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EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL STATISTICS FOR DECEMBER 1981

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT TODAY PUBLISHED EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS FOR MAJOR SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY IN DECEMBER 1981.

THESE WERE DERIVED FROM THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL CONDUCTED EVERY QUARTER BY THE DEPARTMENT COVERING THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR, THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR= THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTORS.

A SEPARATE EMPLOYMENT SURVEY COVERS BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES.

THE OVERALL FIGURES, TOGETHER WITH A COMPARISON WITH THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1980 AND SEPTEMBER 1981 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	EMPLOYMENT IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
MANUFACTURING	907 500	904 600	905 900	- 0.2	+ 0.1
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION (MANUAL WORKERS ON SITES ONLY)	90 500	82 700	88 900	- 1.8	+ 7.4
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	455 100	474 000	483 800	+ 6.3	+ 2.1
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	131 600	148 900	154 800	+ 17.6	+ 3.9

A COMPARISON OF THE FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1981 WITH THOSE FOR THE SIMILAR PERIOD IN 1980, SHOWED THERE WERE INCREASES IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR AND THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR.

THE RAPID GROWTH RATE IN THE FINANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR CONTINUED= EMPLOYMENT IN THIS SECTOR IN DECEMBER 1981, AT 154 800 WAS 17.6 PER CENT HIGHER THAN IN DECEMBER 1980.

/EMPLOYMENT IN .....

EMPLOYMENT IN THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR IN DECEMBER 1981, AT 483 800, WAS 6.3 PER CENT HIGHER THAN IN DECEMBER 1980. ON THE OTHER HAND, EMPLOYMENT IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR AND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES DECREASED BY 0.2 PER CENT AND 1.8 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY AS COMPARED WITH THE SAME TIME LAST YEAR.

A COMPARISON OF EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1981 WITH THOSE FOR SEPTEMBER 1981, SHOWED THERE WERE INCREASES OF VARYING MAGNITUDE IN EACH OF THE FOUR SECTORS ABOVE. THE HIGHEST INCREASE OF 7.4 PER CENT, REGISTERED IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES, WAS DUE TO THE INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC WORKS AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT SITES. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY INCREASES OF 3.9 PER CENT AND 2.1 PER CENT IN THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR AND THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR RESPECTIVELY. THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

TOGETHER WITH EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS, THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ALSO PUBLISHED VACANCY STATISTICS FOR THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR= THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR= AND THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR IN DECEMBER 1981. THESE WERE COMPILED FROM THE NUMBER OF JOB VACANCIES REPORTED BY ESTABLISHMENTS COVERED BY THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL IN THESE SECTORS. THE OVERALL FIGURES, TOGETHER WITH A COMPARISON WITH THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1980 AND SEPTEMBER 1981, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY	NUMBER OF REPORTED VACANCIES IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
MANUFACTURING	42 000	47 900	44 100	+ 4.9	- 7.9
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	5 800	6 600	6 500	+12.0	- 0.5
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	2 900	2 200	2 300	-22.8	+ 1.2

THE FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1981 COMPARED WITH THOSE FOR THE SAME TIME IN 1980, SHOWED INCREASES OF 4.9 PER CENT AND 12 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF REPORTED VACANCIES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR AND THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR RESPECTIVELY. FOR THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR, THE NUMBER OF REPORTED VACANCIES DECREASED BY 22.8 PER CENT RELATIVE TO THE SAME TIME IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

/THE FIGURES .....

THE FIGURES FOR DECEMBER 1981 COMPARED WITH THOSE FOR SEPTEMBER 1981, SHOWED DECREASES OF 7.9 PER CENT AND 0.5 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF REPORTED VACANCIES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR AND THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR.

ON THE OTHER HAND, A MINOR INCREASE OF 1.2 PER CENT WAS OBSERVED IN THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR.

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL ARE STATISTICS ON MONTHLY PAYROLL OUTLAYS IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR= THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR= AND THE FINANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR. QUARTERLY TOTALS FOR EACH OF THESE SECTORS ARE SHOWN IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE.

TOTAL QUARTERLY PAYROLL IN

SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY	4TH QTR. 1980	3RD QTR. 1981	4TH QTR. 1981	% CHANGE 4TH QTR.81 ON 4TH QTR.80	% CHANGE 4TH QTR.81 ON 3RD QTR.81
	HK$ MN	HK$ MN	HK$ MN		
MANUFACTURING	4 228	4 770	5 076	+20.1	+ 6.4
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	2 339	2 674	2 981	+27.4	+11.5
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	1 211	1 351	1 671	+38.0	+23.7

RELATIVE TO THE PREVIOUS QUARTER AS WELL AS THE SAME QUARTER A YEAR AGO, PAYROLL OUTLAYS INCREASED IN EACH OF THE ABOVE SECTORS. THE INCREASE WAS PARTICULARLY RAPID IN THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR, WHICH REGISTERED INCREASES OF 23.7 PER CENT AND 38.0 PER CENT WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS QUARTER AND THE SAME QUARTER A YEAR AGO RESPECTIVELY.

TO ADJUST FOR VARIATIONS IN TOTAL PAYROLL OUTLAYS ARISING FROM CHANGES IN THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT, A NOMINAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED IS OBTAINED. TO FURTHER ALLOW FOR DIFFERENCES IN PURCHASING POWER, THE NOMINAL INDEX IS ADJUSTED BY THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (A) TO GIVE THE REAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED. VALUES OF THESE TWO INDICES ARE GIVEN IN THE TABLES BELOW:

/NOMINAL INDEX OF .....

SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY	NOMINAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED (JUNE 1980 = 100)			% CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
MANUFACTURING	114.8	122.5	138.4	+20.6	+13.0
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	127.4	124.8	155.6	+22.1	+24.7
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	152.2	120.2	172.9	+13.6	+43.8

SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY	REAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED (JUNE 1980 = 100)			% CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
MANUFACTURING	107.7	102.3	114.0	+ 5.8	+11.4
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	119.5	104.2	128.2	+ 7.3	+23.0
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	142.8	100.3	142.4	- 0.3	+42.0

COMPARED WITH DECEMBER 1980, INCREASES OF 20.6 PER CENT, 22.1 PER CENT AND 13.6 PER CENT WERE REGISTERED IN THE NOMINAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR= WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR= AND THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR RESPECTIVELY.

OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE REAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED SHOWED INCREASES OF 5.8 PER CENT AND 7.3 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR= AND THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR.

/THE FINANCE. .....

THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR RECORDED AN INSIGNIFICANT DECREASE OF 0.3 PER CENT. THE RELATIVELY MODERATE CHANGES IN THE INDICES OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED IN THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR INDICATE THAT THE RAPID INCREASE IN TOTAL PAYROLL OUTLAYS IN THIS SECTOR WAS LARGELY DUE TO A RAPID INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT.

COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1981, INCREASES OF 13 PER CENT, 24.7 PER CENT AND 43.8 PER CENT IN THE NOMINAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED WERE REGISTERED RESPECTIVELY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR= THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR, AND THE FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR. THESE RAPID INCREASES WERE LARGELY DUE TO YEAR-END BONUSES MADE IN DECEMBER 1981.

OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE CORRESPONDING INCREASES IN THE REAL INDEX OF PAYROLL PER PERSON ENGAGED IN THE ABOVE SECTORS WERE 11.4 PER CENT, 23.0 PER CENT AND 42.0 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR SELECTED INDIVIDUAL INDUSTRIES WITHIN THE FOUR SECTORS ARE GIVEN IN THE TABLES FOLLOWING.

FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

DETAILS OF EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES

I. MANUFACTURING SECTOR

INDUSTRY GROUP	EMPLOYMENT IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
WEARING APPAREL (EXCLUDING KNITWEAR FROM YARN)	263 700	258 300	259 700	- 1.5	+ 0.5
TEXTILES (INCLUDING KNITWEAR FROM YARN)	127 600	123 400	122 600	- 3.9	- 0.6
ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, APPLIANCES AND SUPPLIES, INCLUDING ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS	122 100	124 100	124 800	+ 2.2	+ 0.5
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	86 100	89 100	89 100	+ 3.6	-
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS	84 200	82 100	82 400	+ 2.2	+ 0.4

/II. BUILDING .....

II. BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

(MANUAL WORKERS ON SITES ONLY)

CONTRACTING PARTY	EMPLOYMENT IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	16 500	16 500	20 300	+23.0	+23.0
HOUSING DEPARTMENT	16 000	15 000	16 500	+ 3.1	+10.0
MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION *	3 800	1 700	2 000	-47.4	+17.6
PRIVATE SECTOR	54 200	49 500	50 000	- 7.7	+ 1.0

* CONSTRUCTION SITES UNDER THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION REFER TO M.T.R. CONTRACTS FOR WHICH WORK WAS IN PROGRESS DURING THE REFERENCE PERIOD

III. WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, IMPORT AND EXPORT, AND RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR

INDUSTRY GROUP	EMPLOYMENT IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
WHOLESALE TRADE	50 700	52 800	53 300	+ 5.2	+ 1.1
RETAIL TRADE	152 800	155 900	156 500	+ 2.4	+ 0.4
IMPORT/EXPORT BUSINESS	113 800	119 500	124 000	+ 9.0	+ 3.8
RESTAURANTS, CAFES AND BARS	118 200	125 200	128 600	+ 8.8	+ 2.7
HOTELS AND BOARDING HOUSES	19 600	20 600	21 400	+ 9.0	+ 3.6

/IV. FINANCE, ...

IV. FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR

INDUSTRY GROUP	EMPLOYMENT IN			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	DEC. 80	SEPT. 81	DEC. 81	DEC. 81 ON DEC. 80	DEC. 81 ON SEPT. 81
MONETARY INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING BANKS	44 800	47 800	49 400	+10.3	+ 3.4
REAL ESTATE COMPANIES	19 300	22 300	23 100	+19.7	+ 3.7
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	20 000	24 700	26 200	+31.2	+ 6.0
ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING FIRMS	5 100	5 600	5 700	+11.0	+ 1.7
ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES	8 300	9 800	10 300	+23.9	+ 5.3

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NEW POLICY ON GAS WATER HEATER INSTALLATION

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THE GAS INDUSTRY HAS TAKEN IMPORTANT DECISIONS THAT WILL ENSURE THE SAFETY OF FUTURE GAS WATER HEATER INSTALLATIONS.

IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT NO NEW INSTALLATIONS OF OPEN FLUED WATER HEATERS, THAT IS THE TYPE WITH A ROUND FLUE PIPE GOING THROUGH THE WALL TO A TERMINAL, WILL BE MADE IN BATHROOMS. THIS IS BECAUSE IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO MAKE THIS TYPE OF INSTALLATION COMPLETELY SAFE UNLESS THERE IS A LOT OF VENTILATION IN THE BATHROOM WHEN THE HEATER IS IN OPERATION.

NEW BATH WATER HEATERS WILL BE THE ROOM SEALED TYPE. THESE REQUIRE ONLY A SHORT FLUE THROUGH THE WALL, REQUIRE NO SPECIAL ROOM VENTILATION AND THUS THERE IS NO NEED TO OPEN A WINDOW WHEN IT IS OPERATING.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ADVISED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO CHECK THAT ANY BATH WATER HEATER THEY BOUGHT WAS THE ROOM SEALED, ALSO KNOWN AS THE BALANCED FLUED, TYPE.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN AGREED THAT THE SMALL FLUELESS SINK WATER HEATER WILL NOT BE FITTED IN BATHROOMS AND WILL BE USED ONLY TO PROVIDE WATER FOR A SINK. THIS MEANS THAT IT WILL ONLY BE WORKING FOR A SHORT TIME, CERTAINLY NOT MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES.

/IT WILL BE .....

IT WILL BE NECESSARY AS AN INTERIM MEASURE TO USE THE FLUELESS HEATER TO PROVIDE HOT WATER FOR A SHOWER IN SOME BUILDINGS JUST COMPLETED OR NEARING COMPLETION AS THESE MAY NOT HAVE PROVISION FOR FITTING THE ROOM SEALED TYPE. THE FLUELESS HEATERS WILL BE FITTED ONLY IN SELECTED WELL VENTILATED PLACES AND NEVER IN ROOMS WHERE THERE IS A SHOWER OR BATH.

EFFORTS ARE ALSO BEING MADE BY THE GAS INDUSTRY TO UPGRADE EXISTING OPEN FLUED AND FLUELESS HEATERS, BY REPLACING THEM WITH BALANCED FLUED UNITS OR FAN FLUED HEATERS.

THE NEW POLICY ON GAS WATER HEATER INSTALLATION WAS INTRODUCED FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND GAS INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES OF A LIAISON GROUP SET UP TO CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE GAS CONSULTANTS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CONDUCT AN OVERALL STUDY OF THE SAFETY AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF TOWNGAS AND LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS OPERATIONS IN HONG KONG.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID WORK WAS PROCEEDING NOW ON THE DRAFTING OF LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE SUITABLE PROVISION TO BE MADE IN EACH NEWLY-BUILT FLAT FOR A ROOM SEALED GAS WATER HEATER FOR A BATH OR SHOWER TO BE FITTED. HE DISCLOSED THAT THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING HAD ALREADY DECIDED THAT ALL FUTURE GOVERNMENT BUILT HOUSING, AND AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THOSE BEING BUILT AT PRESENT, WOULD MEET THIS REQUIREMENT.

A PRACTICE NOTE HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE BUILDING AUTHORITY TO ALL AUTHORISED PERSONS AND REGISTERED STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS URGING THEM TO TAKE THE APPROPRIATE ACTION NOW IN ADVANCE OF THE LEGISLATION. THE NOTE ADVISES THAT TO ENABLE A ROOM SEALED HEATER TO BE FITTED IT IS NECESSARY AT THE DESIGN STAGE OF A BUILDING TO ALLOW FOR A PREFORMED HOLE, TO TAKE THE HEATER FLUE, TO BE PROVIDED AT A SUITABLE POSITION IN AN OUTSIDE WALL.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE CO-OPERATION OF REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS WAS ALSO BEING SOUGHT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE SAFETY MEASURE.

COMMENTING FURTHER ON THE PROGRESS OF FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON THE CONSULTANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID HEADWAY WAS BEING MADE IN A NUMBER OF AREAS.

+SEVERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND SECRETARIAT BRANCHES HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN REGULAR DISCUSSIONS AS WELL AS CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR SINCE THE CONSULTANTS' REPORT WAS PUBLISHED 10 WEEKS AGO. THE DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IS AT AN EARLY STAGE AND, GIVEN THAT THE REPORT DEALS WITH THE FULL RANGE OF GAS OPERATIONS, MUCH WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE ON WHAT IS A HIGHLY TECHNICAL AND COMPLEX MATTER,+ HE EXPLAINED.

GOVERNMENT STAFF AND THE TWO GAS ENGINEERS SECONDED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO ADVISE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE PAID NUMEROUS SITE VISITS TO INSPECT INSTALLATIONS AND APPLIANCES IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AND IN PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION, BULK STORES, MANUFACTURING PLANTS, DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS AND TRAINING FACILITIES, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

/AN EXERCISE .....

AN EXERCISE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF GAS WATER HEATERS IN EXISTENCE IN HONG KONG, BY THE INCLUSION OF RELEVANT QUESTIONS IN THE LAST GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND THE RETURNS ARE BEING PROCESSED NOW. A FACT-FINDING EXERCISE IS ALSO BEING CARRIED OUT AT PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

PLANNING IS IN HAND TO DEVISE AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF REPORTING GAS-RELATED ACCIDENTS WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING ACCURATE AND ADEQUATE INFORMATION ON THE CAUSES WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH RESCUE OPERATIONS AND EMERGENCY REMEDIAL WORK.

A FULL EXAMINATION IS BEING CARRIED OUT ON A LARGE NUMBER OF BULK LPG INSTALLATIONS WITH A VIEW TO PRESCRIBING THE ACTION NEEDED TO BRING THEM UP TO THE STANDARD REQUIRED BY THE DANGEROUS GOODS ORDINANCE.

THE GOVERNMENT IS EXAMINING WITH BUILDING AUTHORITIES AND THE OIL COMPANIES THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF USING CYLINDERS IN MULTI-STOREY DOMESTIC APARTMENT BLOCKS. THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO LOOKING AT AND DISCUSSING WITH THE PARTIES CONCERNED THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY AN INCREASED TOWNGAS SUPPLY AND BULK LPG SUPPLY CAN BE PROVIDED.

THE INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO CONSIDER THE INTRODUCTION OF FORMAL COURSES TO SUPPLEMENT THE TRAINING ALREADY PROVIDED BY THE GAS INDUSTRY. A MANPOWER SURVEY WILL BE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE CONTRACTORS OF THE OIL COMPANIES SO THAT AN ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING NEEDS CAN BE MADE. BY OBTAINING INFORMATION ON CRAFTSMEN AND OTHERS INVOLVED IN THE VARIOUS STRATA OF THE INDUSTRY IT WILL ALSO BE POSSIBLE TO DRAW UP UNIFORM JOB SPECIFICATIONS FOR EACH TRADE, THEREBY ALLOWING FOR BETTER REGULATION OF STANDARDS.

ON THE SUBJECT OF PUBLICITY THE SPOKESMAN SAID IN ADDITION TO THE GAS SAFETY MESSAGES SEEN FREQUENTLY ON TELEVISION, A SPECIAL PROGRAMME ON THE PROPER USE OF GAS WATER HEATERS HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND SHOWN TO AN ESTIMATED 500 000 SCHOOL CHILDREN THROUGH THE NORMAL ETV CHANNELS. A CIRCULAR HAS BEEN SENT TO ALL SCHOOLS ADVISING THE STAFF TO ENSURE THAT PUPILS ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE DANGERS ARISING FROM THE USE OF GAS AND OF THE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF INTERVIEWS WITH CANDIDATES FOR THE JOB OF GAS ADVISER AND TWO SUPPORTING POSTS OF CHIEF ENGINEER, IT IS HOPED THAT THESE POSTS WILL BE FILLED BY JULY.

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MONEY SUPPLY AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS FOR FEBRUARY 1982

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THE MONEY SUPPLY AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS FOR FEBRUARY 1982 ARE PUBLISHED TODAY. THE MONETARY AGGREGATES ARE STILL AFFECTED BY SEASONAL FACTORS.

A REDUCTION IN THE DEMAND FOR TRANSACTION BALANCES (NOTES AND COINS, CURRENT ACCOUNTS AND SAVINGS ACCOUNTS) AFTER THE LUNAR NEW YEAR CAUSED THE MONEY SUPPLY, ON FIVE OF THE SIX DEFINITIONS, TO FALL IN FEBRUARY, BUT THERE WAS A FURTHER RISE IN THE GROWTH OF LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG DURING THE MONTH, PARTLY REFLECTING THE CONTINUED DEMAND FOR CREDIT ARISING FROM THE NEED TO PAY PROFITS AND SALARIES TAXES.

MONEY SUPPLY

THE MONEY SUPPLY ON THE NARROW DEFINITION, M1-TOTAL, FELL IN FEBRUARY BY EIGHT PER CENT AND HK$M1 BY 8.5 PER CENT, AFTER INCREASING BY, RESPECTIVELY, 8.9 PER CENT AND 8.6 PER CENT IN JANUARY. THE FEBRUARY OUTTURN REFLECTED A REDUCTION OF 13.5 PER CENT IN NOTES AND COINS HELD BY THE PUBLIC AFTER THE LUNAR NEW YEAR AND ALSO A FALL OF 3.7 PER CENT IN DEMAND DEPOSITS WITH BANKS.

M2-TOTAL FELL BY 0.6 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY, DOWN FROM A 3.1 PER CENT RISE IN JANUARY. M3-TOTAL ROSE BY 0.1 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY, ALSO DOWN FROM AN INCREASE OF 2.3 PER CENT IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH. HK$M3 FELL BY 1.2 PER CENT, AFTER RISING BY 1.8 PER CENT IN JANUARY.

IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS HK$M3 ROSE BY 3.5 PER CENT, UP FROM AN INCREASE OF 1.8 PER CENT IN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS.

LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG

LOANS BY BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES FOR USE IN HONG KONG ROSE IN FEBRUARY BY 3.6 PER CENT, AFTER AN INCREASE OF 2.5 PER CENT IN JANUARY. IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS, TOTAL LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG GREW BY 10.5 PER CENT, AGAINST AN INCREASE OF 7.5 PER CENT IN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS.

LOANS BY BANKS FOR USE IN HONG KONG ROSE IN FEBRUARY BY 3.8 PER CENT, AND SIMILAR LOANS BY DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES BY 3.1 PER CENT, FOLLOWING THE INCREASES OF 2.5 PER CENT AND 2.6 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS

THE NET FOREIGN CURRENCY ASSETS OF ALL BANKS FELL IN FEBRUARY BY $2 474M., WHILE THE NET FOREIGN CURRENCY LIABILITIES OF ALL DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ROSE BY $221M., INDICATING A NET OUTFLOW OF FUNDS FROM THE HONG KONG MONETARY SECTOR OF $2 695M., COMPARED WITH A NET OUTFLOW OF $537M. IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH. IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS THE NET OUTFLOW OF FUNDS FROM THE MONETARY SECTOR AMOUNTED TO $2 580M., AFTER A NET INFLOW TO THE SECTOR OF $398M. IN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS.

/BALANCE SHEET .....

BALANCE SHEET RATIOS

THE AVERAGE LIQUIDITY RATIOS (AS DEFINED IN S. 18 OF THE BANKING ORDINANCE) FOR ALL BANKS IN HONG KONG ROSE IN FEBRUARY TO 54.5 PER CENT FROM 54.2 PER CENT IN JANUARY. THE RATIO OF THEIR LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG TO THEIR DEPOSITS ROSE TO 103.1 PER CENT AT THE END OF FEBRUARY FROM 100 PER CENT AT THE END OF JANUARY.

THE AVERAGE LIQUIDITY RATIO (AS DEFINED IN S. 24A OF THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCE) FOR ALL DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ROSE TO 48.1 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY FROM 46.5 PER CENT IN JANUARY. THE RATIO OF THEIR LOANS FOR USE IN HONG KONG TO THEIR DEPOSITS ROSE TO 70.1 PER CENT AT THE END OF FEBRUARY FROM 69 PER CENT AT THE END OF JANUARY.

NUMBER OF REPORTING INSTITUTIONS

THE NUMBER OF REPORTING BANKS IN FEBRUARY WAS UNCHANGED AT 121. THE NUMBER OF REPORTING DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES INCREASED BY ONE TO 352, COMPRISING ONE LICENSED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY AND 351 REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

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TENDERS FOR PLEASURE BOATS FOR HIRE AT CASTLE PEAK BEACH

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TENDERS ARE NOW BEING INVITED FOR THE PROVISION OF PLEASURE BOATS FOR HIRE AT CASTLE PEAK BEACH IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WHERE MORE THAN 100 000 BEACH-GOERS ENJOYED THEIR PASTIME LAST YEAR.

SUCCESSFUL BIDDER CAN START OPERATING BUSINESS ON MAY 16 AND THE CONTRACT WILL EXPIRE ON MAY 15, 1983, SAID A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT TODAY.

TENDER FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE NTSD HEADQUARTERS ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF AUSTIN CENTRE, 19-23 AUSTIN AVENUE, TSIM SHA TSUI.

COMPLETED FORMS MUST BE PLACED IN THE TENDER BOX AT THE THIRD FLOOR OF NTSD HEADQUARTERS BEFORE FRIDAY, MAY 7.

ENQUIRIES ON FURTHER PARTICULARS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES SECTION OF NTSD HEADQUARTERS ON TELEPHONE 3-678715.

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HONG KONG CHALLENGES EEC MANDATE ON MFA

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THE LONDON OFFICE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TODAY RELEASED A SURVEY OF UK TRADE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING COVERING THE WHOLE PERIOD OF THE SECOND MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA II - 1978-81) WHICH SHOWS THAT:

* MFA II HAS NOT BEEN A BALANCED ARRANGEMENT BECAUSE THE SHARE OF UK IMPORTS HELD BY SUPPLIERS IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCS) HAS DROPPED TO 30 PER CENT, WHEREAS SUPPLIERS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAVE INCREASED THEIR SHARE TO 67 PER CENT.

* THE CUT-BACKS IMPOSED ON HONG KONG IN 1977 HAVE BENEFITED NEITHER THE UK INDUSTRY NOR OTHER LDC SUPPLIERS- THE MAIN BENEFICIARIES HAVE BEEN EEC SUPPLIERS, WHO HAVE INCREASED THEIR SHARE OF THE UK IMPORT MARKET FROM 38 PER CENT TO 42 PER CENT.

* THE MASSIVE DETERIORATION IN THE UK VISIBLE TRADE BALANCE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING HAS BEEN MAINLY DUE TO THE TRADE WITH DEVELOPED BOUNTRIES GOING INTO DEFICIT, COMPARED WITH A SURPLUS PRIOR TO MFA II.

* THE UK INDUSTRY'S MAIN PROBLEM APPEARS TO BE LACK OF COMPETITIVENESS WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, MANY OF WHICH HAVE MUCH HIGHER WAGE RATES, AND THERE IS NO INDICATION OF ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN PRODUCTIVITY.

THE SURVEY HAS BEEN RELEASED TO COINCIDE WITH THE VISIT TO LONDON, BRUSSELS AND GENEVA, OF MR BILL DORWARD, HONG KONG'S DIRECTOR OF TRADE INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS.

MR DORWARD POINTED OUT THAT THE FALLING IMPORT SHARES OF LDC SUPPLIERS GAVE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR MORE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES UNDER THE RECENTLY NEGOTIATED MFA III, AND YET IT APPEARED THAT THE EEC HAD ADOPTED A MANDATE WHICH COULD BE USED TO GIVE EFFECT TO PROTECTIONIST DEMANDS IN THE COMMUNITY, SUCH AS THOSE OF THE UK INDUSTRY.

+IF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST 20 YEARS AND MORE IS ANYTHING TO GO BY, IT IS THAT THOSE WHO LOBBY ON BEHALF OF THE UK TEXTILES AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES ARE NEVER SATISFIED FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME NO MATTER HOW HIGH THE LEVEL OF PROTECTION PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT,+ SAID MR DORWARD.

+CONSIDERATION OF BRITAIN'S OVERALL NATIONAL INTEREST WOULD BE FURTHERED BY AN IMPARTIAL OFFICIAL REVIEW OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE UK TEXTILES AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES, THE CAUSES OF THOSE PROBLEMS, AND THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF ANY MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE THEM,+ HE SAID.

SIR JACK CATER, HONG KONG'S COMMISSIONER IN LONDON, HAS SENT THE SURVEY TO THOSE MPS WHO TAKE AN INTEREST IN HONG KONG AND IN TEXTILES TO SEEK THEIR SUPPORT FOR HONG KONG IN THE FORTHCOMING BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EEC.

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RECALLING THE SUPPORT FROM ALL SIDES IN PARLIAMENT FOR RECOGNITION OF HONG KONG'S OPEN MARKET, ESTIMATED TO BE BRITAIN'S BEST EXPORT MARKET IN ASIA, SIR JACK SAID IT WAS FEARED THAT THE EEC WOULD DEMAND FURTHER CUT-BACKS FROM HONG KONG UNDER THREAT OF MORE DRASTIC ACTION IF HONG KONG DID NOT AGREE.

+IN ACCEDING TO MFA III, HONG KONG ENTERED INTO A COMMITMENT TO SEEK MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS TO TRADE PROBLEMS WHICH THE IMPORTING COUNTRIES, SUCH AS THE EEC, MAY BE EXPERIENCING,+ SIR JACK SAID.

+BUT THE EEC HAS YET TO JUSTIFY ITS DEMANDS FOR CUT-BACKS.+

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VACANCIES FOR ARTISANS AND TECHNICIANS

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THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IS INVITING APPLICATIONS TO FILL A LARGE NUMBER OF VACANCIES FOR SENIOR ARTISANS AND ARTISANS IN THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL FIELDS IN THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (MONDAY) THAT THE EXTRA STAFF WAS REQUIRED FOR THE RAILWAY'S +ELECTRIFICATION PLAN+.

THE SENIOR POST CARRIED A STARTING SALARY OF $2 845 A MONTH RISING TO $3 160, AND THE JUNIOR POST, $2 350 TO $2 770.

APPLICANTS FOR SENIOR ARTISAN SHOULD HAVE COMPLETED AN APPRENTICESHIP IN THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL FIELDS OR EQUIVALENT TRAINING PLUS THREE YEARS OR MORE WORKING EXPERIENCE IN THE RELEVANT FIELD. THE ARTISAN SHOULD HAVE FOUR YEARS' RELEVANT WORKING EXPERIENCE OR HAVE COMPLETED AN APPRENTICESHIP IN THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL FIELDS OR EQUIVALENT TRAINING.

IN ADDITION, APPLICANTS FOR THE POSTS SHOULD BE OF GOOD PHYSIQUE AND BE ABLE TO SPEAK FLUENT CANTONESE AND READ AND WRITE SIMPLE CHINESE.

THE DUTIES INCLUDE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ELECTRIC MULTIPLE UNITS. SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PERFORM SHIFT DUTIES.

THOSE INTERESTED MAY APPROACH ANY BRANCH OFFICE OF THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IS ALSO RECRUITING ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRING TECHNICIANS FOR THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TELEPHONES 3-666615, 3-695525 AND 5-270276.

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