DETRIMENT OF THEIR HEALTH.

+THESE ADVERTISEMENTS DO INSTITUTE A DANGER TO THE PUBLIC.

+MUST WE WAIT UNTIL LIVES ARE LOST BEFORE EFFECTIVE ACTIONS ARE TAKEN?+ HE ASKED.

/HE RECALLED

HE RECALLED THAT THE ISSUE WAS FIRST BROUGHT UP BY THE HONG KONG MEDICAL ASSOCIATION IN 1973 AND EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ONLY A STANDARD WARNING LETTER WAS ISSUED TO WARN TWO PAPERS AND A GLOBAL LETTER TO THE PRESS DURING THE LAST 12 YEARS.

DR CHIU SAID HE BELIEVED THAT IF PROSECUTIONS WERE ULTIMATELY INSTITUTED THEY WOULD SERVE TO REMIND ALL CONCERNED OF THE LAW.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SCHEDULE OF THE UNDESIRABLE MEDICAL ADVERTISEMENT ORDINANCE WAS INCOMPLETE AND OUTDATED.

+IT IS HOPED THAT A MORE COMPREHENSIVE SCHEDULE CAN BE WORKED OUT SO AS TO PLUG THE LOOPHOLES OF THE EXISTING ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

THE FOREGOING WAS ONE OF THE MANY AREAS IN OUR EXISTING HEALTH SYSTEM WHICH DR CHIU SAID HE BELIEVED WE SHOULD SERIOUSLY LOOK INTO.

DR CHIU SAID IT WAS ENVISAGED THAT THE REPORT BY THE AUSTRALIAN CONSULTANTS, EXPECTED TO BE OUT NEXT MONTH, WOULD BRING FORTH SOME WORTHWHILE CHANGES OF MEDICAL SYSTEM WHICH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE COMMUNITY.

HOWEVER, HE SUGGESTED THAT BEFORE NEW CHANGES WERE INTRODUCED, CAREFUL AND THOROUGH STUDY SHOULD BE MADE INTO WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO SHOULDER THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS= WHETHER THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS, WOULD ACCEPT THE NEW CHANGES AND WHETHER THE PUBLIC WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR BETTER MEDICAL SERVICES.

+IT IS DEEMED NECESSARY TO PUBLICISE THE REPORT IN ORDER TO INVITE PUBLIC OPINIONS AND SUGGESTIONS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID HE REGRETTED TO SEE THE PROPORTION OF MEDICAL EXPENDITURE TO OUR TOTAL BUDGET HAD BEEN DECLINING IN THE RECENT THREE DECADES AND ADDED THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE ALLOCATION BE REDUCED.

ON MORE SPECIFIC AREAS IN THE MEDICAL SYSTEM, DR CHIU SAID NO MORE THAN ONE STANDARD SHOULD BE ADOPTED IN EITHER GOVERNMENT OR SUBVENTED HOSPITALS IN ORDER TO MAXIMISE THE USE OF HOSPITAL BEDS.

HE DREW THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO THE HEAVY WORKLOAD AND POOR WORKING ENVIRONMENT OF MEDICAL PERSONNEL IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR WHICH WERE WELL KNOWN TO ALL.

+IF THIS SITUATION GOES ON, EVEN THE MOST DEVOTED STAFF WILL BE DISHEARTENED AND LEAVE, SO OUR MEDICAL FIELD WILL SUFFER FROM SERIOUS MANPOWER SHORTAGE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

/HE SAID

HE SAID HE HOPED THE CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON THE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION OF HOSPITAL SERVICE COULD PROVIDE SOLUTION TO THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

TURNING TO MEDICAL SERVICE FOR THE SANDWICH CLASS, DR CHIU ARGUED THAT THOSE WHO COULD AFFORD AND WERE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR BETTER SERVICE HAD NO REASON TO ASK TAXPAYERS TO SUBSIDISE THEM TO THE PRESENT EXTENT.

+THEREFORE IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THIS LONG-FELT NEED INTO CONSIDERATION IN FUTURE PLANNING OF HOSPITAL SERVICES.

+MEDIUM-PRICED MEDICAL SERVICE WHEN SUPPLEMENTED WITH THE MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEME WILL LEAD TO BETTER RESULTS,+ HE SAID.

DR CHIU SAID HE SUPPORTED DR HENRIETTA IP'S PROPOSAL FOR A STANDARD MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEME.

+THE GOVERNMENT, AS THE BIGGEST EMPLOYER, SHOULD TAKE THE LEAD TO INTRODUCE THE SCHEME TO BENEFIT CIVIL SERVANTS SO AS TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS,+ HE SAID.

ON THE HARDSHIP SUFFERED BY ESTATE DOCTORS BECAUSE OF THE RECENT SUBSTANTIAL RENTAL INCREASE, DR CHIU SAID THE ART OF HEALING WAS NOT A COMMODITY AND MEDICAL SERVICE SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS TYPICAL COMMERCIAL BEHAVIOUR.

HE SAID HE HOPED THE COMMERCIAL TENANCY SECTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY COULD REVIEW THE SITUATION.

TURNING TO INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE LOCAL MEDICAL PROFESSION, DR CHIU SAID HE EARNESTLY HOPED THAT AN ACADEMY OF MEDICINE COULD BE SET UP IN TWO TO THREE YEARS.

+AS IT IS AN URGENT NECESSITY TO MAINTAIN OUR STANDARDS, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXPEDITE THE FORMATION OF THE WORKING PARTY ON POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE,+ HE SAID.

CONCLUDING HIS SPEECH, DR CHIU REITERATED SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES IN CONNECTION WITH MEDICAL SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

+FIRSTLY, SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT SHOULD BE GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT. ANY DECREASE IN GOVERNMENT ALLOCATION FOR MEDICAL SERVICES IS UNACCEPTABLE.

+SECONDLY, PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS MUST BE SOUGHT BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR CHANGES IN MEDICAL SYSTEM.

+NEEDLESS TO SAY, MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICE IS THE FUNDAMENTAL ESSENCE OF STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF OUR COMMUNITY.

+APPROPRIATE ACTIONS CONCERNING THE WELL-BEING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC MUST BE TAKEN BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE,+ HE SAID.

INTERNAL MIGRATION SHOULD BE WELL-PLANNED

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THE ECONOMIC COST TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE HARDSHIP THAT FOLLOWS MUST BE ENORMOUS IF THE PROGRESS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION TO THE NEW TERRITORIES IS NOT WELL-PLANNED, THE HON MARIA TAM SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SHE SAID THE +SELF-SUFFICIENCY+ CONCEPT OF NEW TOWNS DEVELOPMENT HAD NOT REALLY MATERIALISED.

FIRSTLY, SHE SAID, THERE WAS PLENTY OF OFFICE SPACE IN THE URBAN AREA AND PROBABLY DECENTRALISATION OF OFFICE WORK IN HONG KONG COULD NEVER BE ACHIEVED.

IN ADDITION, FACTORY WORKERS MUST CONTINUE TO TRAVEL TO THE FACTORIES IN THE URBAN AREA UNLESS AND UNTIL A NEW GENERATION OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COULD BE DEVELOPED IN THE NEW TOWNS, SHE SAID.

SHE SAID THERE WAS A GREAT WASTAGE OF MANPOWER CREATED BY INTERNAL MIGRATION AS THERE WAS LITTLE PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT WITHIN THE NEW TOWNS FOR YOUNG HOUSEWIVES.

MISS TAM SAID TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE WAS NOT ONLY ESSENTIAL FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, BUT ALSO VITAL IN MAKING A SUCCESS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION TO THE NEW TOWNS.

SHE SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE CLEAR WHAT TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURES WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR TIN SHUI WAI AND HOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS AND RAILS WOULD BE COORDINATED WITH THE GROWTH OF POPULATION IN TUEN MUN.

ON URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS, MISS TAM SAID THERE WAS BOUND TO BE STRONG RESISTANCE IF CITY-DWELLERS WERE ASKED TO MOVE INTO THE NEW TERRITORIES AND AWAY FROM THEIR JOBS.

+THE AIM OF URBAN REDEVELOPMENT MUST BE TO REDUCE INCIDENTS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION,+ SHE SAID.

TO IMPROVE THE CONTROL OF LAND USE IN RURAL AREAS, MISS TAM SAID AMENDMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO SECTION 3 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE.

SHE SAID THE SECTION OF THE ORDINANCE APPLIED NOW TO URBAN AND POTENTIAL URBAN AREAS, BUT DEFINITELY NOT RURAL AREAS= AND THERE WOULD BE AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR DEVELOPMENTS IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS.

FURTHERMORE, IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN HONG KONG, THERE SHOULD BE A MORE COHESIVE PLANNING FOR LAND USE OVER THE WHOLE TERRITORY, SHE SAID, ADDING THAT THE AREAS OUTSIDE OF HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON, NEW KOWLOON AND THE NEW TOWNS ALSO SHOULD BE COVERED BY STATUTORY PLANS WITH PROPER AREA ZONING.

/HOWEVER, IN

HOWEVER, IN ADVOCATING FOR CHANGES, MISS TAM WARNED THAT ONE MUST RECOGNISE EXISTING TENURE PROBLEMS AND LEGITIMATE INTERESTS.

ONE MUST ALSO ENSURE THAT THE HEUNG YEE KUK AND THE REGIONAL COUNCIL WERE WELL REPRESENTED IN THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD, SHE SAID.

WITH THE RAPID URBANISATION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, MISS TAM SAID HER MAIN CONCERN WAS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD NO LONGER ADOPT A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS PLANNING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, INCLUDING THE RURAL AREAS, AND SHOULD TRY TO ACHIEVE AN EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF LAND USE IN THE WHOLE TERRITORY.

SHE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD SHOULD LEVY A FEE FOR PROCESSING PLANNING APPLICATIONS, THAT IT SHOULD GIVE REASONS FOR REFUSAL OF PERMISSION; AND THAT THE APPROVAL GIVEN TO AN APPLICATION SHOULD AUTOMATICALLY EXPIRE AFTER A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME TO AVOID LAND SPECULATION BY DEVELOPERS AFTER OBTAINING THE PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS WERE THAT THERE SHOULD BE A SIX-MONTH PERIOD WITHIN WHICH AN AGGRIEVED PERSON MUST APPEAL, AND THAT THE DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE CONSULTED BEFORE A STATUTORY DRAFT PLAN WAS PREPARED.

TURNING TO THE SUBJECT ON REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS, MISS TAM SAID THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHOULD GIVE SOME CONCRETE PROPOSALS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER (CSO) PILOT SCHEME AND THE SPENT CONVICTION SCHEME, BEFORE EMBARKING ON OTHER NEW SCHEMES FOR THE REHABILITATION OF EX-PRISONERS.

MISS TAM SAID THE TWO SCHEMES WERE PROPOSED IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, AND ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER ORDINANCE WAS ENACTED IN NOVEMBER 1984, THE PILOT SCHEME HAD STILL NOT YET BEEN INTRODUCED.

+ONE YEAR HAS GONE AND WE HAVE NOT REALLY BEEN INFORMED OF THE PROGRESS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER. I AM GLAD TO KNOW AT LEAST THAT PROBATION OFFICERS ARE BEING SENT TO THE U.K. FOR OVERSEAS TRAINING AND I LOOK FORWARD TO THE HON ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REPLY TO INFORM US OF THE TIMING OF THE LAUNCHING OF THE SCHEME WHICH ALREADY HAS THE SUPPORT OF THIS COUNCIL,+ SHE SAID.

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INCLUDE YAU MA TEI, MONG KOK IN EXPANSION PROGRAMME
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS TODAY (THURSDAY) URGED TO CONSIDER INCLUDING YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK DISTRICTS IN ITS URBAN EXPANSION PROGRAMME.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE, THE HON JACKIE CHAN CHAI-KEUNG SAID HE WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S ON-GOING URBAN EXPANSION PROGRAMME, WHICH INCLUDED A MOST ENCOURAGING RECLAMATION PLAN.

IF IMPLEMENTED, THE PLAN WOULD SECURE HONG KONG'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY EVEN MORE, HE NOTED.

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE RECLAMATION PLAN ONLY COVERED KELLETT BAY ON THE WEST COAST OF THE ISLAND AND HUNG HOM BAY IN KOWLOON.

THE TWO DISTRICTS OF MONG KOK AND YAU MA TEI WHERE NEW LAND SUPPLY WAS GREATLY NEEDED TO SOLVE THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS IN THE VICINITY HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE SCHEDULED PLAN, HE SAID.

MR CHAN POINTED OUT IT WAS WELL KNOWN TO ALL CITIZENS IN HONG KONG THAT THE TWO DISTRICTS HAD A DENSE POPULATION, ADVERSE ENVIRONMENT, CONGESTED TRAFFIC AND INADEQUATE PROVISION OF CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND SITTING-OUT AREAS.

HE SAID HE HOPED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD, IF FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE, CONSIDER INCLUDING THE TWO DISTRICTS IN THE URBAN EXPANSION PROGRAMME AT AN EARLY STAGE.

MR CHAN SAID HE SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT'S REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME OF OLD DISTRICTS IN THE URBAN AREA, BUT HE CAUTIONED THAT IN CONSIDERING THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, IT SHOULD COVER THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DRAINAGE SYSTEM, THE PROPER ARRANGEMENT OF TRANSPORT FACILITIES AND THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE PARKING SPACES.

PROGRAMMES TO MAKE THE DISTRICTS GREEN SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED.

HE SUGGESTED THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD OFFER REASONABLE COMPENSATION AND SATISFACTORY REHOUSING TO LANDLORDS AND TENANTS AFFECTED BY THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

+ IF DISAGREEMENT IN THE OFFER OF COMPENSATION AND REHOUSING SHOULD OCCUR, PARTIES INVOLVED SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO LODGE THEIR REASONABLE APPEALS, + HE SAID.

/HE SAID

HE SAID THERE MIGHT ALSO BE INSTANCES WHERE INDIVIDUAL OWNERS COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATION WITH THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION REGARDING REDEVELOPMENT BECAUSE THEY WERE ABSENT FROM HONG KONG OR OF OTHER REASONS.

+IN THE GENERAL INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC, GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROCEED WITH THE AMENDMENTS OF CERTAIN LEGISLATIONS IN ORDER TO SUIT THE ACTUAL SITUATION AND TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS,+ HE SAID.

ON THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT OF THE YAU MA TEI SIX STREETS, MR CHAN SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH SOME YAU MA TEI DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS.

ALL BOARD MEMBERS HOPED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD IMPLEMENT THIS PROJECT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND AT THE SAME TIME WOULD ACCORD THE LANDLORDS AND TENANTS WITH REASONABLE COMPENSATION AND REHOUSING, HE SAID.

BESIDES, THEY ALSO HOPED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD LAUNCH WIDER PUBLICITY TO CALL ON AND ENCOURAGE THE LANDLORDS AND TENANTS OF THE OLD DISTRICTS TO POSITIVELY PARTICIPATE AND SUPPORT THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, HE ADDED.

TURNING TO FIRE SERVICES, MR CHAN SAID THAT FOR THE SAKE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXPEDITE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE EXISTING LEGISLATION IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH OFFENCES OF CAUSING OBSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC PLACES.

HE SAID AT PRESENT, WHEN FIRE SERVICES PERSONNEL PAID SITE VISITS ON RECEIVING COMPLAINTS, THE PRACTICE WAS ONLY TO SERVE THE OWNERS OF OBSTRUCTION ARTICLES WITH NOTICE OF ADVICE.

+THEY CANNOT ISSUE SUMMONS TO CHARGE THEM ON THE SPOT AND THUS THE DETERRENT EFFECT IS NOT GREAT,+ HE SAID.

FINALLY, MR CHAN URGED THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO CONTINUE LAYING STRESS ON THEIR PUBLICITY ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CIVIC EDUCATION SO THAT CITIZENS WOULD BECOME CIVIC-MINDED.

IN RESPECT OF LARGE-SCALE FACTORIES AND HOUSING ESTATES, THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST THEM TO TRAIN THEIR OWN SECURITY PERSONNEL ON THE APPLICATION OF FIRE-FIGHTING EQUIPMENT, HE SAID.

+IT WILL BE CONDUCTIVE TO REDUCING THE OCCURRENCE OF FIRE AND MINIMISING THE LOSS OF HUMAN LIVES AND PROPERTIES IN FIRES,+ HE ADDED.

DEVELOPERS URGED TO JOIN IN URBAN RENEWAL
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CO-OPERATIVE EFFORTS FROM PRIVATE DEVELOPERS, PROPERTY OWNERS AND THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LDC) ARE VITAL TO OUR URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS, THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN SAID AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE TODAY (THURSDAY).

+AS A MEMBER OF THE STEERING GROUP FOR THE LDC, I FEEL THAT WE SHOULD SEIZE WITH BOTH HANDS THE CHANCE TO ACHIEVE GREAT PUBLIC BENEFITS THROUGH JOINT VENTURES AND OTHER COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS.

+THE LDC WILL HAVE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE SPECIAL PROJECTS, BUT THE NECESSARY LIFE-BLOOD WILL HAVE TO COME FROM THE PRIVATE DEVELOPERS.

+WE SHALL NEED ALL THE TALENT AND THE CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THE WHOLE BUILDING INDUSTRY IF WE ARE TO MAKE OUR INNER-URBAN AREAS NOT ONLY GOOD PLACES TO LIVE IN BUT ALSO INTEGRAL AND VITAL PARTS OF OUR CITY,+ HE SAID.

MR CHENG SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE SCHEMES WOULD HAVE THE VISION AND THE SCOPE TO INSPIRE EVERYONE, NOT LEAST THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, TO HELP IN CREATING NEW NEIGHBOURHOODS OF CHARACTER AND QUALITY, TO THE ADVANTAGE OF US ALL.

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE APPRECIATED THAT PEOPLE AFFECTED WOULD HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THESE PLANS.

ON THE ONE HAND, HE SAID, THEY HAD HOPES OF BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS IN A BRIGHTER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WERE FEARS OF HAVING TO MOVE AWAY FROM OLD, FAMILIAR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

+THESE FEELINGS ARE VERY NATURAL AND UNDERSTANDABLE.

+THEY MUST NOT BE IGNORED AND WE MUST MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO LOOK AFTER THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THESE AREAS.

+PROVISION WILL BE MADE TO REHOUSE THEM -- IN THE SAME NEIGHBOURHOOD IF POSSIBLE -- AND A NUMBER OF COMPENSATION OPTIONS BASED ON MARKET VALUES ARE BEING DRAWN UP FOR OWNERS OF PROPERTY AND BUSINESSES,+ MR CHENG SAID.

HE SAID HE WAS FULLY AWARE THAT URBAN RENEWAL IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD HAD NOT ALWAYS HAD HAPPY RESULTS, BUT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT WE WERE NOW ON THE RIGHT TRACK AND WE COULD RELY ON THE CO-OPERATION OF THE WHOLE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN THIS ENTERPRISE.

TURNING TO THE PROBLEM OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION, MR CHENG STRONGLY URGED THE ACCELERATION AND THE EXTENSION OF THE PROGRAMME WHICH BEGAN SOME YEARS AGO TO PROVIDE PARKING FACILITIES CLOSE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT AS WELL AS IN THE URBAN AREAS.

+ONLY WHEN PEOPLE CAN CONVENIENTLY TRANSFER FROM CAR TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT WILL THEY STOP BRINGING THEIR CARS INTO OR THROUGH THE INNER URBAN AREAS.

+AND ONLY WHEN THERE IS SUFFICIENT PARKING WITHIN OUR URBAN AREAS SHALL WE CLEAR THE ROADS OF THE ENDLESS, SEARCHING PROCESSION OF THOSE CARS AND LORRIES WHICH DO HAVE TO BE THERE,+ HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON HOUSING, MR CHENG CONGRATULATED THE HOUSING AUTHORITY ON THE PROGRESS OF ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN BUILDING STANDARDS.

+HOWEVER, THE IMPORTANCE OF STRINGENT QUALITY CONTROL AND PROPER SUPERVISION THROUGHOUT OUR CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY CAN NEVER BE OVER-EMPHASISED, AND WE MUST GUARD THE STANDARDS CAREFULLY AND ALWAYS KEEP THEM UNDER REVIEW.

+IN THE LONG RUN, HIGH STANDARDS NOT ONLY REDUCE REMEDIAL WORK AND CUT MAINTENANCE COSTS BUT ALSO INCREASE THE DURABILITY OF OUR BUILDINGS,+ HE SAID.

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FIVE-POINT PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPING NEW TOWNS

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GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO THE NEED TO ENSURE PUBLIC FACILITIES IN NEW TOWNS COPE WITH THE RAPID GROWTH OF POPULATION.

THIS WAS ONE OF FIVE POINTS MADE BY THE HON LAU WONG-FAT ON NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT DURING THE SECOND DAY OF THE POLICY DEBATE IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR LAU SAID THAT APART FROM A DEFICIENCY IN MEDICAL FACILITIES, NEW TOWNS WERE AT PRESENT FACING THE SERIOUS PROBLEM OF EDUCATION WHICH HE CONSIDERED ATTRIBUTABLE TO GOVERNMENT'S EXISTING SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION POLICY.

MR LAU SAID THE POLICY, WHILE FEASIBLE IN URBAN AREAS WHERE TRANSPORT WAS READILY AVAILABLE, WAS OBVIOUSLY IMPRACTICABLE WHEN APPLIED TO THE NEW TERRITORIES, WHERE PUBLIC TRANSPORT WAS INADEQUATE.

/+THERE IS

+THERE IS A NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ADJUST THE PRESENT SCHOOL PLACES ALLOCATION POLICY TO MEET THE ACTUAL NEEDS ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS.

+AT THE SAME TIME, IN THE ALLOCATION OF OTHER RESOURCES, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE VARIOUS LOCAL FACILITIES IN NEW TOWNS FULFIL THE NEEDS ARISING FROM GROWTH IN POPULATION, TO ENABLE THE NEW TOWNS TO INTEGRATE FULLY INTO HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES AS A WHOLE,+ HE SAID.

MR LAU THEN TURNED TO THE RESUMPTION OF LAND AND REMOVAL PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE COURSE OF NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT.

HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOOKING AFTER THE INTERESTS OF AFFECTED RESIDENTS BY GIVING THEM REASONABLE RESUMPTION COMPENSATION AND APPROPRIATE RESETTLEMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE HAD BEEN FREQUENT FRICTIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND AFFECTED RESIDENTS IN THE PAST OVER RESUMPTION AND REMOVAL PROBLEMS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN ABLE TO CARRY OUT MANY LARGE-SCALE CLEARANCES SMOOTHLY IN THE PAST BECAUSE OF THE EFFORTS AND MEDIATION OF NEW TERRITORIES ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS HEUNG YEE KUK AND RURAL COMMITTEES.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO GIVE DUE RECOGNITION TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THESE BODIES AND NO MENTION WAS MADE OF THEM IN THE POLICY ADDRESS.

THIS UNGRATEFUL ATTITUDE WOULD DEFINITELY AFFECT THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE, MR LAU SAID.

HE SUGGESTED THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET UP A COMMITTEE TO REGULARLY REVIEW RESUMPTION AND REMOVAL POLICIES.

THE THIRD AREA MR LAU COMMENTED ON WAS THE NEED TO IMPROVE VARIOUS FACILITIES IN AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES CLOSE TO NEW TOWNS.

+THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STEP UP LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS IN THE VILLAGES WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF VILLAGERS AND MATCHING THEM WITH DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO DREW ATTENTION TO THE LACK OF WATER SUPPLY FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES AND ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO APPOINT A CO-ORDINATING DEPARTMENT TO WORK OUT IMPROVEMENT PLANS.

ON NOISE POLLUTION IN THE NEW TOWNS, MR LAU CALLED FOR EARLY STEPS BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ENACT LEGISLATION FOR COMPREHENSIVE CONTROL IN THE WHOLE TERRITORY AND THE SETTING UP OF A SPECIAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF THE RELEVANT LEGISLATION.

LASTLY, MR LAU SPOKE ON LAND USE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

HE SAID THE PRESENT RESTRICTION BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE USE OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WAS TOO STRINGENT AND HAD TO BE REVIEWED.

HE SUGGESTED THAT LARGE AREAS OF LAND COULD BE USED FOR SUBSIDIARY TRADE AND INDUSTRIES BEFORE THEY WERE REQUIRED FOR OTHER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT.

+BESIDES, CERTAIN AREAS WITH BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE AND LONG-STANDING HISTORICAL BACKGROUND COULD BE USED FOR PROMOTING TOURISM.

+ON THE OTHER HAND, HIGH TECHNOLOGY AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERY DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ALSO BE ENCOURAGED TO ENHANCE LOCAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION,+ HE SAID.

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MORE ATTENTION NEEDED TO DEVELOP NT
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MORE ATTENTION AND INCREASED FUNDING SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE NEW TERRITORIES TO DEVELOP AND EXPAND THEIR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL, BOTH IN THE INDUSTRIAL AND THE AGRICULTURAL SECTORS, SO AS TO IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE RESIDENTS THERE.

MAKING THE CALL DURING THE POLICY DEBATE AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, THE HON TAI CHIN-WAH SAID THERE SHOULD ALSO BE A MORE REALISTIC POLICY OF MAKING BETTER USE OF THE AVAILABLE LAND, WHICH SOMETIMES IN THE PAST HAD BEEN UNNECESSARILY RESTRICTED.

MR TAI URGED THAT THE COMPENSATION SCHEME IN RESPECT OF RESUMPTION OF LAND SHOULD BE RE-EXAMINED.

MR TAI SAID EARLY CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO CONSTRUCTING A ROAD LINKING MAI PO TO AU TAU SO THAT THE EVER INCREASING FLOW OF TRAFFIC TO AND FROM THE BORDER WOULD NOT BE IMPEDED.

+THIS PROPOSED IMPROVED ROAD NETWORK, GIVING BETTER ACCESS TO THE CHINA BORDER ENTRY POINTS, WOULD HELP GREATLY TO MEET THE PRESENT URGENT NEED TO UP-GRADE AND IMPROVE EXISTING ROAD COMMUNICATIONS IN THE NORTH-WEST AREA OF THE NEW TERRITORIES,+ HE SAID.

MR TAI SAID THESE PROPOSALS WOULD DO MUCH TO EASE THE GROWING TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THIS AREA CAUSED BY GOODS VEHICLES TRAVELLING TO AND FROM THE BORDER.

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REGARDING THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF TIN SHUI WAI, HE SUGGESTED THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD NOW BE GIVEN TO DEVELOPING THE WHOLE AREA OF APPROXIMATELY 488 HECTARES WITH A VIEW TO ACCOMMODATING ABOUT 340 000 PEOPLE.

TURNING TO HEALTH SERVICES, MR TAI SAID SUBVENTED HOSPITALS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WERE BELOW THE NORMAL STANDARDS OF OTHER HOSPITALS IN THE TERRITORY AND WERE UNABLE TO MEET THE EVER INCREASING MEDICAL NEEDS OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT MOST OF THE URGENT MEDICAL CASES OCCURRING IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAD TO BE SENT TO EITHER THE PRINCESS MARGARET OR THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITALS.

+THIS IS OBVIOUSLY UNSATISFACTORY AND NEEDS TO BE REMEDIED,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT HOSPITAL FACILITIES IN TUEN MUN AREA WERE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT, MR TAI URGED THAT THE TUEN MUN HOSPITAL PROJECT BE REGULARLY MONITORED TO ENSURE THERE WERE NO UNWARRANTED DELAYS.

ON EDUCATION, MR TAI SUPPORTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A THIRD UNIVERSITY WHICH WOULD SERVE TO DEMONSTRATE THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IN THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

LASTLY, HE SAID THE NEED TO WIDEN THE SCOPE OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN ALL SCHOOLS AT THE PRESENT TIME COULD NOT BE OVER-EMPHASISED.

+OUR AIM SHOULD BE TO ACHIEVE WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY A GREATER MEASURE OF UNDERSTANDING OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE NATURE OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

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ATLA TO CONSIDER AIR LICENCES

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A PUBLIC INQUIRY TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS BY TWO LOCAL AIRLINES FOR LICENCES TO OPERATE SCHEDULED SERVICES BETWEEN HONG KONG AND POINTS IN CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA WILL BE CONDUCTED BY THE AIR TRANSPORT LICENSING AUTHORITY (ATLA) STARTING ON MONDAY (DECEMBER 2).

THE INQUIRY, TO BE HELD IN THE FORMER LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, IS EXPECTED TO RUN FROM DECEMBER 2 TO 6 AND 9 TO 13.

BOTH HONG KONG DRAGON AIRLINES LIMITED (DA) AND CALEDONIAN FAR EAST AIRWAYS LIMITED (CFEA) HAVE SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR LICENCES TO OPERATE SCHEDULED SERVICES BETWEEN HONG KONG AND POINTS IN CHINA. AT THE SAME TIME, CFEA HAS ALSO SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES TO OPERATE SCHEDULED SERVICES TO OTHER POINTS IN THE REGION.

MEMBERS OF ATLA ARE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR UNDER THE AIR TRANSPORT (LICENSING OF AIR SERVICES) REGULATIONS. MR JUSTICE PENLINGTON IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AUTHORITY AND ITS MEMBERS FORMING THE PANEL FOR THE FORTHCOMING INQUIRY ARE MR MICHAEL S.H. CHAN, MR FAN SAI-YEE, MRS MAXINE KWOK, MR EDMOND T.C. LAU, MR MA CHING-YUK, MR FRANK PONG FAI AND MR N.A. RIGG.

DURING THE HEARING, REPRESENTATIVES AND WITNESSES CALLED BY THE APPLICANTS WILL APPEAR BEFORE THE AUTHORITY. DA HAVE LODGED OBJECTIONS TO ALL OF CFEA'S APPLICATIONS, WHILE THE LATTER HAVE OBJECTED IN RESPECT OF FOUR OF THE 10 POINTS IN CHINA FOR WHICH DA ARE SEEKING A LICENCE.

CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS LIMITED, WHO HAVE OBJECTED TO A NUMBER OF POINTS IN CHINA SOUGHT BY BOTH OTHER AIRLINES AND TO ALL BUT ONE OF CFEA'S APPLICATIONS FOR NON-CHINA POINTS, WILL ALSO BE REPRESENTED AT THE INQUIRY.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE INQUIRY WHICH WILL BE HELD BETWEEN 9.30 AM AND 4.30 PM SHOULD MAKE USE OF THE PUBLIC ENTRANCE - SEATS ARE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THERE WILL BE A 10-MINUTE PHOTOCALL FROM 9.30 AM TO 9.40 AM IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE HEARING ON MONDAY (DECEMBER 2). AFTER THAT, PHOTOGRAPHS CAN ONLY BE TAKEN FROM THE BOOTHS. GIS OFFICERS WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST.

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LEGAL TITLE FOR CO-OP HOUSING MEMBERS
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MEMBERS OF CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SCHEMES FOR CIVIL SERVANTS WILL SOON BE ABLE TO OBTAIN LEGAL TITLE TO THE FLATS THEY NOW OCCUPY, UNDER REVISED CONDITIONS ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE ACQUISITION OF LEGAL TITLE IS VOLUNTARY, INVOLVING THE PAYMENT OF A SMALL PREMIUM AND NOMINAL RENTAL.

SUBJECT TO THE PAYMENT OF A FURTHER PREMIUM AND THE COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER CONDITIONS, MEMBERS OF THESE BUILDING SOCIETIES WILL HAVE THE OPTION TO SELL, LET OR OTHERWISE DISPOSE OF THEIR PROPERTIES.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH SAID: +THE DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AFTER AN EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF THESE SCHEMES WHICH WERE FIRST INTRODUCED MORE THAN 30 YEARS AGO.+

THERE ARE 5 042 FLATS BUILT BY 236 CIVIL SERVANTS' CO-OPERATIVE BUILDING SOCIETIES BETWEEN 1952 AND 1962, AND 727 SIMILAR FLATS AT LUNG CHEUNG COURT AND HONG LEE COURT BUILT BY THE GOVERNMENT BETWEEN 1969 AND 1973.

THE POLICE LOCAL INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION'S SHA TIN LODGE AND THE HONG KONG CHINESE CIVIL SERVANTS ASSOCIATION'S WAH YUEN CHUEN ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE ARRANGEMENTS ANNOUNCED TODAY BECAUSE THEY WERE SET UP UNDER DIFFERENT TERMS AND WILL BE DEALT WITH SEPARATELY.

THE MAIN CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE TRANSFER OF LEGAL TITLE TO FLATS FROM CIVIL SERVANTS' CO-OPERATIVE BUILDING SOCIETIES TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS ARE:

- (A) ANY OUTSTANDING LOANS FROM THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE FULLY REPAID;
- (B) A SMALL PREMIUM OF \$1 000 PER LOT AND A NOMINAL RENTAL WILL BE CHARGED;
- (C) BEFORE THE FLAT CAN BE SOLD, LET OR OTHERWISE DISPOSED OF, THE OWNER MUST PAY TO THE GOVERNMENT A LAND PREMIUM EQUIVALENT TO, GENERALLY, TWO-THIRDS OF THE +EXISTING USE VALUE+ OF THE LAND ON WHICH THE PROPERTY STANDS;
- (D) AN ADDITIONAL MODIFICATION PREMIUM WILL BE CHARGED AT FULL MARKET VALUE ON REDEVELOPMENT OVER AND ABOVE THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT. THE CONSENT OF ALL OWNERS WILL BE REQUIRED BEFORE ANY REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL CAN PROCEED, AND

/(E) ONCE

- (E) ONCE A SOCIETY MEMBER HAS ACQUIRED LEGAL TITLE, HE WILL NO LONGER BE ELIGIBLE FOR OTHER FORMS OF CIVIL SERVICE HOUSING BENEFIT, EXCEPT FOR OPERATIONAL DEPARTMENTAL QUARTERS.

+ALL THE AFFECTED SOCIETIES AND COMMITTEES HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME. THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS ARE MERELY A FACILITY. IT WOULD BE UP TO INDIVIDUAL SOCIETIES AND COMMITTEES TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY WISH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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PRIVATE CAR INSPECTION SCHEME LAUNCHED

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THE PRIVATE CAR INSPECTION SCHEME, WHICH WILL COME INTO EFFECT IN JANUARY NEXT YEAR, WILL PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF DEFECTIVE VEHICLES ON THE ROAD, THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR PETER LEEDS, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AND THE MOTOR TRADERS ASSOCIATION TO ANNOUNCE THE SCHEME, MR LEEDS SAID IT HAD BEEN THE AIM OF THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME OF VEHICLE EXAMINATIONS AS A PREREQUISITE TO LICENSING TO ENSURE THAT VEHICLES ON THE ROADS ARE IN GOOD MECHANICAL CONDITIONS.

IN RESPECT OF PRIVATE CARS THE INITIAL AIM WAS TO HAVE ALL VEHICLES MORE THAN SIX YEARS OLD REGULARLY EXAMINED.

+INITIALLY, THE SCHEME WILL BE APPLICABLE TO PRIVATE CARS MANUFACTURED BEFORE 1980. FOR THOSE VEHICLES, WHEN THEIR LICENCES EXPIRE ON ANY DATE AFTER MARCH 1986 IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO HAVE THE VEHICLE EXAMINED, TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF ROADWORTHINESS BEFORE THE LICENCE IS RENEWED ON ANY DATE AFTER JANUARY 2, 1986,+ MR LEEDS SAID.

TO ENSURE BETTER USE OF INSPECTION FACILITIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE GOVERNMENT HAD SELECTED 17 PRIVATE GARAGES AS CAR TESTING CENTRES. LETTERS OF DESIGNATION FOR 15 OF THEM WERE ISSUED AND TWO OTHERS WOULD BE DESIGNATED LATER.

+IF THE GOVERNMENT HAD HAD TO PROVIDE NEW CENTRES, IT WOULD HAVE TO COST ABOUT \$15 MILLION WITH \$2 MILLION ANNUAL RECURRENT EXPENDITURE,+ HE SAID.

THE TESTING CENTRES ARE FULLY EQUIPPED TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY EXAMINATIONS; FIVE OF THE 17 ARE ON HONG KONG ISLAND, SEVEN IN KOWLOON AND FIVE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

/THEY ALL

THEY ALL HAVE STAFF COMPETENT TO CARRY OUT THESE EXAMINATIONS AND 157 OF THEM HAVE ATTENDED TRAINING COURSES ARRANGED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ON THE PROCEDURE FOR CARRYING OUT THE EXAMINATIONS.

THE EXAMINATIONS WILL COVER THE ESSENTIAL ITEMS WITH REGARD TO SAFETY WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON BRAKES, STEERING, SUSPENSION AND THE CONDITION OF THE WHEELS AND TYRES.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT SOME 50 000 CARS MANUFACTURED IN 1979 OR BEFORE WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE SCHEME AND LEAFLETS HAVE BEEN PREPARED ADVISING CAR OWNERS ON THE PROCEDURE. THE LEAFLETS PRODUCED BY THE MOTOR TRADERS ASSOCIATION WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING OFFICES, CAR TESTING CENTRES AND PETROL FILLING STATIONS.

MEANWHILE, A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT 15 OF THE CAR TESTING CENTRES WILL START OPERATING FROM JANUARY 1986. THE OTHER TWO WILL BE OPERATING FROM FEBRUARY 1986 AND MARCH 1986.

THE CAR TESTING CENTRES ARE:

- (1) BMW CONCESSIONAIRES (HK) LTD.
MA TAU WAI ROAD
- *(2) CONCORD LIMITED
MA TAU KOK ROAD
- (3) CROWN MOTORS LTD.
KING'S ROAD
- (4) CROWN MOTORS LTD.
CHAI WAN KOK STREET
- (5) CROWN MOTORS LTD.
KIU TAU WAI
- (6) DAH CHONG HONG (MOTOR SERVICE CENTRE) LTD.
WESTLANDS ROAD
- ** (7) DAH CHONG HONG (MOTOR SERVICE CENTRE) LTD.
TEXACO ROAD

/(8) DAH

- (8) DAH CHONG HONG (MOTOR SERVICE CENTRE) LTD.
KAI CHEUNG ROAD
- (9) FIDELITY MOTORS LTD.
SAN MA TAU STREET
- (10) JEBSEN AND CO. LTD.
CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD
- (11) M.D. MOTORS LTD.
TIN WAN CLOSE
- (12) UNIVERSAL CARS LTD.
CASTLE PEAK ROAD
- (13) WALLACE HARPER AND CO. LTD.
KWUN TONG ROAD
- (14) WALLACE HARPER AND CO. LTD.
ABERDEEN MAIN ROAD
- (15) ZUNG FU GARAGES LTD.
WONG CHUK HANG ROAD
- (16) ZUNG FU GARAGES LTD.
PO LOI STREET
- (17) ZUNG FU GARAGES LTD.
WO YI HOP ROAD

* SERVICE BEGINS MARCH 1986

** SERVICE BEGINS FEBRUARY 1986

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PAC CONTINUES HEARINGS TOMORROW
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THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE ITS OPEN HEARINGS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT 9.15 AM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE TO ANSWER POINTS RAISED IN THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S ANNUAL REPORT WILL BE THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, THE SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE, AND THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT.

FURTHER HEARINGS WILL BE HELD ON DECEMBER 5.

THE TIMETABLE FOR TOMORROW'S HEARINGS IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 9.15 AM SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, PARAGRAPHS 7-11.
- 9.40 AM DIRECTOR OF MARINE, PARAGRAPHS 150-153.
- 10 AM DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION AND DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, PARAGRAPHS 125-129.
- 10.15 AM SECRETARY, UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE, PARAGRAPHS 107-123.
- 11.10 AM SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, PARAGRAPHS 97-106.
- 11.45 AM SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, PARAGRAPHS 184-192.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES COVERING THE OPEN HEARINGS ARE ADVISED TO BRING WITH THEM A COPY OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR REFERENCE.

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MEANWHILE, SEVEN ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS ARE PLANNED BY 1993 ALTHOUGH TWO OF THEM WERE NOT YET IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME, HE SAID.

+AS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, SEVEN MORE WILL BE ON STREAM BY 1993, ALTHOUGH FIVE HAVE YET TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME,+ HE ADDED.

DR HAYES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS SINCERE IN THE PLANNING OF FACILITIES TO MEET ADDITIONAL DEMANDS AND EVERY EFFORT WOULD BE MADE, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, TO ENABLE STUDENTS TO STUDY AT SCHOOLS WITHIN THEIR OWN DISTRICT.

+THIS IS ALL PART OF THE PLANNED PROVISION OF BALANCED COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES, BUT THERE IS MORE TO A BALANCED COMMUNITY THAN THE PROVISION OF WORK, EDUCATION AND FACILITIES OF ALL KINDS,+ HE SAID.

+NEW TOWNS USUALLY HAVE PROBLEMS OF INTEGRATION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND NEWCOMERS, AND AT TIMES THERE MIGHT BE MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN THEM,+ HE ADDED.

+WE MUST BE PREPARED TO INTEGRATE, TO CO-EXIST, TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER, AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, TO MUTUALLY ACCOMMODATE,+ HE SAID.

DR HAYES SAID THE BEST PLACE TO PREPARE ONESELF FOR MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION WAS IN SCHOOLS WHERE CHILDREN COULD LEARN TO GRASP THE IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF A HARMONIOUS COMMUNITY BY BEING COMMUNITY-MINDED, SHOWING WILLINGNESS TO MAKE FRIENDS, AND PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY SERVICES.

THE WONG SHIU CHI MIDDLE SCHOOL WHICH HAD A HISTORY OF MORE THAN 20 YEARS AND WAS THE FIRST GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDISED SCHOOL IN THE DISTRICT, HAD CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TAI PO COMMUNITY, SAID DR HAYES.

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EARLY STUDY OF CIVIC EDUCATION CALLED FOR
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YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD LEARN ALL THEY CAN ABOUT CIVIC EDUCATION AND PUT IT INTO PRACTICE SO THAT THEY AND THE COMMUNITY CAN BENEFIT, DEPUTY REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR PETER NG, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

+THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING, YOUTHS WILL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CITIZEN, THUS ENHANCING THEIR CIVIC SENSE AND CONCERN FOR SOCIETY,+ HE SAID.

/SPEAKING AT

SPEAKING AT THE 13TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE SKH LAM WOO MEMORIAL SECONDARY SCHOOL, HE SAID, BESIDES JOINING EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT LOCAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM.

STUDENTS CAN ACHIEVE THIS BY ATTENDING THE OPEN MEETINGS OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS, PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL, URBAN COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID.

+THIS WILL ENABLE THEM TO DIRECTLY UNDERSTAND THE SPIRIT, OPERATION AND LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT, IN PREPARING THEMSELVES TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY IN FUTURE.

+HONG KONG IS UNDERGOING A STAGE OF EVOLVEMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE FIELDS OF POLITICAL SYSTEM AND EDUCATION,+ MR NG SAID.

+THE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG WILL DEPEND GREATLY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT UNDER WHICH PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS SECTORS WILL BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES AND SERVICES,+ HE SAID.

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DB MEMBERS VISIT KOWLOON CITY POLICE

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KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS THIS (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON HAD A LOOK AT THE WORK OF THE POLICE DURING A VISIT TO THE KOWLOON CITY POLICE DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS IN HO MAN TIN.

THE VISIT WAS PART OF A PROGRAMME ARRANGED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICE TO FAMILIARISE MEMBERS WITH THE OPERATION OF VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

LED BY CHAIRMAN, MR WONG SIK-KONG, AND DISTRICT OFFICER, MR GORDON JONES, MEMBERS WERE BRIEFED BY POLICE DISTRICT COMMANDER, MR NG CHING-KWOK, AND SENIOR OFFICERS ON LAW AND ORDER IN THE DISTRICT.

MR NG TOLD MEMBERS THAT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME INTRODUCED IN THE DISTRICT LAST MONTH WAS PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY.

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE, SIX RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN LOK MAN ESTATE, OI MAN ESTATE, HO MAN TIN ESTATE, WHAMPOA ESTATE, YIN ON STREET AND CHUN SIN MEI ESTATE WERE CHOSEN FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHEME.

MR NG TOLD BOARD MEMBERS THAT THE INITIAL RESPONSE FROM RESIDENTS WAS ENCOURAGING AND MORE THAN 180 HOUSEHOLDS HAD AGREED TO PARTICIPATE. THE SCHEME WILL BE EXTENDED TO COVER MORE BUILDINGS IN THE FUTURE.

/BOARD MEMBERS

BOARD MEMBERS DISCUSSED WITH THE POLICE A WIDE RANGE OF MATTERS INCLUDING RECENT POLICE ACTION AGAINST THE PUBLICATION OF PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN THE DISTRICT.

THEY LATER EXCHANGED VIEWS ON HOW TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE DELIQUENCY IN THE DISTRICT.

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CONFERENCE TO PROMOTE FIRE SAFETY
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LOCAL FIRE ENGINEERS, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, WILL HOLD AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FEDERATION OF BRITISH FIRE ORGANISATIONS TO PROMOTE FIRE SAFETY.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF FIRE ENGINEERS, HONG KONG BRANCH, MR G.V. ALLAWAY, WHO IS SENIOR DIVISIONAL OFFICER OF FIRE PROTECTION BUREAU, WILL MEET THE PRESS AT 11.15 AM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF THE EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE.

THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE GIS PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE FIFTH FLOOR OF BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, CENTRAL.

THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR ROBERT HOLMES AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERATION OF BRITISH FIRE ORGANISATIONS, MR BRIAN FULLER, WILL ALSO BE PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

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VISIT TO SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE
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KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS TODAY (THURSDAY) LEARNED ABOUT VARIOUS SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

LED BY BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR LAM HANG-FAI, MEMBERS TOURED THE PERTH STREET SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTRE THIS MORNING AND SAW THE LATEST FACILITIES THERE.

A PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR OF THE CENTRE, MRS WINNIE CHAN, TOLD BOARD MEMBERS THAT THE CENTRE OFFERED TWO KINDS OF SERVICE - ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIAL SERVICES.

ASSESSMENT SERVICES INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF TESTS ON VISUAL, HEARING, SPEECH, LEARNING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE FOR CHILDREN.

THE CENTRE ALSO PROVIDES TRAINING AND THERAPY FOR CHILDREN WHEN THEIR DEFECTS ARE DETECTED, AND PARENTS WOULD BE GIVEN ADVICE ON HOW TO HANDLE THEIR CHILDREN, MRS CHAN SAID.

THE PERTH STREET CENTRE IS ONE OF THREE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTRES RUN BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, WHICH IS THE FIFTH DEPARTMENT THE DISTRICT BOARD VISITED SINCE THIS TERM BEGAN IN APRIL IN A PROGRAMME TO LEARN ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT MACHINERY.

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COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS BUDGET
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BUDGETARY MATTERS FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR WILL BE THE KEY ISSUE WHEN URBAN COUNCIL'S KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN COMMITTEE MEET AGAIN TOMORROW (FRIDAY) MORNING.

THE COMMITTEE, CHAIRED BY MR WALTER SULKE, WILL ALSO REVIEW AND CONSIDER A NUMBER OF REPORTS AND PAPERS, INCLUDING THE CAMPAIGN'S STRATEGY FOR 1986 AND PARTICIPATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE AUXILIARY LITTER WARDEN SCHEME WHICH IS, AT PRESENT, EXCLUSIVE TO POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY.

THE MEETING, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, WILL START AT 8.30 AM AT ROOM 2, FOURTH FLOOR, URBAN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, EDINBURGH PLACE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1985

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ROAD SAFETY NIGHT IN TSUEN WAN
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AN ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATIONAL ROAD SAFETY NIGHT IN TSUEN WAN WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AT 7.30 PM IN THE SHA TSUI ROAD PLAYGROUND AS PART OF THE DISTRICT'S CURRENT ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN.

OFFICIATING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WILL BE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ANGUS MIU, AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, MR CHAU HOW-CHEN.

PROGRAMMES FOR THE NIGHT INCLUDE DRILLS BY SCHOOL ROAD SAFETY PATROLS, ROAD SAFETY DEMONSTRATION AND EXHIBITION, GAMES STALLS AND PRESENTATION OF PRIZES TO WINNERS OF A RECENT POSTER AND BOOKMARK DESIGN COMPETITIONS.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

DETAILS ON DB STUDY TOUR
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MEMBERS OF THE SHAM SHUI PO DISTRICT BOARD WILL DEPART FOR JAPAN TOMORROW (FRIDAY) ON A NINE-DAY STUDY TOUR.

JOINED BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, THE 17-MEMBER GROUP WILL VISIT KAGOSHIMA AND TOKYO.

TOUR LEADER, MR CHOW KWEN-LIM, AND DISTRICT OFFICER, MR SYLVESTER TSE, WILL ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF THE STUDY TRIP AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT 12.15 PM IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE ARRIVAL HALL AT KAI TAK AIRPORT TOMORROW.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1985

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FIRE SERVICES TO HOLD PEAK RELAY
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THE ANNUAL PEAK RELAY RACE ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG FIRE COMMAND OF THE FIRE SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT 3 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

SOME 150 OFFICERS AND MEN AS WELL AS CIVILIAN STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT WILL TAKE PART IN THE ANNUAL EVENT STARTING FROM HARLECH ROAD NEAR THE PEAK CAFE AND FINISHING AT THE STARTING POINT.

EACH TEAM COMPRISES FIVE RUNNERS WHO WILL EACH HAVE TO COMPLETE A 3.5 KILOMETRES DISTANCE AROUND THE PEAK.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT STARTING AT 3 PM.

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CENTRAL FIRE STATION IN USE
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A NEW FIRE STATION BUILT TO REPLACE THE OLD GARDEN ROAD FIRE STATION IN CENTRAL BECAME OPERATIONAL TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE CENTRAL FIRE STATION, WHICH IS SITUATED AT COTTON TREE DRIVE, PROVIDES FIRE PROTECTION FOR THE CENTRAL AREA.

A FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID MOTORISTS USING COTTON TREE DRIVE TO GET ACCESS TO THE MID-LEVELS WERE REMINDED TO WATCH FOR SLOWING DOWN VEHICLES WHICH MIGHT BE MAKING A LEFT TURN INTO THE FIRE STATION.

+MOTORISTS ARE ALSO REMINDED TO GIVE WAY TO FIRE APPLIANCES TURNING OUT FROM THE STATION WHEN NEARBY TRAFFIC STOP LIGHTS ARE OPERATING,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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PASSING-OUT PARADE
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THE REGIONAL SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE CIVIL AID SERVICES' 32ND PASSING-OUT PARADE AT THE CHEUNG SHA WAN PLAYGROUND ON SATURDAY (NOVEMBER 30).

MORE THAN 240 MEN AND WOMEN RECRUITS HAVE COMPLETED TRAINING IN LIGHT RESCUE, FOREST FIRE-FIGHTING, TYPHOON DUTIES AND FIRST AID AND 168 WERE DRAWN UP FOR THE PARADE.

MR WIGGHAM WILL PRESENT SPECIAL CERTIFICATES TO THREE MOST OUTSTANDING RECRUITS AND THE CIVIL DEFENCE LONG SERVICE MEDALS AND COMMISSIONER'S COMMENDATION CERTIFICATES.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CAS PASSING-OUT PARADE AT CHEUNG SHA WAN PLAYGROUND ON SATURDAY AT 7.30 PM.

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