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DOMESTIC EXPORTS ON STEADY RECOVERY

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IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983, DOMESTIC EXPORTS BEGAN TO RECOVER AND RECORDED A YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE IN REAL TERMS OF TWO PER CENT, ACCORDING TO THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT 1983 PUBLISHED TODAY BY THE GOVERNMENT.

THE TREND OF DECLINING GROWTH RATES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS DURING 1982 HAS THUS BEEN REVERSED.

THE REPORT SAYS THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR DOMESTIC EXPORTS ARE NOW BRIGHTER.

APART FROM THE SLOW BUT GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE ORDER-BOOK POSITIONS REPORTED BY MANUFACTURERS IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE ARE MORE DEFINITE INDICATIONS OF AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN TWO OF HONG KONG'S MAJOR MARKETS, THE UNITED STATES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY.

THE REPORT NOTES THAT, HOWEVER, THE SUPPLY OF LABOUR FOR 1982 AS A WHOLE GREW AT A SLIGHTLY FASTER RATE THAN THE DEMAND FOR IT.

IN CONSEQUENCE, OVERALL EMPLOYMENT DECLINED SOMEWHAT AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATES BOTH ROSE IN 1982. THESE TRENDS CONTINUED INTO 1983.

COMMENTING ON THE EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT GIVEN THERE WAS SOME REVIVAL IN MANUFACTURING ACTIVITY IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983, THE UNDERLYING ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS ALREADY IMPROVING.

BUT THE IMPROVEMENT WAS NOT YET SUFFICIENT TO RESULT IN A FALL IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE.

HE ADDED THAT CHANGES IN UNEMPLOYMENT TEND TO LAG BEHIND CHANGES IN THE ECONOMY, SO THAT A RISING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT THE UNDERLYING ECONOMIC SITUATION IS ALSO DETERIORATING.

THE RATE OF INFLATION IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983 REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME AS IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1982.

THE REPORT ATTRIBUTES THIS TO THE RELATIVE BALANCE BETWEEN AGGREGATE DEMAND AND AGGREGATE SUPPLY IN THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY, AS WELL AS TO THE CONTINUED EASING OF INFLATION ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

THE REPORT UPDATES THE ANALYSES OF THE ECONOMY IN 1982 IN THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND DOCUMENT PUBLISHED ON BUDGET DAY, AND ASSESSES SUBSEQUENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983 USING SUCH STATISTICS AS ARE AVAILABLE.

/APART FROM .....

APART FROM GIVING AN OVERALL VIEW, THE REPORT CONTAINS INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS ON THE EXTERNAL SECTOR, THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, THE LABOUR SECTOR, ACTIVITY IN SELECTED SECTORS AND PRICES.

ON THE EXTERNAL SECTOR, THE REPORT POINTS OUT THAT DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN THE FIRST QUARTER SHOWED A YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE OF SIX PER CENT IN VALUE TERMS OR TWO PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

THE LATTER GROWTH RATE, ALBEIT SLOW, WAS ENCOURAGING, GIVEN THAT THE YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS WAS NEGATIVE FOR FOUR CONSECUTIVE QUARTERS IN 1982.

WITHIN THIS INCREASE IN THE OVERALL GROWTH RATE OF EXPORTS WAS A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES, HONG KONG'S LARGEST MARKET, BY 19 PER CENT IN VALUE TERMS OR NINE PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

THE REPORT CAUTIONS, HOWEVER, THAT THE IMPROVEMENT IN DOMESTIC EXPORT PERFORMANCE IN THE FIRST QUARTER, THOUGH PROMISING, DID NOT IN ITSELF PROVIDE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE THAT A SUSTAINED ECONOMIC RECOVERY HAS BEGUN.

IT POINTS OUT THAT, FIRST, MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT CONTINUED TO DECLINE IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983 AND THERE ARE AS YET NO CLEAR SIGNS OF A SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT, EXCEPT PERHAPS IN SOME SECTORS OF MANUFACTURING.

SECOND, RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES SHOWED NO GROWTH IN REAL TERMS IN THE FIRST QUARTER, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THEY HAVE BEGUN TO PICK UP SINCE THEN.

THIRD, APART FROM THE MORE DEFINITE SIGNS OF AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, MOST INDICATORS POINT TO ONLY A MODEST RECOVERY IN MOST OF HONG KONG'S MAJOR MARKETS.

NEVERTHELESS, THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT STATISTICS AVAILABLE SINCE THE REPORT WAS WRITTEN CONTINUED TO INDICATE THAT AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY WAS UNDERWAY.

THE REPORT FURTHER NOTES THAT RE-EXPORTS ALSO IMPROVED IN THE FIRST QUARTER, SHOWING A YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE OF FIVE PER CENT IN VALUE TERMS OR THREE PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

THE YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATE OF THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS (DOMESTIC EXPORTS PLUS RE-EXPORTS), AT SIX PER CENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER, WAS THUS FASTER THAN THAT OF IMPORTS AT TWO PER CENT.

IN CONSEQUENCE, THE VISIBLE TRADE GAP NARROWED SIGNIFICANTLY TO 13 PER CENT FROM 16 PER CENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1982.

/ON THE .....

ON THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, THE REPORT OBSERVES THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

FIRST, THE OVERALL GROWTH RATE OF THE MONEY SUPPLY WAS MODERATE DURING THE FIRST QUARTER, BUT THAT OF THE FOREIGN CURRENCY COMPONENT WAS RELATIVELY HIGH. THE INTEREST TAX CHANGES INTRODUCED IN FEBRUARY 1982, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, STILL APPEARED TO BE HAVING SOME EFFECT.

SECOND, INTEREST RATES REMAINED GENERALLY STABLE THROUGHOUT THE FIRST QUARTER, WHILE LOANS AND ADVANCES GREW ONLY SLOWLY.

THIRD, THE TRADE WEIGHTED EXCHANGE RATE INDEX FOR THE HONG KONG DOLLAR WAS RELATIVELY STABLE AFTER THE SHARP ADJUSTMENT IN THE PREVIOUS QUARTER.

HOWEVER, RENEWED DOWNWARD PRESSURE ON THE HONG KONG DOLLAR DEVELOPED IN THE SECOND QUARTER.

THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE US DOLLAR, WEAKENED FURTHER IN THE EARLY PART OF THE SECOND QUARTER.

ON THE LABOUR SECTOR, THE REPORT INDICATES THAT MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT DECREASED IN 1982, REFLECTING THE INFLUENCE OF THE GENERAL ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN.

EMPLOYMENT ON BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES ALSO DECLINED.

THESE DECREASES WERE, HOWEVER, LARGELY OFFSET BY THE INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE TERTIARY SERVICES SECTORS.

THE TREND OF THE RELATIVE SHIFT IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN FAVOUR OF THE TERTIARY SERVICES SECTORS THUS CONTINUED.

THE REPORT FURTHER OBSERVES THAT WHILE MANUFACTURING WAGE RATES AND CONSTRUCTION WAGE RATES DECLINED IN REAL TERMS, SALARIES IN THE TERTIARY SERVICES SECTORS, IN TERMS OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED, CONTINUED TO RISE.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THERE WAS SOME IMPROVEMENT IN MANUFACTURING ACTIVITY IN THE FIRST QUARTER, AS SUGGESTED BY THE LATEST STATISTICS ON DOMESTIC EXPORTS AND ON RETAINED IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES.

THE MONTHLY SURVEY ON EMPLOYMENT, PAYROLL AND ORDERS-ON-HAND SHOWED GRADUAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ORDER-BOOK POSITIONS IN RECENT MONTHS.

FURTHER, SOME QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENTS, BASED ON FACTORY VISITS, CONTACTS WITH LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS ALSO INDICATED THAT MANUFACTURERS IN GENERAL WERE MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT EXPORT PROSPECTS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR THAN IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1982.

/THE GENERAL .....

THE GENERAL IMPRESSION IS THAT TEXTILES AND CLOTHING, AND THE UPPER END OF THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY ARE RECOVERING FIRST, FOLLOWED BY THE FOOD AND BEVERAGES, AND THE PRINTING INDUSTRY.

PLASTIC WARE, TOYS AND WATCHES ALSO REPORTED A MILD RECOVERY.

ON THE PROPERTY SECTOR, THE REPORT SAYS THAT THE VACANCY POSITION AT THE END OF 1982 FOR MOST TYPES OF PROPERTY, APART FROM RESIDENTIAL, WAS HIGH IN RELATION TO EXISTING STOCK.

HOWEVER, FOLLOWING THE SHARP FALL IN PROPERTY PRICES IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, PRICES SEEM TO HAVE STABILIZED.

THERE ARE NOW SIGNS OF RENEWED INTEREST IN PROPERTY BUYING, ESPECIALLY OF SMALL RESIDENTIAL FLATS.

ON PRICES, THE REPORT COMMENTS THAT THE RATE OF PRICE INCREASE IN THE FIRST QUARTER WAS RELATIVELY STABLE BECAUSE THE DEMAND FOR DOMESTIC RESOURCES WAS NOT EXERTING MUCH PRESSURE ON THEIR SUPPLY, AND THE RATE OF INFLATION IN HONG KONG'S MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS WAS EASING.

IT POINTS OUT THAT, HAD THE HONG KONG DOLLAR NOT DEPRECIATED IN THE LAST MONTHS OF 1982 AND IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1983, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN A EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT SLOWING DOWN IN THE RATE OF INFLATION.

THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT IS NOW ON SALE AT $7 A COPY.

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TDC CHAIRMAN SEES END OF RECESSION

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+HONG KONG IS ONCE AGAIN LAST INTO THE WORLD RECESSION AND THE FIRST OUT OF IT,+ MISS LYDIA DUNN SAID TODAY.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL WAS COMMENTING ON THE TERRITORY'S LATEST TRADE FIGURES WHICH SHOW A 16 PER CENT RISE IN DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN APRIL THIS YEAR COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

THE FIGURES HERALD GOOD NEWS FOR THE ECONOMY, MISS DUNN SAID, ADDING: +HONG KONG HAS COME THROUGH THE RECESSION AND OUR EXPORTERS ARE READY TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE UPSWING IN THE WORLD ECONOMY.+

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HIGHER EXPORT EARNINGS FOR TEXTILES EXPECTED

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RECENT SHARP INCREASES IN TEXTILE QUOTA PRICES POINT TO HIGHER EXPORT EARNINGS FOR HONG KONG THIS YEAR, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JUSTIN YUE, SAID TODAY.

+THIS SHOULD HELP SUSTAIN THE RECOVERY IN OUR EXPORT TRADE THAT IS REFLECTED IN THE FIRST QUARTER ECONOMIC REPORT RELEASED TODAY,+ MR YUE SAID.

REFERRING TO QUOTA PRICES, HE EXPLAINED THAT INCREASED QUOTA PRICES USUALLY MEANT THAT QUOTAS WOULD BE FULLY TAKEN UP IN THE COURSE OF THE YEAR.

+IF SO, TEXTILE EXPORTS IN 1983 SHOULD PROVIDE MORE EARNINGS FOR HONG KONG THAN IN 1982,+ HE SAID.

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR APRIL

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THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) AND CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (B) FOR APRIL 1983 WERE 142 AND 140 RESPECTIVELY, ACCORDING TO FIGURES RELEASED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH, CPI(A) INCREASED BY TWO POINTS OR 1.4 PER CENT AND CPI(B) BY ONE POINT OR 0.7 PER CENT.

WHEN COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH OF THE PRECEDING YEAR, CPI(A) ROSE BY 15 POINTS OR 11.8 PER CENT AND CPI(B) BY 13 POINTS OR 10.2 PER CENT.

DURING THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED IN APRIL 1983, THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED CPI(A) INCREASED AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 1.5 PER CENT EACH MONTH AND THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED CPI(B), 1.2 PER CENT.

DURING APRIL, THE PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES STAYED AT A HIGH LEVEL OWING TO PROTRACTED ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS. IN ADDITION, CHARGES FOR MEALS IN RESTAURANTS AND RENTALS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DWELLINGS INCREASED.

THE CPI(A) AND CPI(B) ARE BASED ON THE EXPENDITURE PATTERNS OF 50 PER CENT AND 30 PER CENT, RESPECTIVELY, OF URBAN HOUSEHOLDS IN HONG KONG, WHICH WERE DERIVED FROM THE 1979/80 HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY. THE CPI(A) REFERRED TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN $1 000 AND $3 499 A MONTH AND THE CPI(B) TO HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING BETWEEN $3 500 AND $6 499 A MONTH AT THAT TIME.

THE INDEXES FOR APRIL 1983 IN RESPECT OF THE NINE COMMODITY/ SERVICE SECTIONS IN THE TWO CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES ARE GIVEN BELOW, TOGETHER WITH THOSE FOR MARCH 1983 AND APRIL 1982.

/(OCTOBER .....

(OCTOBER 1979 TO SEPTEMBER 1980 AVERAGE = 100)

SECTION	CPI(A) APR. 82	CPI(A) MAR. 83	CPI(A) APR. 83	CPI(B) APR. 82	CPI(B) MAR. 83	CPI(B) APR. 83
FOODSTUFFS	129	144	146	130	144	146
HOUSING	124	133	135	124	132	134
FUEL AND LIGHT	138	143	140	139	144	141
ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (FOR HOME CONSUMPTION)	124	190	188	123	182	181
CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR	128	135	138	129	135	138
DURABLE GOODS	108	109	109	110	111	111
MISCELLANEOUS GOODS	121	129	130	117	128	129
TRANSPORT AND VEHICLES	137	149	149	134	152	152
SERVICES	131	146	147	130	144	145
ALL ITEMS	127	140	142	127	139	140

THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS INCREASED BY TWO POINTS IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B). THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF FRESH VEGETABLES ROSE AS A RESULT OF CONTINUED SHORTAGE IN SUPPLY. THE AVERAGE CHARGES FOR MEALS IN RESTAURANTS ALSO WENT UP. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF LIVE POULTRY DECREASED OWING TO SLACKENED DEMAND.

THE EFFECT OF THE MOVEMENTS IN THE RETAIL PRICES OF OTHER FOOD ITEMS ON THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS WAS INSIGNIFICANT.

THE INDEX FOR HOUSING WENT UP BY TWO POINTS IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B) AS A RESULT OF INCREASED RENTS FOR PRIVATE DWELLINGS AND FOR SOME HOUSING AUTHORITY GROUP A AND HOUSING SOCIETY ESTATES, HIGHER FEES FOR MULTI-STOREY BUILDING MAINTENANCE, AND HIGHER WATER CHARGES. THE INCREASE IN WATER CHARGES BEGAN AFFECTING SOME HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE MONTH AND WILL BE EXTENDED TO ALL HOUSEHOLDS BY AUGUST 1983.

THE INDEX FOR FUEL AND LIGHT DECREASED BY THREE POINTS IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B) BECAUSE OF LOWER CHARGES FOR ELECTRICITY AND TOWNGAS CAUSED BY REDUCED FUEL COSTS, AND THE FULL IMPACT OF THE DECREASE IN THE PRICE OF KEROSENE.

/THE INDEX .....

THE INDEX FOR ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND TOBACCO (FOR HOME CONSUMPTION) DECREASED BY TWO POINTS IN CPI(A) AND BY ONE POINT IN CPI(B) AS A RESULT OF LOWER PRICES OF CIGARETTES.

THE THREE-POINT INCREASE IN THE INDEX FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B) WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIGHER PRICES FOR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S OUTERCLOTHING.

HIGHER PRICES OF JEWELLERY, TOILET REQUISITES AND COSMETICS CAUSED THE INDEX FOR MISCELLANEOUS GOODS TO RISE BY ONE POINT IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B).

THE INDEX FOR SERVICES INCREASED BY ONE POINT IN BOTH CPI(A) AND CPI(B) FOLLOWING INCREASED FEES CHARGED IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AND OUTPATIENT CLINICS; HIGHER TENNIS COURT CHARGES AND HIGHER ADMISSION FEES TO SWIMMING POOLS.

PRICE MOVEMENTS IN THE OTHER SECTIONS WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

(FIGURES PRESENTED IN THIS PRESS RELEASE REFER TO CPI SERIES NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED).

DETAILS OF THESE PRICE MOVEMENTS ARE GIVEN IN THE +CONSUMER PRICE INDEX REPORT+ FOR APRIL 1983. BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE VERSIONS OF THIS REPORT ARE AVAILABLE AT $3 PER COPY AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG.

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT AT TELEPHONE NO. 3-7216512.

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QUESTION ABOUT FAKE BANKNOTES FOR LEGCO

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A QUESTION WILL BE ASKED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TOMORROW ABOUT ACTION BEING TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AGAINST COUNTERFEITING OF BANKNOTES.

IT WILL BE ONE OF 16 QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ABOUT A WIDE RANGE OF MATTERS.

AT THE SAME MEETING, FIVE NEW BILLS WILL BE INTRODUCED, AND DEBATE WILL BE RESUMED ON THREE OTHERS.

THE FIVE NEW BILLS ARE: THE EXCHANGE FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WATERWORKS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, PRISONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, AND PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983. DEBATE ON THESE BILLS IS EXPECTED TO RESUME ON JUNE 8.

/DEBATE ON .....

DEBATE ON THE FOLLOWING THREE OTHER BILLS WILL BE RESUMED: ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) BILL 1983, LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, AND LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983.

AT QUESTION TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO BE ASKED ABOUT THE NUMBER OF CASES IN THE LAST 24 MONTHS IN WHICH FIRE-ARMS OR DANGEROUS DRUGS WERE FOUND BEING SMUGGLED IN BY PERSONS ENTERING AND RE-ENTERING FROM CHINA, AND ABOUT THE SECURITY MEASURES ENFORCED AT BORDER CHECKPOINTS TO PREVENT SUCH ACTIVITIES.

AND A QUESTION WILL BE ASKED ABOUT THE ANNUAL CRIME RATE OF FEMALE OFFENDERS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

SOME OF THE OTHER QUESTIONS WILL DEAL WITH SUCH MATTERS AS THE CERTIFICATES OF NO CRIMINAL CONVICTION, THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT THINKING ABOUT A SECOND HARBOUR CROSSING BETWEEN HONG KONG AND EAST KOWLOON, AS WELL AS ABOUT MOSQUITO-BRED DISEASES AND PROSECUTIONS AGAINST PEOPLE CAUSING MOSQUITOES TO BREED ON PREMISES OR LAND UNDER THEIR CONTROL.

QUESTIONS WILL ALSO BE ASKED ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF CHILDREN UNDER 12 AT CASUALTY DEPARTMENTS IN SOME HOSPITALS, AND WHETHER THERE ARE SUFFICIENT MEDICAL AND PARA-MEDICAL STAFF TO MEET DEMANDS, AS WELL AS THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED STAFF TO MEET PROJECTED NEEDS.

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TRADE DIRECTOR VISITS TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

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THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR HAMISH MACLEOD TODAY VISITED A HIGH TECHNOLOGY ELECTRONICS FACTORY AT TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.

THE TOUR WAS PART OF MR MACLEOD'S FAMILIARISATION PROGRAMME TO LOCAL INDUSTRIES, TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS AFTER HIS APPOINTMENT AS THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR.

ACCOMPANIED BY MR NIGEL SHIPMAN AND MR C.W. LAU, ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF TRADE, MR MACLEOD VISITED RCL-SEMICONDUCTORS LTD. AND WAS WELCOMED BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR S.C. TSUI.

THE FACTORY, WHICH BEGAN PRODUCTION IN SEPTEMBER 1981, MANUFACTURES INTEGRATED CIRCUITS, SEMICONDUCTORS AND LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICES FOR THE LOCAL MARKET AND FOR EXPORT TO EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA.

MR MACLEOD THEN CALLED ON THE ESTATE MANAGER, MR ROGER CHENG WHO ESCORTED HIM ON A TOUR OF THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AND BRIEFED HIM.

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AIR PASSENGER DEPARTURE TAX BILL 1983
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THE REMAINING READINGS OF THE AIR PASSENGER DEPARTURE TAX BILL WILL NOT BE TAKEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TOMORROW, BUT ON JUNE 8.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT WISHED TO GIVE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TIME TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT IT PLANNED TO INTRODUCE AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE BILL.

THE AMENDMENT IS CONSEQUENTIAL TO THE PROPOSED ABOLITION OF THE PASSENGER SERVICE CHARGE AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW TAX. THE INTENTION IS TO REMOVE ANY CONTRACTUAL LIABILITY FOR THE NEW TAX ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT OR OTHER EMPLOYERS IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE THE PRESENT CHARGE PAID FOR AS PART OF THEIR EXISTING CONDITIONS OF SERVICE. THE AMENDMENT WILL NOT, HOWEVER, PRECLUDE AN EMPLOYER FROM AGREEING, AFTER THE ORDINANCE HAS COME INTO OPERATION, TO PAY THE TAX ON HIS EMPLOYEES' BEHALF IN THE FUTURE.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT, SUBJECT TO ENACTMENT THE AIR PASSENGER DEPARTURE TAX ORDINANCE WILL COME INTO OPERATION ON JUNE 9.

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GOVERNMENT STANDARDS AND CALIBRATION LABORATORY
ACQUIRES PREMISES
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PROGRESS IN THE SETTING UP OF THE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR GOVERNMENT STANDARDS AND CALIBRATION LABORATORY TOOK A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD TODAY WITH THE FORMAL TAKE OVER OF THE MODERN WAN CHAI PREMISES IN WHICH IT WILL BE HOUSED.

+THE LABORATORY IS A KEY TECHNICAL BACK-UP SERVICE BEING PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT TO ENABLE HONG KONG INDUSTRY TO CALIBRATE ITS MOST PRECISE MEASURING EQUIPMENT.

+THIS FACILITY IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL TO ASSIST THE PROCESS OF FURTHER INDUSTRIAL DIVERSIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURING SECTOR,+ THE HEAD OF THE LABORATORY, MR BRIAN TYLER SAID.

THE 900-SQUARE-METRE PREMISES, WHICH OCCUPIES THE WHOLE OF THE 6TH FLOOR OF CARRIAN CENTRE IN GLOUCESTER ROAD, WILL NEED ELABORATE FITTING-OUT, INCLUDING THE INSTALLATION OF PRECISE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL EQUIPMENT TO GIVE AN AMBIENT TEMPERATURE OF 23 DEGREES CELSIUS CONTROLLED TO WITHIN 1 DEGREE CELSIUS, TOGETHER WITH LOW HUMIDITY.

+THIS WORK SHOULD TAKE ABOUT SIX MONTHS, AND THE LABORATORY WILL OPEN IN EARLY 1984,+ MR TYLER SAID.

+FOR THE FIRST YEAR OPERATION, 11 TECHNICAL STAFF ARE BEING RECRUITED AND ARE EXPECTED TO BE AT WORK IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

/+WHEN FULLY .....

+WHEN FULLY DEVELOPED, THE LABORATORY WILL HAVE AN ESTABLISHMENT OF MORE THAN 30 TECHNICAL STAFF. THE POSTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE FILLED IN A PHASED PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS,+ MR TYLER SAID.

ALL THE MAJOR PRECISION MEASURING EQUIPMENT TO BE INSTALLED ARE NOW BEING BOUGHT, THE BUDGET FOR THIS IS ABOUT HK$11 MILLION, WITH OVERALL PROJECT COSTS TOTALLING HK$16 MILLION.

THE LABORATORY IS BEING ESTABLISHED BY THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING A RECOMMENDATION BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION, AND ENDORSED BY THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

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COMPUTERISED TRAFFIC CONTROL LIKELY FOR TSUEN WAN

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM, IN WHICH COMPUTERISED TRAFFIC LIGHT CONTROLS COPE AUTOMATICALLY WITH DAILY CHANGES IN THE TRAFFIC FLOW, WILL EVENTUALLY BE EXTENDED TO COVER TSUEN WAN, MR RICHARD SCURFIELD, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT (NEW TERRITORIES), SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

THE SYSTEM IS NOW IN OPERATION AT 200 ROAD JUNCTIONS FROM LAI CHI KOK TO THE AIRPORT IN KOWLOON, AND AT 50 JUNCTIONS IN THE NORTH EASTERN PART OF HONG KONG ISLAND.

SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT TO THE TRAFFIC FLOW HAS BEEN NOTED SINCE THE SYSTEM WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 1977.

MR SCURFIELD NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT EXTENSION OF THE SCHEME TO TSUEN WAN WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE IMPLEMENTED UNTIL THE SCHEME HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO OTHER URBAN AREAS.

MR SCURFIELD WAS SPEAKING TO THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEES OF SIX NEW TERRITORIES DISTRICT BOARDS WHO VISITED THE DEPARTMENT'S NT REGIONAL OFFICES.

MR SCURFIELD SAID TODAY'S VISIT WOULD FAMILIARISE THE VISITORS WITH THE OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

AT THE SAME TIME, IT ENABLED THE GROUP TO MEET SOME OF THE DEPARTMENT'S SENIOR STAFF MEMBERS WHO NORMALLY DO NOT ATTEND DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS, HE SAID.

THE VISITORS HELD TALKS WITH THE OFFICIALS BEFORE GOING OFF TO SEE THE DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING OFFICES, PARKING METER DEPOT AND THE LION ROCK TUNNEL.

A SIMILAR VISIT TO THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR THE END OF THE MONTH FOR THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE KOWLOON DISTRICT BOARDS.

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AUCTION OF SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL HOLD ANOTHER AUCTION OF SPECIAL CAR REGISTRATION NUMBERS ON SATURDAY (MAY 28) AT 10 AM IN THE CITY HALL RECITAL HALL.

A TOTAL OF 31 SPECIAL CAR NUMBERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR BIDDING. THEY ARE:

CZ 928	CZ 168	CX 500	CZ 203	CZ 3
CZ 306	CY 78	CZ 119	CZ 107	CZ 938
CZ1283	CZ8119	CK 838	CY 2	CG 8
CZ 884	CZ 295	CZ 944	CZ2227	CZ7021
CZ1846	CJ 82	CZ 556	AR1111	6996
CZ 611	CZ 120	CW8181	CZ2628	CY8661
CZ 621				

SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS MUST PAY IN CASH OR BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BIDDING.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER WOULD BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION WILL, AS USUAL, GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

THE COMING AUCTION WILL BE THE 85TH ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

NEW POST OFFICE

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A NEW POST OFFICE LOCATED IN SHOP UNITS NO. 6 AND 7, ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF CLOUD VIEW ROAD SHOPPING CENTRE, 33 CLOUD VIEW ROAD, HONG KONG WILL BE OPENED TO THE PUBLIC AT NOON ON THURSDAY, MAY 26.

THIS WILL BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF POST OFFICES IN HONG KONG TO 91.

TO MARK THE OCCASION, THERE WILL BE A SHORT OPENING CEREMONY AT 11 AM ON THE SAME DAY.

MRS JEANNIE CHOW SUN FONG-CHUNG, A PROMINENT EASTERN DISTRICT COMMUNITY LEADER, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING TOGETHER WITH THE ACTING POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR T.H. BARMA, AND THE DISTRICT OFFICER, EASTERN, MR LUI HAU-TUEN.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY.

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NEW FIRE STATION OPENING

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THE $20-MILLION WONG TAI SIN DIVISIONAL FIRE STATION WILL BE OFFICIALLY OPENED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR ROBERT HOLMES, AT 10.30 AM ON FRIDAY (MAY 27).

THE NEW COMPLEX IS THE DIVISIONAL FIRE STATION FOR KOWLOON EAST AND IS SITUATED AT THE JUNCTION OF SHA TIN PASS ROAD AND FUNG TAK ROAD, WONG TAI SIN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE OPENING CEREMONY.

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LABOUR LAW OFFENCES

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A TOTAL OF 566 PROSECUTION CASES FOR BREACHES OF LABOUR LAWS TAKEN OUT BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT RESULTED IN CONVICTIONS LAST (APRIL) MONTH AND FINES IMPOSED EXCEEDED $600 000.

MOST OF THE CASES CONCERNED BREACHES OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE AND ITS VARIOUS SUBSIDIARY REGULATIONS, THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE AND THE WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS (INDUSTRY) REGULATIONS.

CASES CONCERNING VIOLATIONS OF SAFETY REGULATIONS TOTALLED 200, WITH $327 100 IN FINES.

THESE INCLUDED 80 CASES (WITH $100 950 IN FINES) FOR BREACH OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (GUARDING AND OPERATION OF MACHINERY) REGULATIONS AND 58 CASES (WITH $166 950 IN FINES) FOR BREACH OF THE CONSTRUCTION SITES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS.

CASES RELATING TO BREACHES OF THE WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS (INDUSTRY) REGULATIONS ACCOUNTED FOR 350, WITH $263 100 IN FINES.

OF THE OTHER PROSECUTIONS, 11 CASES WERE RELATED TO FAILURE TO KEEP RECORDS OF EMPLOYEES, LEADING TO $6 700 IN FINES.

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NOTICE BOARDS FOR DB MESSAGES
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SEVEN NOTICE BOARDS HAVE BEEN PUT UP AT VANTAGE POINTS IN SHAM SHUI PO TO HELP PUBLICISE DISTRICT BOARD MESSAGES.

THE SHAM SHUI PO DISTRICT OFFICER, MR STEPHEN IP, SAID THE NEW BOARDS WOULD SERVE AS A DIRECT AND EFFECTIVE MEANS TO INFORM RESIDENTS OF VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD.

BEARING THE LOCAL DB LOGO, THE BRIGHT-LOOKING NOTICE BOARDS ARE PAINTED IN GREEN AND FITTED WITH WATERPROOF WINDOW PANES.

+BY DISPLAYING MATERIALS SUCH AS POSTERS, MAPS, PICTURES, AND NEWSLETTERS, WE WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP RESIDENTS BETTER INFORMED OF MAJOR DISTRICT SPORT AND RECREATIONAL EVENTS, SERVICE PROJECTS AS WELL AS VARIOUS CAMPAIGN MESSAGES.

. +IT IS HOPED THAT THESE NOTICE BOARDS WILL HELP ESTABLISH A DISTRICT IDENTITY AND ATTRACT MORE PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM,+ MR IP SAID.

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SUMMER HOLIDAY ADVENTURE COURSES FOR CHILDREN
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ADVENTURE COURSES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN TO MAKE USE OF THEIR SUMMER HOLIDAYS WILL BE HELD AT THE OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL IN SAI KUNG.

A TOTAL OF 90 SUBVENTED PLACES WILL BE OFFERED TO DESERVING PUPILS BY THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT AND THE SCHOOL.

THE SEVEN-DAY COURSES, THE FIRST OF WHICH WILL BEGIN ON JULY 15, WILL COVER SEA-BASED AS WELL AS LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES.

+THOSE WISHING TO APPLY FOR SUBVENTED PLACES SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,+ A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

APPLICATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF THE RECREATION AND SPORTS SERVICE IN WING ON CENTRE, CENTRAL, AND AT ITS 19 DISTRICT OFFICES.

TWENTY OF THE 90 SUBVENTED PLACES ARE BEING OFFERED FOR TWO SEA-BASED JUNIOR ADVENTURE COURSES TO CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF NINE AND 16.

ONE COURSE WILL START ON JULY 15 AND THE OTHER ON JULY 23.

THE REMAINING 70 PLACES WILL BE FOR TWO LAND-BASED COURSES FOR CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF SEVEN AND 11.

/THE COURSES .....

THE COURSES WILL START ON JULY 16 AND 23.

THE OFFER OF SUBVENTED VACANCIES FOLLOWED AN EARLIER ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, OF A SCHEME TO ASSIST DESERVING PEOPLE WHO WISHED TO TAKE PART IN OUTWARD BOUND COURSES.

THE SCHEME GOT OFF THE GROUND WITH A GRANT OF $670 000 BY THE GOVERNMENT.

MR WIGGHAM SAID THE AMOUNT GIVEN WAS A RECURRENT GRANT WHICH WOULD BE USED TO REDUCE THE COST OF NORMAL COURSE FEES BY ABOUT 50 PER CENT.

FOR THE WHOLE OF FISCAL 1983-84, THERE WILL BE ABOUT 1 000 SUBVENTED PLACES FOR LAND AND SEA-BASED COURSES.

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NEW MAXICAB ROUTE FOR SAN PO KONG

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A NEW MAXICAB ROUTE LINKING SAN PO KONG WITH MONG KOK RAILWAY STATION WILL BE IN SERVICE FROM TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY).

THE NEW ROUTE, NO. 21K, WILL RUN VIA HONG KEUNG STREET, SHUNG LING STREET, TSEUK LUK STREET, TAI SHING STREET, TUNG TAU TSUEN ROAD, TUNG TSING ROAD, LOK SIN ROAD, KAI TAK ROAD, NGA TSIN WAI ROAD, LA SALLE ROAD, PRINCE EDWARD ROAD WEST, NATHAN ROAD, MONG KOK ROAD, SAI YEE STREET, ARGYLE STREET AND LUEN WAN STREET.

THE RETURN JOURNEY WILL BE VIA BUTE STREET, SAI YEE STREET, BOUNDARY STREET, LA SALLE ROAD, NGA TSIN WAI ROAD, TAK KU LING ROAD, LOK SIN ROAD, CHOI HUNG ROAD, TAI YAU STREET, TSEUK LUK STREET AND HONG KEUNG STREET.

THE NEW ROUTE WILL BE OPEN FROM 6.30 AM TO 10.30 PM ON WEEKDAYS, AND 8 AM TO 10 PM ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS. ITS SERVICE FREQUENCY WILL BE 10 MINUTES DURING PEAK HOURS AND 15 MINUTES DURING OFF-PEAK PERIODS.

WHILE THE FULL FARE IS $2 PER TRIP, A SECTIONAL FARE OF $1 WILL BE CHARGED FOR THE JOURNEY FROM THE JUNCTION OF LA SALLE ROAD WITH NGA TSIN WAI ROAD TO MONG KOK RAILWAY STATION, AND FOR THE RETURN TRIP FROM THE SAME JUNCTION TO SAN PO KONG.

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