



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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HONG KONG SYSTEM WORTH PRESERVING: LOBO

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IT WAS VITAL THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE SHOULD IDENTIFY AND DISPLAY TO OTHERS THE QUALITIES WHICH HAVE MADE THIS COMMUNITY A SUCCESSFUL SOCIETY WORTH PRESERVING, HON R.H. LOBO SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

WINDING UP THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ANNUAL ADDRESS, MR LOBO SAID THE HONG KONG SYSTEM, WHATEVER ITS SECRET, HAD ALWAYS GENERATED SELFLESS DEDICATION TO PUBLIC SERVICE AS WELL AS COMMERCIAL SUCCESS.

HE SAID THE HONG KONG SYSTEM DEFIED ABSOLUTE DEFINITION, BUT CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

- * FREEDOM TEMPERED BY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE,
- * RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL,
- * REWARD FOR ENTERPRISE AND SUCCESS, AND
- * CONCERN FOR THOSE IN NEED.

+THESE FACTORS, COMBINED WITH THE ENTERPRISING QUALITIES OF OUR PEOPLE, HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A SOCIETY WHICH HAS OUT-PERFORMED ITS COMPETITORS, NOT MERELY IN INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT BUT IN THE PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES, HOUSING, EDUCATION, AND IN ALL THOSE ASPECTS WHICH, TOGETHER, PRODUCE A SATISFYING STYLE OF LIFE AND A CONTENTED COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

+IT IS CLEAR, THE KEY LIES IN THE BLENDING OF A RESPONSIVE ADMINISTRATION WITH THE RIGHTS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL,+ MR LOBO SAID.

HE SAID HONG KONG HAD BEEN MADE BY THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE AND HAD BECOME WHAT HONG KONG PEOPLE WANTED IT TO BE.

+INDEED, HONG KONG'S SUCCESS IS WIDELY RECOGNISED AS DUE TO THE FACT THAT GOVERNMENT INTERFERES AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE WITH THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO WORK AND LIVE HERE.+

HE NOTED THAT THE FORTHCOMING WHITE PAPER ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG WAS UPPERMOST IN THE MINDS OF MANY PEOPLE.

+THIS IS SEEN BY MANY AS PART AND PARCEL OF THE OTHER WHITE PAPER WHICH WE HAVE JUST DEBATED.

+INDEED, AS WE LOOK TO THE SESSION AHEAD, IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE WHITE PAPER ON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT ALREADY BEEN PUBLISHED,+ MR LOBO SAID.

THERE WAS APPREHENSION ARISING FROM THE POSSIBILITY THAT FREE ELECTIONS MIGHT TURN THIS THRIVING SOCIETY INTO A PARASITIC WELFARE STATE, HE SAID.

/HE OBSERVED

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HE OBSERVED THAT HONG KONG'S SUCCESS DEPENDED ON THE PRESERVATION OF FREE ENTERPRISE AND INCENTIVES.

+WHILE WE MUST ALWAYS AIM TO NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR, IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO REFRAIN FROM UNDUE INTERFERENCE IN OUR FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND FROM ANY DIMINUTION OF THE PROFIT INCENTIVE.

+WE MUST PRESERVE A PROPERLY REGULATED SYSTEM IN WHICH THE NEEDY ARE CARED FOR AND ENTERPRISE IS REWARDED,+ HE SAID.

MR LOBO URGED ALL OUR PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO PARTICIPATE TO THE FULL IN THE IMPENDING ELECTIONS AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY.

+I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL MEET THE CHALLENGES WHICH LIE AHEAD - BECAUSE THIS IS HONG KONG'S WAY OF DOING THINGS - AND WE WILL SEE THE CONTINUATION OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN THE SYSTEM WHICH WE NOW ENJOY.+

HE SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE AND EXPAND OUR PLANS FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT.

+DURING THE LAST SESSION, WE HELD OUR DRAFT ESTIMATES MEETING IN PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME.

+DURING THIS CURRENT SESSION, THE PUBLIC MAY ALSO ATTEND MEETINGS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE AND, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, OTHER MEETINGS TOO WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC,+ MR LOBO SAID.

MR LOBO ENVISAGED A HEAVY WORKLOAD DURING THE COMING MONTH AND SAID: +I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU, SIR, AND THROUGH YOU, YOUR ADMINISTRATION, THAT THE UNOFFICIALS ARE READY FOR IT - AND WE HAVE FORMED OUR STUDY AND SCRUTINY GROUPS AND HAVE ALREADY BEGUN WORKING ON SOME BILLS. NOT OF LESS IMPORTANCE IS THE FORTHCOMING INTRODUCTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) BILL WHICH YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR ADDRESS.+

+SIR, IN EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR US AND WHAT YOUR ADMINISTRATION IS PLANNING TO DO, I WOULD LIKE, IN THANKING YOU, TO ASSURE YOU OF THE UNOFFICIALS' CONTINUING SUPPORT.

+I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO PAY TRIBUTE TO OUR CIVIL SERVICE - ALL TOO OFTEN THE UNFORGOTTEN FACTOR IN HONG KONG'S SUCCESS STORY - WITHOUT WHOSE DEDICATION AND EFFICIENCY HONG KONG WOULD NOT BE THE PLACE IT IS TODAY.

+HONG KONG HAS MUCH TO BE PROUD OF, AND NOT LEAST IS THE QUALITY OF OUR ADMINISTRATION,+ MR LOBO SAID.

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PEOPLE TOLD TO BE MORE ACTIVE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO BE APOLITICAL, THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

WITH CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND THE DRAFT SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT IT WAS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR AND URGED TO TAKE PART IN THE APPROACHING 1985 DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS AND THE FORTHCOMING EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH OUR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES IN THE YEARS TO COME, HE SAID.

THE FACT THAT 1.4 MILLION PEOPLE HAD REGISTERED TO VOTE IN THE MARCH ELECTIONS AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN SO MUCH DISCUSSION IN THE MEDIA OF THE GREEN PAPER PROPOSALS INDICATED THE KEEN INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

+I AM ENCOURAGED BY THESE INDICATIONS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, ALTHOUGH I ADMIT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY,+ MR CHEUNG SAID.

+I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS IN ENCOURAGING THE PUBLIC TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AND TO APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO CURRENT AFFAIRS, TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING IN VOICING THEIR OPINIONS AND TO FULFIL THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP SUCH AS TO ELECT SUITABLE REPRESENTATIVES TO RUN HONG KONG.+

THE QUESTION NOW WAS HOW TO ENCOURAGE GOOD CITIZENSHIP THROUGH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, AND IN WHAT WAY COULD THE GOVERNMENT PROMOTE CIVIC AWARENESS AMONG THE PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY SO AMONG THE SECOND GENERATION.

+IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THE VERY IMPORTANCE OF THE NEED THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY LIVE, MAKE SENSIBLE JUDGEMENTS ON ISSUES OF CURRENT INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE, AND CONTRIBUTE TO ITS WELL-BEING AND DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEUNG WAS CRITICAL OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT, SAYING WE CERTAINLY WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SITUATIONS WHEREBY THE NECESSARY COMMUNITY FACILITIES WERE PLANNED AND CONSTRUCTED ONLY AFTER THE FIRST BATCH OF +SETTLERS+ HAD MOVED IN.

MANY WERE DISAPPOINTED TO FIND THAT SOME OF THE MOST ESSENTIAL FACILITIES WERE LACKING, AMONG WHICH THE MOST SERIOUS WERE DEFICIENCIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN NEW TOWNS LIKE TUEN MUN AND SHA TIN.

IN TUEN MUN 2 000 PUPILS HAD TO ATTEND CLASSES IN CONVERTED CLASSROOMS, A +FAR FROM SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT+, WHICH HE HOPED THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD REMEDY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

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ON CRIME IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, HE SAID IT HAD DOUBLED SINCE 1979 WITH THE GROWTH OF THE NEW TOWNS, AND HE APPEALED TO THE AUTHORITIES TO DEPLOY MORE POLICE OFFICERS TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER, PARTICULARLY IN THE NEW PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

HE HOPED THE CONSTANT POLICE PATROLS PROVIDED ON MTRC TRAINS COULD BE EXTENDED TO KCR TRAINS, AS CROWDED PLATFORMS AND TRAIN CABINS WERE IDEAL PLACES FOR PICKPOCKETS.

SPEAKING ABOUT WATER SUPPLY ON MA WAN, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION WAS FIRST DRAWN TO THE PLIGHT OF THE ISLANDERS IN 1967 AND IT HAD TAKEN 17 YEARS TO DECIDE ON A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM. A PROJECT TO LAY A SUPPLY MAIN FROM YAU KAM TAU WOULD BE COMPLETED IN MID-1987, BUT MR CHEUNG ASKED IF CONSIDERATION COULD BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING SOME INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS.

HE FULLY SUPPORTED A PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL CENTRES TO PROVIDE LOCAL VILLAGERS WITH FACILITIES SUCH AS COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES AS HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE THE LIVELIHOOD OF VILLAGERS IN REMOTE PARTS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

ANOTHER +WORTHWHILE+ PROJECT WAS THE RESIDENTIAL UPGRADING PILOT SCHEME TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF VILLAGES SUCH AS SUN HING TSUEN IN TUEN MUN. HE HOPED IT COULD BE EXTENDED TO OTHER VILLAGES WHICH REQUIRED SUCH ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS.

ON THE TUEN MUN TO YUEN LONG LRT PROJECT, MR CHEUNG SAID THE KCRC BOARD, OF WHICH HE WAS A MEMBER, HAD EXAMINED THE FEASIBILITY STUDIES INTO THE PROJECT AND CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS COMMERCIALY VIABLE AND WAS GOOD FOR THE LONG-TERM PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND PROSPERITY OF THE NORTH-WESTERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+OF COURSE, ONE CANNOT EXPECT SUCH A PROJECT TO YIELD AS QUICK A RETURN OF CAPITAL AS MANUFACTURING, BUT THE SINO-BRITISH DRAFT AGREEMENT HAS CLEARED UP UNCERTAINTIES OF THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG AND REINFORCED OUR CONFIDENCE IN THE LRT PROJECT,+ MR CHEUNG SAID.

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HK-CHINA ANTI-CRIME EFFORT URGED BY MARIA TAM
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A CALL FOR JOINT EFFORTS BY CHINA AND HONG KONG TO STAMP OUT CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES WAS MADE BY THE HON MARIA TAM TODAY.

SPEAKING ON THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MARIA TAM SAID THE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF LAW AND ORDER WAS A VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN MAINTAINING SOCIAL STABILITY IN HONG KONG.

/+THE PEOPLE'S

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+THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA HAS JUST BECOME A MEMBER OF INTERPOL AND SHE SHOULD BE MORE RECEPTIVE OR MORE RESPONSIVE NOW TO ANY CALLS FOR JOINT EFFORTS TO STAMP OUT CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN CHINA AND HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NO LACK OF EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE BORDER AT PRESENT, BUT THE MAIN PROBLEM LAY IN THE RELAXED ATTITUDE OF THE CHINESE TOWARDS THE MANUFACTURING OF SYNTHETIC DRUGS AND THEIR POSSESSION IN CHINA, THE USE AND POSSESSION OF GENUINE OR REPLICA FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION WHICH WAS NOT DETERRED BY THE PENALTIES IMPOSED IN CHINA.

+TO FIGHT AGAINST THESE CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES CALLS FOR EVEN CLOSER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT BODIES OF CHINA AND HONG KONG,+ MISS TAM SAID.

+THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE A FRESH APPROACH TO CHINA, AS A FELLOW INTERPOL MEMBER, TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS AT SOURCE, AND SHOULD AT LEAST AGREE ON A LIST OF CUSTOMS CONTROL PRIORITIES BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND HONG KONG BORDER CHECK POINTS,+ SHE SAID.

SHE ALSO CALLED ON THE GOVERNOR TO ACTIVELY EXERCISE HIS POWER TO REMOVE OR DEPORT +HIT-MEN+ FROM CHINA WHO HAD COMMITTED SERIOUS OR INDICTABLE OFFENCES.

+THESE CRIMINALS MUST FIRST SERVE THEIR SENTENCES HERE BEFORE REPATRIATION,+ SHE SAID.

+THIS IS THE TIME, WHEN SINO-BRITISH RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE THAN CORDIAL, TO COME TO AN ARRANGEMENT WITH THE CHINESE FOR US TO RETURN THEM TO CHINA.

+JUST BY REACHING SUCH AN AGREEMENT, OR REPATRIATING A FEW OF THESE CRIMINALS, THE DETERRENT EFFECT ON CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES HERE WILL BE VERY SIGNIFICANT.+

IN THE LONG RUN, MISS TAM SUGGESTED, HONG KONG SHOULD LOOK FOR PROPER EXTRADITION ARRANGEMENTS WITH CHINA, WHEN EACH HAD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE OTHER'S LEGAL SYSTEM.

TURNING TO THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME, SHE SAID SHE WELCOMED ITS INTRODUCTION.

+THE OPPORTUNITY TO REHABILITATE YOUNG OFFENDERS OR OFFENDERS OF LESSER CRIMES BY ORDERING THEM TO WORK FOR THE COMMUNITY HAS MET WITH GENUINE SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY,+ MISS TAM SAID.

+MY MAIN CONCERN WILL BE THE DEMAND ON FINANCIAL RESOURCES REQUIRED TO TRAIN PROBATION OFFICERS TO SUPERVISE THE OFFENDERS, THE SUBSEQUENT MANPOWER COMMITMENT OF SUCH SUPERVISION, AND THE SUBSIDIES THAT MIGHT BE REQUIRED BY SUBVENTED AGENCIES WHICH PROVIDE PLACEMENT FOR OFFENDERS,+ SHE SAID.

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IN VIEW OF THESE DIFFICULTIES, MISS TAM CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE THE +SPENT CONVICTION SCHEME+, WHICH SHE DESCRIBED AS +A LESS EXPENSIVE BUT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MEASURE IN THE REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS.+

+THE IDEA BEHIND THE SCHEME IS THAT, WHERE A PERSON WHO HAS COMMITTED AN OFFENCE HAS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS BEEN LAW-ABIDING, HIS PREVIOUS CONVICTION WILL BE CONSIDERED SPENT,+ SHE EXPLAINED.

REFERRING TO THE USAGE AND STATUS OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE IN THE FUTURE, MISS TAM SAID IT WAS VITAL THAT HONG KONG CONTINUE TO USE BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGES.

+AS LONG AS BOTH LANGUAGES REMAIN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN HONG KONG WE SHALL CONTINUE TO ENJOY A MIX OF CULTURE AND MAINTAIN A POOL OF EXPATRIATE TALENT IN BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR, AND KEEP THIS PLACE A COSMOPOLITAN CITY.

+HENCE, I BELIEVE THAT IN HONG KONG OUR STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE A CHOICE OF RECEIVING THEIR EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS FROM EITHER THE CHINESE OR ENGLISH STREAM.

+THIS WILL FOSTER THE TALENT TO SUSTAIN OUR STRENGTH TO FUNCTION AND MAINTAIN OUR STATUS AS AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF FINANCE, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY,+ SHE SAID.

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DR IP OFFERS +VALUE-FOR-MONEY TIPS+
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TIPS ON HOW TO GET BETTER +VALUE-FOR-MONEY+ FROM HONG KONG'S CIVIL SERVICE WERE SUGGESTED BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

DR IP SAID FRINGE BENEFITS FOR CIVIL SERVANTS WERE INFLEXIBLE AND UNEQUALLY DISTRIBUTED.

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FIND IT WORTHWHILE TO HAVE A RETHINK ON FRINGE BENEFITS WHICH WERE COSTLY, AND DID NOT BENEFIT MANY.

+WHY DON'T WE OFFER DIRECT BENEFITS TO THEM IN MONEY TERMS, IN WHICH THEY HAVE AN OPTION TO CHOOSE HOW THEY WOULD LIKE BEST TO SPEND THEIR MONEY?+ SHE ASKED.

WITHOUT ANY INCREASE IN MONETARY TERMS, MONEY SPENT ON FRINGE BENEFITS COULD THEN BE DISTRIBUTED IN SUCH A WAY THAT ALL INCOME GROUPS COULD HAVE THEIR FAIR SHARE.

/+IF THIS

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+IF THIS PROPOSAL MIGHT MAKE SOME WORRY THAT SUCH MONETARY BENEFITS FAIL TO KEEP CIVIL SERVANTS FROM LEAVING WITH THEIR MONEY AND BENEFITS AFTER A SHORT STINT IN THE SERVICE, I WOULD REACT BY SAYING, THE BEST WAY TO KEEP CIVIL SERVANTS IS TO MAKE THE JOB INTERESTING; GIVE THEM MORE JOB SATISFACTION,+ SHE SAID.

+IN FACT, A CONSTANT INTERFLOW IN AND OUT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IS A GOOD THING. CIVIL SERVANTS WILL LEARN HOW THE OTHER SIDE LIVES AND THE PUBLIC ALSO REALISES THE DIFFICULTIES CIVIL SERVANTS HAVE TO FACE IN THEIR WORK.+

TURNING TO MEDICAL FEES, DR IP SUGGESTED THAT THESE SHOULD BE RAISED TO A MORE REALISTIC LEVEL +TOWARDS A BREAK-EVEN POINT+ SO THAT OUT-PATIENTS WERE NOT HEAVILY SUBSIDISED. IN THIS CONTEXT, SHE POINTED OUT THAT PATIENTS WHO COULD NOT AFFORD MEDICAL FEES COULD CLAIM PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, AND SICK LEAVE WAS GIVEN WITH PAY.

+AT BREAK-EVEN POINT, THE COST IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE NO MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF THAT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR,+ SHE SAID.

+IT CAN REALLY BE SAID TO BE 'GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY'+

TURNING TO THE BETTER USE OF EDUCATION RESOURCES, SHE SUGGESTED THAT TEACHERS SHOULD TAKE THEIR TWO-WEEK SUMMER VACATION AND THEN UTILIZE THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDENTS' TWO-MONTH LEAVE PERIOD BY GREATER INVOLVEMENT IN THE REMEDIAL TEACHING OF THEIR OWN STUDENTS AND IN ORGANISING EDUCATIONAL COURSES FOR ADULTS. THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

NO COST WOULD BE INCURRED BY THIS PLAN AS TEACHERS ARE PAID THROUGHOUT THEIR SUMMER VACATION, DR IP SAID.

IN HER SPEECH, DR IP ALSO CITED WHAT SHE SAW AS A NUMBER OF INJUSTICES IN OUR SOCIETY. THESE INCLUDED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, DIFFERENT FUNDING RATIOS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT-SUBVENTED AGENCIES, DOUBLE STANDARDS IN QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS AND INTERNSHIPS FOR DOCTORS, AND SALARY SCALES FOR CIVIL SERVANTS ON SHIFT DUTIES.

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DB REFORMS SUPPORTED BY CHAN YING-LUN
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THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ELECTED DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS, THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF BOARDS BEING TAKEN UP BY ELECTED MEMBERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CEASING TO BE FULL BOARD MEMBERS, WERE ALL STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY ONE OF THE SPEAKERS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+I THINK THIS REPRESENTS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN RETURNING POWER TO THE PEOPLE AND, IF PROPERLY ADMINISTERED, WILL ENSURE A BETTER AND MORE RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT AND PROVIDE A FIRMER BASIS FOR OUR FUTURE ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK,+ THE HON CHAN YING-LUN SAID.

TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE A LOT MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE BY BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNOFFICIALS, HE SAID.

+ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT, IT MUST IMPRESS UPON ITS STAFF WORKING AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL TO CONTINUE TO RESPOND PROMPTLY AND POSITIVELY TO SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS FROM UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS.

+EXPERIENCE TELLS US THAT IT IS OFTEN TOO EASY FOR DISTRICT OFFICIALS ATTENDING DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS TO ANSWER QUESTIONS AND TO TAKE ADVICE, BUT IT IS OFTEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO RESPOND TO THE ADVICE AND EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO ACT UPON THE ADVICE.

+FROM MY CONTACTS WITH UNOFFICIAL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS, THERE IS A GENUINE WORRY ON THEIR PART THAT AS SOON AS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CEASE TO BE DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS THEY WILL SIMPLY PLAY A PASSIVE ROLE WITHOUT DISPLAYING THE SAME DEGREE OF INITIATIVE, ENTHUSIASM AND PARTICIPATION HITHERTO SO CONSPICUOUS AMONG THE DISTRICT OFFICIAL TEAM,+ MR CHAN SAID.

HE SHARED THIS CONCERN AND HOPED THE ADMINISTRATION COULD ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY THEIR EXECUTIVE ROLE EFFECTIVELY.

ON MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF A MORE OPEN GOVERNMENT, MR CHAN SAID THE SAME PRINCIPLE SHOULD ALSO BE APPLIED AT THE DISTRICT BOARD LEVEL.

+WE HAVE A LONG TRADITION OF GOVERNMENT BY CONSULTATION AND CONSENSUS, BUT WITH THE ADVENT OF DISTRICT BOARDS AND PEOPLE'S GROWING INTEREST IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS THERE HAS BEEN A CORRESPONDING DEMAND FOR MORE CONSULTATION ON GOVERNMENT POLICIES, PARTICULARLY ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE WELFARE OF RESIDENTS AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL.

+AS THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW DEALING WITH A MORE VOCAL POPULATION IT SHOULD ALLOW THE INTERESTED PUBLIC TO HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO DISCUSS OPENLY THOSE POLICY PROPOSALS THAT AFFECT THE GENERAL PUBLIC,+ HE SAID.

/+AT PRESENT,

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+AT PRESENT, THERE DO NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY GUIDELINES ON WHEN AND ON WHAT ISSUES DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE CONSULTED.

+HOWEVER, I HOPE THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS COULD EXERCISE THEIR GOOD POLITICAL SENSE AND CONSULT THE VIEWS OF DISTRICT BOARDS WHEN STRONG PUBLIC REACTION IS ANTICIPATED FOR A PARTICULAR POLICY ISSUE,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAN RECALLED THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS AS SAYING THAT THERE WOULD BE AN INCREASE OF SOME 80 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF ELECTED DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS FROM 132 TO 236 IN THE COMING ELECTION.

+BUT THIS WILL NOT NECESSARILY MEAN AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF ADVICE TO BE GIVEN UNLESS CANDIDATES OF THE RIGHT CALIBRE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE AND SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS ARE ENCOURAGED AND ARE PREPARED TO STAND FOR ELECTION.

+MORE PUBLICITY AND PERSUASION FROM THE GOVERNMENT, BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM EMPLOYERS AND MORE SPIRITED SUPPORT FROM PROFESSIONAL BODIES ARE ESSENTIAL IF MORE PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES WITH GOOD LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL AND DEDICATION ARE TO COME FORTH,+ HE SAID.

WHILE STRESSING THE QUALITY OF CANDIDATES, MR CHAN SAID ONE MUST ALSO GUARD AGAINST THE TENDENCY OF CREATING A CLASS OF ELITE UNOFFICIALS WHO MAY BECOME MORE AND MORE ALOOF FROM THE PEOPLE.

+THE BEST ASSURANCE IS FOR THE PEOPLE TO GROW WITH OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM,+ HE SAID.

ON CIVIC EDUCATION, MR CHAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE, PARTICULARLY THROUGH ITS VARIOUS COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES.

+HERE, I PARTICULARLY WANT TO EMPHASISE THE POINT THAT DISTRICT BOARDS IN ORGANISING THEIR ACTIVITIES SHOULD, APART FROM THE RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT ELEMENTS, AIM AT INSTILLING AMONG THE LOCAL POPULATION, IN PARTICULAR THE YOUNGER GENERATION, A GREATER DEGREE OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY, A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOVERNMENT AND OF THE ELECTION AND DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAN AGREED WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH THE GOVERNOR WHEN HE SAID BUILDING A FUTURE WAS NOT A TASK FOR THE GOVERNMENT ALONE AND THE WHOLE COMMUNITY MUST BECOME INVOLVED.

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PAY FULL-TIME LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, RITA FAN SUGGESTS
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A CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER PAYING LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO WORK ON A FULL-TIME BASIS WAS MADE TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE HON RITA FAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT SHE FELT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER USING MORE PRACTICAL MEANS TO ATTRACT PEOPLE OF GOOD CALIBRE TO TAKE PART IN ELECTIONS.

+LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS MAY, FOR EXAMPLE, BE PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT TO WORK ON A FULL-TIME BASIS AND BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC,+ SHE SAID.

+IF, FOR EXAMPLE, A DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER IS ELECTED A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HIS ORIGINAL DUTIES WITH THE DISTRICT BOARD SHOULD BE TAKEN UP BY SOMEONE TO BE SELECTED IN A BY-ELECTION SO THAT HE MAY CONCENTRATE ON HIS WORK WITH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN SERVING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.+

IF THESE PROPOSALS WERE PUT INTO EFFECT, SHE ADDED, CAREFUL CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN TO DETAILS OF ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE SALARIES OF COUNCILLORS MAY BECOME A SENSITIVE QUESTION.

IF THE SALARY SCALE WAS FIXED AT TOO LOW A LEVEL, IT MIGHT NOT ATTRACT SUITABLE PERSONS.

IF IT WAS FIXED AT TOO HIGH A LEVEL, THERE WOULD BE A WASTE OF PUBLIC FUNDS.

AT ALL EVENTS, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD USE ALL KINDS OF METHODS TO IMPRESS KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS THAT IT WAS WORTHWHILE TO TAKE PART IN THE ELECTION WHEN DIRECT ELECTION BECAME ONE OF THE WAYS BY WHICH PEOPLE MIGHT SERVE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+THE DAYS AHEAD ARE FULL OF CHALLENGES AND WE WILL BE FACED WITH TRIALS UNKNOWN TO US BEFORE. SO WE MUST BE PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED.

+WE SHOULD BROADEN OUR HORIZON ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL PLATFORMS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME,+ SHE SAID.

DURING THE COMING 12 YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS' INTERIM PERIOD, HONG KONG SHOULD TRY TO PROGRESS WITH CARE, SEEK TO MAINTAIN ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STABILITY, WORK FOR ITS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND TRAIN UP THE NEXT GENERATION AS SUCCESSORS.

/+I THINK

+I THINK THE BASIC ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY AND STABILITY ARE: A STABLE GOVERNMENT WELL SUITED TO THE HONG KONG SOCIETY, AND GOOD GENERAL LAW AND ORDER,+ SHE SAID.

+WITH A STABLE GOVERNMENT WELL SUITED TO THE HONG KONG SOCIETY, INVESTORS HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO POUR THEIR RESOURCES INTO HONG KONG.

+WITH GOOD GENERAL LAW AND ORDER, PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE PROTECTED AND THEY CAN CONCENTRATE ON DOING THEIR DUTIES WELL.

+SO POLITICAL STABILITY AND LAW AND ORDER ARE COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER.+

THE EFFORTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THESE TWO ASPECTS DURING THE YEARS WERE WELL KNOWN TO ALL.

THE WHITE PAPER ON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG WHICH WOULD HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON THE TERRITORY'S FUTURE POLITICAL STABILITY WOULD BE PUBLISHED NEXT MONTH.

+YOU HAVE POINTED OUT, SIR, THAT THESE PLANS WILL REPRESENT ONLY ONE FURTHER STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG.

+THEY DO NOT PRECLUDE SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT.

+YOU HAVE ALSO SAID THE TIME FOR DIRECT ELECTIONS MAY COME.

+I THINK THE NATURAL TREND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IS A DIRECTLY ELECTED LEGISLATURE,+ MRS FAN SAID.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD PLAY AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE.

UNDER THE DIRECT ELECTION SYSTEM, THE QUALITY OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WOULD DEPEND ON VOTERS' ABILITY TO CHOOSE AND THE CALIBRE OF THE CANDIDATES.

IN HONG KONG, BOTH THESE TWO QUALITIES SHOULD BE IMPROVED BECAUSE THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF HONG KONG HAD TO ACHIEVE WHAT OTHERS HAD FAILED TO DO IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE +ONE COUNTRY TWO SYSTEMS+ CONCEPT.

+I THINK THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE REALISTIC AND PROMOTE CIVIC EDUCATION ACTIVELY TO ENHANCE THE PUBLIC'S KNOWLEDGE IN CHOOSING THEIR COUNCILLORS,+ MRS FAN SAID.

+I AM REFERRING NOT ONLY TO CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS, BUT CIVIC EDUCATION FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE CITIZENS.

/+THE PEOPLE

+THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE A FAIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE MAJOR EXISTING SYSTEMS BEFORE THEY CAN DISTINGUISH WHETHER THE PLATFORMS PROPOSED BY THE CANDIDATES ARE FEASIBLE AND WHETHER THEY ARE BENEFICIAL TO HONG KONG AS A WHOLE.+

IN THE PAST, ONE DID NOT HAVE TO CARE ABOUT POLITICS.

ONE HAD ONLY TO WORK FOR A BETTER AND MORE MEANINGFUL LIFE.

SO, DURING DISTRICT BOARD AND URBAN COUNCIL ELECTIONS, MOST PEOPLE WOULD ONLY CONSIDER WHAT THE CANDIDATES WOULD DO FOR THEM.

THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH THIS THINKING.

+HOWEVER, SUCH A CONSIDERATION MAY NOT BE ADEQUATE WHEN IT IS APPLIED TO VOTING FOR LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS IN FUTURE ELECTIONS BECAUSE BY THEN, WE HAVE TO CONSIDER THIS AS WELL -- IF WE FOLLOW THEIR PROPOSALS, WE MAY BENEFIT AS INDIVIDUALS, BUT WHAT WILL BE THEIR EFFECTS ON THE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG AS A WHOLE?+ SHE SAID.

+MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MUST UNDERSTAND THAT IF THERE IS ANY STUMBLING BLOCK ON THE PATH TO PROSPERITY AND STABILITY, ALL THEY HAVE NOW MAY COME TO NAUGHT,+ SHE SAID.

+THEREFORE, IT IS NOT WORTHWHILE FOR THEM TO OVERLOOK LONG-TERM COMMUNITY INTERESTS SIMPLY BECAUSE OF SHORT-TERM BENEFITS.

+I CONSIDER THIS VERY IMPORTANT AND PROPOSE THAT IT SHOULD BE MADE THE MAJOR THEME OF CIVIC EDUCATION.

+IT IS AN URGENT TASK TO EARNESTLY PROMOTE CIVIC EDUCATION AS RESULTS MAY NOT BE SEEN UNTIL SEVERAL YEARS LATER.+

MRS FAN SAID THE GOVERNOR HAD MENTIONED IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE WOULD PLAY A FULL PART IN MAINTAINING A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS HONG KONG.

+I FULLY AGREE WITH YOU, AND I THINK IT IS INCUMBENT UPON GOVERNMENT TO GIVE ITS FULLEST SUPPORT TO DEDICATED CIVIL SERVANTS,+ SHE SAID.

+SUCH SUPPORT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, THE POLICE IN PARTICULAR.

+THE SUPPORT I REFER TO IS TWO-SIDED.

+ONE WAS ON RESOURCES. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, PROVIDE THE POLICE WITH ADEQUATE MANPOWER, EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES SO AS TO ENABLE THE FORCE TO EFFECTIVELY PROTECT THE PUBLIC AND FIGHT CRIME.

THE OTHER MEANS OF SUPPORT WAS TO IMPOSE HEAVIER PUNISHMENT ON VIOLENT CRIMINALS AND TO STRENGTHEN PREVENTIVE MEASURES THROUGH LEGISLATION, MRS FAN SAID.

ON OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS AND VIDEO-TAPES, SHE PROPOSED STRENGTHENING LEGISLATION SO THAT THE COURTS COULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO STOP PUBLICATION WHEN DEALING WITH PERSISTENT OFFENDERS.

SHE ALSO URGED SETTING UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE +OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS TRIBUNAL+ WHICH THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS MENTIONED TO THE COUNCIL IN JULY.

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'POLICY ADJUSTMENT NEEDED TO MEET CHANGES'

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HONG KONG NEEDED TO ADJUST ITS POLICIES OVER THE NEXT 13 YEARS TO BRING THEM INTO LINE WITH THE BASIC ARRANGEMENTS SET OUT FOR THE TERRITORY AFTER 1997 IN THE SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT, THE HON PAULINE NG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MRS NG SAID IT WAS HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT MAJOR PROJECTS, MAKE INVESTMENTS AND IMPLEMENT PLANS IN A FAR-SIGHTED WAY.

+IN DOING SO, THE GOVERNMENT WILL SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR US, SHOWING THAT IT NOT ONLY CARES FOR THE LONG-TERM PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG BUT ALSO HAS CONFIDENCE IN OUR FUTURE,+ SHE SAID.

ON CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MRS NG SAID AT A TIME WHEN HONG KONG'S CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM WAS HEADING TOWARDS A MORE OPEN FORM OF GOVERNMENT, CHANGES TO DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE.

SHE HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SPEED UP THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND ENHANCE THE STATUS OF DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS AT THE SAME TIME.

AT THE MOMENT, THE GENERAL STATE OF MOST MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES WAS STAGNANT AND ONE OF LOW MORALE.

THE REASON WAS THAT PARTICIPATION BY RESIDENTS WAS NOT ACTIVE AND THE FINANCIAL SUBSIDY FROM GOVERNMENT WAS STILL VERY LIMITED WHICH RESTRAINED THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES.

IN ADDITION, SHE SAID, THE IMPORTANCE OF AREA COMMITTEES, WHICH OFTEN MADE VALUABLE SUGGESTIONS ON DISTRICT AFFAIRS TO DISTRICT BOARDS AND REFLECTED VIEWS FROM MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES AND OWNERS' INCORPORATIONS, SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED.

+THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RAISE THE STATUS OF AREA COMMITTEES, CONSIDER ALLOCATING PREMISES TO THEM AND DEPLOYING LIAISON OFFICERS TO WORK IN THE COMMITTEE PREMISES ON AN AREA BASIS, SO THAT RESIDENTS OF THAT AREA WILL KNOW BETTER THE ROLE OF AREA COMMITTEES, AND THERE WILL BE INCREASED CONTACT BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND MEMBERS OF AREA COMMITTEES.

+OUR LEADERS OF THE FUTURE WILL ALL COME FROM WITHIN THE DISTRICTS, AND TO INCREASE THE RATE AND STRENGTHEN THE CHANNELS OF PARTICIPATION, COUPLED WITH THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE PROVISION OF RESOURCES, THESE ARE THE ESSENTIAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS OF THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM,+ MRS NG SAID.

SHE SAID SHE HOPED IN FUTURE MUTUAL COMMUNICATION COULD BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD THEN JOIN HANDS WITH EACH OTHER HARMONIOUSLY IN FORMULATING POLICIES THROUGH THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS.

TOUCHING ON HOUSING POLICIES, MRS NG SAID SHE WELCOMED THE PLAN TO HAVE ALL SQUATTERS IN THE URBAN AREAS REHOUSED BY THE EARLY 1990'S.

+WHILE THERE ARE STILL EIGHT TO 10 YEARS BEFORE THE WHOLE PROJECT COULD BE COMPLETED, THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF SQUATTER AREAS,+ SHE SAID.

ON EDUCATION POLICIES, SHE SAID SHE SUPPORTED THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE THAT HONG KONG SHOULD HAVE A BODY OF ITS OWN FOR THE VALIDATION OF DEGREE COURSES RATHER THAN RELYING ON THE UK COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL ACADEMIC AWARDS.

MRS NG STRESSED THE NEED ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, THE PROBLEM OF SECURING INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF DEGREE COURSES VALIDATED BY THE LOCAL BODY, SO AS TO MAINTAIN INTERNATIONALLY-ACCEPTED STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

SHE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT CUTTING DOWN ON EXPENDITURE AT THE EXPENSE OF LOWERED STANDARDS WAS HARDLY COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF MAINTAINING THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG.

NOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIC AND MORAL EDUCATION FOR LOCAL YOUNGSTERS, MRS NG SAID AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPRISING MEMBERS FROM DIFFERENT SOCIAL STRATA SHOULD BE FORMED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO STUDY AND ANALYSE PRESENT CONDITIONS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ALSO TO IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE THERE WERE PROBLEMS.

ON THE MANAGEMENT OF STREET SLEEPERS, MRS NG HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE MORE POSITIVE MEASURES AND PLAY A COORDINATING ROLE AMONG DEPARTMENTS FOR THE FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF STREET SLEEPERS, PARTICULARLY VAGABONDS WITH MENTAL PROBLEMS, SHE SAID LEGISLATION UNDER WHICH THEY WERE REQUIRED TO STAY IN SPECIAL INSTITUTIONS FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT ON A COMPULSORY BASIS SHOULD BE PASSED.

LOOK FOR ECONOMY IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, PETER POON SAYS
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THERE WAS A LIMIT TO FURTHER INCREASES IN DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXES, SO THE GOVERNMENT MUST LOOK FOR FURTHER ECONOMY IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, THE HON PETER POON SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR POON SAID IN BAD TIMES OTHER COUNTRIES DRASTICALLY CUT THEIR PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, INCLUDING A BLANKET CUT IN NUMBERS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

WHILE SUCH AUSTERE MEASURES WERE NOT WARRANTED IN HONG KONG'S PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, HE PROPOSED A GENERAL REVIEW OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT TO SEE WHETHER THERE WAS AMONG OTHER THINGS IDLE CAPACITY; CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER PRIVATISATION OF SOME GOVERNMENT SERVICES; AND A REALISTIC REVIEW OF CIVIL SERVANTS' FRINGE BENEFITS.

MR POON SAID THOUGH UNDER CONDITIONS OF SERVICE THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO LAY OFF STAFF IT COULD ADOPT MORE INTENSIVELY THE POLICY OF NOT FILLING ANY VACANCIES NO LONGER REQUIRED AND OF REDEPLOYING REDUNDANT STAFF TO OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

ON FURTHER PRIVATISATION HE SAID THIS MEASURE HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN RESPECT OF THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY AND SOME GOVERNMENT CAR-PARKS.

+IT TAKES AWAY THE BURDEN OF INCREASING SALARIES AND PENSION COSTS FROM GOVERNMENT'S BUDGETS IN THESE AREAS,+ HE SAID.

ON FRINGE BENEFITS HE ADMITTED THAT THE TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR MANY YEARS AGO MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER THAN THE GOVERNMENT'S, BUT THE SITUATION WAS NO LONGER THE SAME EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR THE SUPER-SCALE GRADE.

HE WAS CRITICAL OF +HEAVILY SUBSIDISED ACCOMMODATION+ AND OVERSEAS EDUCATION ALLOWANCES.

+I MUST STRESS THAT I AM FULLY CONVINCED THAT WE HAVE A VERY EFFICIENT CIVIL SERVICE,+ MR POON SAID.

+NOTWITHSTANDING THIS, THE IMPORTANT POINT IS NOT ONLY TO ENSURE THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT IS THE RIGHT SIZE BUT ALSO THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE LEVEL OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.+

TURNING TO FINANCIAL ASPECTS, MR POON SAID THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO LAY GREAT EMPHASIS ON REGULATION OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR.

THIS WAS ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAIN THE EFFICIENCY AND CREDITABILITY OF HONG KONG AS THE THIRD LARGEST FINANCIAL CENTRE IN THE WORLD.

+NO EFFORTS OR EXPENSES SHOULD BE SPARED TO UPHOLD OUR IMAGE IN THIS REGARD,+ HE SAID.

THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1984, WHICH BECAME EFFECTIVE ON AUGUST 31, 1984, BROUGHT COMPANY LEGISLATION MORE UP TO DATE AND PLUGGED THE LOOPHOLE OF IRRESPONSIBLE LENDINGS TO DIRECTORS BY PUBLIC COMPANIES WHICH HAD LED TO SEVERAL MAJOR COMPANY FAILURES.

+THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMPANY LAW REFORM WILL NO DOUBT CONTRIBUTE TO THE FURTHER IMPROVEMENT OF COMPANY LAW IN HONG KONG,+ MR POON SAID.

THE RE-ORGANISATION OF THE HONG KONG COMMODITY EXCHANGE INTO THE HONG KONG FUTURES EXCHANGE WOULD FURTHER ENHANCE THE TERRITORY'S STATUS AS A FINANCIAL CENTRE.

+I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT AT LONG LAST THE UNIFICATION OF THE STOCK EXCHANGES IS IN VIEW AND NEW LISTING RULES FOR QUOTED COMPANIES AND NEW LEGISLATION ARE BEING INTRODUCED TO REQUIRE DISCLOSURE OF MATERIAL FACTS AND SHAREHOLDINGS,+ HE SAID.

+HONG KONG'S FINANCIAL LAWS AND SYSTEM ARE NOT PERFECT, BUT IT CAN BE SEEN THAT WE LEARN QUICKLY FROM EXPERIENCE AND CONSTANT REVIEWS.+

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN INSIDER DEALING TRIBUNAL LAST WEEK TO LOOK INTO SHARE TRANSACTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL CITY HOLDINGS LTD SHOWED THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUED DETERMINATION IN THIS RESPECT.

ON THE ECONOMY, HE SAID IT STILL FACED SEVERAL MAJOR PROBLEMS.

+THOUGH OUR EXPORTS ARE BUOYANT, RE-INVESTMENT IS LAGGING BEHIND,+ HE SAID.

+RE-INVESTMENT IN OUR INDUSTRIES IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL IF OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR IS TO SURVIVE IN THE YEARS TO COME.+

HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS ESPECIALLY IN BOTH OUR TEXTILE AND ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES MUST EXPAND AND MODERNISE THEIR EQUIPMENT AND KEEP UP WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH.

HONG KONG'S COMPETITORS WERE AGGRESSIVE AND ADVANCING AT SUCH A HIGH SPEED THAT UNLESS IT FOLLOWED SUIT, IT WOULD BE LEFT WAY BEHIND.

+HOPEFULLY, WITH RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG, RE-INVESTMENT WILL PICK UP IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

+OUR STRONG HONG KONG DOLLAR, THOUGH ADVANTAGEOUS IN KEEPING OUR INFLATION RATE LOW AND PROFITS FROM EXPORTS HIGH IN THE SHORT TERM, WILL AFFECT OUR COMPETITIVENESS IN THE WORLD MARKET IN THE MEDIUM OR LONG TERM.+

THIS WAS BEGINNING TO SHOW IN THE GROWTH RATES OF HONG KONG'S EXPORTS TO EUROPE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.

+THEREFORE WE MUST IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR PRODUCTS AND EFFICIENCY OF OUR INDUSTRIES.

+WE MUST ALSO KEEP UP OUR FINE RECORD OF TRADE PROMOTION TO MAINTAIN OUR MARKET SHARE,+ HE SAID.

MR POON SAID HONG KONG'S FINANCIAL SUCCESS DEPENDED A LOT ON EXPORTS, WHICH WERE VULNERABLE IN THE FACE OF A GROWING TREND TOWARDS PROTECTIONISM AND A SLOWING DOWN OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ITS MAJOR MARKETS.

THE RECENT RULES ON COUNTRY OF ORIGIN FOR IMPORT OF GARMENTS AND TEXTILES INTO THE UNITED STATES HAD STRUCK A HEAVY BLOW TO HONG KONG.

MEANWHILE, HONG KONG WAS LUCKY THAT THE PROPOSED NEW CRITERIA FOR THE US GENERALISED SCHEME OF PREFERENCES WHICH WOULD CLASSIFY THE TERRITORY AS A MEDIUM GDP TERRITORY AND RESULT IN REDUCTION OF PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT, WAS NOT APPROVED AND THE SCHEME EXPIRING IN JANUARY, 1985, WAS RENEWED FOR A FURTHER PERIOD OF ABOUT EIGHT YEARS.

+THOUGH WE CAN HAVE A TEMPORARY SIGH OF RELIEF, THIS SHOWS HOW EXTERNAL FACTORS CAN CAUSE GREAT DAMAGE TO OUR COMPETITIVENESS.

+IN THIS REGARD, THE EFFORTS OF BOTH GOVERNMENT AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR INDUSTRIES WHO FOUGHT SO HARD TO PROTECT OUR RIGHTS UNDER GATT AND MFA ARE HIGHLY APPRECIATED,+ MR POON SAID.

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HONG KONG ENTERING A STAGE OF STEADY GROWTH - P.K. YEUNG
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HONG KONG IS ENTERING A STAGE OF STEADY DEVELOPMENT, THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN SAID IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION OF THANKS ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

HE SAID THE SEEMINGLY CONSERVATIVE ADDRESS AS A WHOLE MENTIONED POLICY CHANGES WHICH ECHOED THE MESSAGE OF THE SINO-BRITISH DRAFT AGREEMENT AND THE PROPOSALS IN THE GREEN PAPER ON FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG.

+IT ALSO BRINGS OUT THE FACT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE ITS CONFIDENCE TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG THROUGH ITS DETERMINED TONE AND PRAGMATIC ACTIONS, AS CAN BE SEEN IN THE ADDRESS,+ HE SAID.

MR YEUNG QUESTIONED HOW COULD THE HONG KONG SYSTEM REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR 50 YEARS AFTER 1997 IF WE COULD NOT EFFECTIVELY MAINTAIN A FIRM AND STABLE GOVERNMENT IN THE NEXT 13 YEARS?

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TO MAINTAIN STABILITY FOR 13 YEARS, HE SAID, WE MUST AVOID OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM FROM BEING WRECKED, GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE POWER FROM BEING UNDERMINED, POLICY PLANS FROM BEING ADVERSELY AFFECTED IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION AND LAST BUT NOT THE LEAST WE MUST CHECK THE OUTBREAK OF ANY ECONOMIC CRISIS.

+THUS, THE PRIMARY TASK OF THE GOVERNMENT FROM NOW ON IS TO ENSURE THAT NOTHING DISTURBS AND UPSETS THE STABILITY OF HONG KONG IN THE REMAINING 13 YEARS, WITHOUT WHICH ONE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND THE SMOOTH TRANSITION TO 1997,+ HE SAID.

+WE MUST INTRODUCE CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM, OTHERWISE IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR US TO ADJUST TO THE NEW SITUATION AND EFFECT A SMOOTH TRANSITION IN 1997,+ HE SUGGESTED.

MEANWHILE, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GUIDE THE PEOPLE TO TAKE UP ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS WELL AS TO CULTIVATE THEIR INTEREST AND TRAIN UP THEIR ABILITIES IN THESE AREAS, HE SAID.

+THE BEST WAY TO DO SO IS TO ENLARGE MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INITIALLY THROUGH INDIRECT ELECTIONS AND TO INCREASE THE POWERS OF ITS COUNCILLORS.+

ON THE COMING DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS, MR YEUNG SAID HE EARNESTLY HOPED ELECTORS WOULD MAKE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO RESPOND AND TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE.

HE SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THE ELECTIONS IN 1985 WOULD BE WELL SUPPORTED.

MR YEUNG SAID THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) BILL WAS A WELL-CONCEIVED IDEA, AND HE ALSO WELCOMED THE MOVE OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE TO HOLD ITS HEARINGS OF EVIDENCE IN PUBLIC.

+TO CONDUCT OPEN EXAMINATION OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE WILL, ON THE ONE HAND, HELP REMEDY SHORTFALLS, AND ON THE OTHER, DEMONSTRATE JUSTICE AND IMPARTIALITY,+ HE SAID.

MR YEUNG ALSO REGARDED GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES TO COPE WITH ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AS WISE AND SENSIBLE. HE BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FOLLOW ITS SET POLICIES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND CARRY ON WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS SOCIAL PROGRAMMES AS LONG AS OUR ECONOMY KEPT ITS UPWARD TREND.

+OBVIOUSLY, HONG KONG IS HEADING TOWARDS A HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

/+THE VARIOUS

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+THE VARIOUS PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMMES GIVE US GLIMPSES OF A BRIGHT OUTLOOK.

+I AM CONVINCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO CARRY OUT THE PLANS EXTENSIVELY AND CONSISTENTLY.

+AS THERE WILL BE HURDLES TO OVERCOME, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SHOW GREATER COURAGE TO ACCEPT CHALLENGES AND JOIN HANDS WITH THE PEOPLE TO STRIVE FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

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AVOID TAX INCREASES, SAYS KIM CHAM
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ANY INCREASE IN DIRECT TAXATION SHOULD BE AVOIDED AS THIS MIGHT CURB HONG KONG'S COMPETITIVE POWER BY MAKING THE RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE AND THE STIMULATION OF INVESTMENTS MORE DIFFICULT, THE HON KIM CHAM SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

FOCUSSING ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY, MR CHAM SAID THE DYNAMICS AND IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY'S RECOVERY WERE LARGELY CONCENTRATED IN THE EXPORT SECTOR -- COMPLEMENTED BY AN IMPRESSIVE EXPANSION OF CHINA TRADE.

+I HAVE JUST LEARNT FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY THAT IN THE THIRD QUARTER CHINA HAS MOVED UP TO BECOME OUR SECOND LARGEST TRADING PARTNER.

+THIS EUPHORIC NOTE IS A SIGNAL THAT WE SHOULD, UNDER THE PRESENT OFFICIAL POLICY OF FREE TRADE, FORGE EVEN CLOSER ECONOMIC TIES AND LINKAGE WITH CHINA, GIVEN ITS IMMENSE MARKET POTENTIAL,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID HONG KONG'S CONTINUED GROWTH AS A FINANCIAL CENTRE HAD BEEN IMPRESSIVE AND HAD YIELDED SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS.

STATISTICS OF 1982, HE SAID, SUGGESTED THAT THE FINANCE SECTOR FEATURED A RELATIVELY HIGH RETURN FOR THE INPUT OF LABOUR AS COMPARED WITH THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

+IN FACT, THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FINANCE INDUSTRY IS ALSO RECOGNISED ELSEWHERE. TAIWAN HAD GRANTED PERMISSION FOR OFFSHORE BANKING, JAPAN WAS ABOUT TO LIBERALISE ITS FINANCIAL MARKETS -- LET ALONE SINGAPORE WHICH HAD LONG RECOGNISED THE CONTRIBUTION OF THIS SECTOR AND ACTIVELY SPONSORED ITS EXPANSION.

+IN ORDER TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF INTENSIFYING COMPETITION FROM ABROAD, WE MUST SUSTAIN AND ACCENTUATE OUR EFFORTS TO EXPAND AND UPGRADE THIS SECTOR.

/+IN THIS

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+IN THIS CONNECTION, HONG KONG MUST AIM AT DEVELOPING ITSELF INTO A REGIONAL FINANCIAL BASE,+ HE SAID.

IN PARTICULAR, HE SAID, IT SHOULD SERVE TO SUPPORT CHINA WHICH MIGHT LACK THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO ACCOMMODATE SUCH FULL-SCALE CAPITALIST ACTIVITIES AS FINANCE.

+GIVEN THIS PROSPECT, IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR US TO ENSURE THAT OUR FINANCE SECTOR IS A WELL-REGULATED ONE WHICH CAN SECURE STRONG VOTE OF INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE.+

MR CHAM CALLED FOR A MORE SUPPORTIVE ROLE BY THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE LUBRICATION OF HONG KONG'S FINANCIAL MARKET SO THAT ITS EFFICIENCY AND FUNCTIONING COULD BE MADE BETTER THAN IT WAS NOW.

HE ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXAMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF COMBINING THE SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS OF THE THREE OFFICES OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR COMMODITIES TRADING, THE COMMISSIONER FOR BANKING AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES INTO ONE ADVISORY BODY.

+SUCH AN EXERCISE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE MORE CONVINCINGLY THAT THE FINANCIAL SECTOR COULD PROBABLY OPERATE MORE SMOOTHLY UNDER AN INTEGRATED AUTHORITY OF SUPERVISION OVER ALL THESE THREE ASPECTS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID HIS EXPECTATION WAS FOUNDED ON THE PRESENT TREND TOWARDS THE INTEGRATION OF FINANCIAL BUSINESS, WITH BANKS TRADING IN SECURITIES AND FINANCIAL FUTURES.

ON THE EXPECTED BUDGET DEFICIT OF \$2.1 BILLION, MR CHAM SAID THAT GIVEN THE SMALL SIZE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR BY INTERNATIONAL NORMS, THIS RED FIGURE COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED EXCESSIVE IF IT DID NOT BECOME HABITUAL.

HE SAID THERE MIGHT BE MOUNTING PRESSURE TO BALANCE THE BUDGET, BUT DUE CARE HAD TO BE EXERCISED IN CHOOSING THE MEANS.

+AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE, WE MUST ENSURE THAT HONG KONG REMAINS ATTRACTIVE FOR INVESTMENT AND COMPETITIVE IN PRODUCTION.

+ABOVE ALL, WE MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT SINCE WE ARE NOW IN A CRITICAL PERIOD OF CONFIDENCE REBUILDING, ANY MOVES THAT ERODE OUR ATTRACTIVENESS AND COMPETITIVENESS MAY HAVE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF OUR ECONOMY,+ HE SAID.

WITH THE EXPORT-LED RECOVERY NOW UNDER WAY, MR CHAM SAID IT MIGHT BE PRUDENT TO EXERT AN AUSTERE CONTROL OVER PENDITURE AND CRADLE PATIENTLY THE RECOVERY PROCESS SO THAT IT MIGHT EXTEND EVENLY TO OTHER SECTORS.

+IF THE PRESENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY CONTINUES,+ HE SAID, +IT IS POSSIBLE THAT BEFORE LONG WE SHALL BE ABLE TO WITNESS A NATURAL INCREASE IN GOVERNMENT REVENUE AS A LAGGED BUT BUILT-IN EFFECT OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT,+ HE SAID.

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CALL FOR CIVIC EDUCATION ADVISORY BODY
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A CIVIC EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, SHOULD BE SET UP TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT ON THE BASIC POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF CIVIC EDUCATION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON KEITH LAM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+IN VIEW OF THE RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL OF POLITICAL AND CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE TARGETS FOR THE CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME SHOULD NOT BE CONFINED TO SCHOOL CHILDREN ALONE BUT SHOULD INCLUDE THE PUBLIC AT LARGE, AS WELL,+ HE SAID.

IN REVIEWING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING, MR LAM SAID IT WAS HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION TO COMMUNITY CENTRE FACILITIES. COMMUNITY CENTRES WERE A MUST TO COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, AND WITHOUT THEM COMMUNITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES WOULD BE SOMEWHAT RESTRAINED.

+UNFORTUNATELY, THE LACK OF COMMUNITY CENTRES IS SOMETIMES NEITHER DUE TO THE LACK OF SUITABLE VENUES OR TECHNICAL PROBLEMS, NOR DUE TO FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS, BUT PURELY BECAUSE THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO AGREE ON A FINAL RECOMMENDATION ON THE 'REQUISITE STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY CENTRE FACILITIES' AND THE ENTIRE PROCESS HAS BEEN DELAYED,+ HE SAID.

IN THIS REGARD, MR LAM HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SPEED UP FORMULATION OF A FINAL RECOMMENDATION AND SUBMIT IT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

TURNING TO EDUCATION, HE CONSIDERED THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF FREE EDUCATION SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO FORM V.

IN ADDITION, SCHOOL PLACES COULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS AFTER FORM III -- ONE GROUP TAKING UP PLACES IN THE ORDINARY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, AND THE OTHER TAKING PLACES IN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES TO CATER FOR STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT INTERESTS OR NEEDS.

+AS SOME OF THE STUDENTS ARE KEEN ON FINDING A SOURCE OF INCOME AND THEREFORE HAVE TO WORK, THE PROVISION OF FREE PART-TIME SCHOOL PLACES WILL SUIT THEIR REQUIREMENTS BETTER,+ HE SAID.

MR LAM FURTHER SUGGESTED HONG KONG SCHOOLS SHOULD START TO INTRODUCE PUTONGHUA AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN CHINESE LANGUAGE CLASSES +TO COPE WITH THE NEW SITUATION+.

+AS FOR OTHER SUBJECTS, THE TEACHING MEDIUM COULD BE DETERMINED BY THE SCHOOLS THEMSELVES DEPENDING ON THEIR OWN SPECIAL NEEDS,+ HE SAID.

/ON SOCIAL

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ON SOCIAL WELFARE, MR LAM SAID THIS WAS NOT AN AREA OF CONCERN FOR GOVERNMENT OR THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ALONE. THE PUBLIC SHOULD ALSO BEAR PART OF THE RESPONSIBILITY.

+IT IS THEREFORE HOPED THAT COMMUNITY LEADERS WILL GIVE THEIR DUE SUPPORT AND CO-ORDINATION IN THIS RESPECT, AND GUIDE THE PUBLIC TO A CLOSER UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE IN OUR MIDST, TREAT THEM WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND GIVE THEM SYMPATHY, ASSISTANCE AND CARE,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIES WERE IN A TRANSITION FROM BEING +LABOUR INTENSIVE+ TO +CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY INTENSIVE+, MR LAM SAID IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF EVENING SCHOOL PLACES IN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DAY WORKERS TO ACQUIRE GREATER SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OR SKILLS.

HE ALSO CALLED ON THE LABOUR SECTOR TO +KEEP THEIR HEADS COOL AND ALERT AND NOT TO BE HOAXED BY THE 'FREE LUNCH' PROPAGANDA INTO MAKING UNREALISTIC DEMANDS+.

IT WAS ONLY WHEN SOCIETY, AS A WHOLE, BECAME AFFLUENT THAT THE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WOULD BE CORRESPONDINGLY RAISED.

HE SAID HE SINCERELY HOPED HONG KONG PEOPLE WOULD HAVE THE INTERESTS OF THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG AT HEART, AND WORK STEADFASTLY TO BUILD A BRIGHT AND PROMISING FUTURE OF WHICH EACH AND EVERYONE WOULD FEEL PROUD.

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TRAIN FUTURE LEADERS, SAYS CARL TONG * * *

A CALL FOR THE PROVISION OF TRAINING FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE LEADERS WAS MADE BY THE HON CARL TONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

MR TONG LIKENED HONG KONG TO A COMPANY AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INVESTORS' CONFIDENCE IN +HONG KONG INCORPORATED'S+ MANAGEMENT.

+I BELIEVE THAT, AS IN BUSINESS, WHERE MANAGEMENT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE, WE MUST PUT EMPHASIS ON PROVIDING TRAINING FOR OUR FUTURE LEADERS,+ HE SAID.

IN THIS CONNECTION HE FULLY SUPPORTED THE GOVERNOR'S COMMENTS ON THE FINE RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS IN THEIR FIRST THREE YEARS.

/+IT FOLLOWS

+IT FOLLOWS THAT THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION,+ MR TONG SAID.

THE DISTRICT BOARDS HAD PROVED TO BE AN EXCELLENT TRAINING GROUND FOR FUTURE LEADERS.

HE SINCERELY HOPED THAT MORE PEOPLE WOULD TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE AND TAKE PART IN RUNNING FOR THE NEXT DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS IN MARCH, 1985.

HE POINTED OUT THAT STATISTICS ON THE 1982 ELECTIONS HAD SHOWN OVER 50 PER CENT OF ELECTED MEMBERS WERE IN BUSINESS AND MOST WERE EITHER SELF-EMPLOYED OR IN PARTNERSHIP.

TO PROVIDE A BALANCE, MR TONG BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE MORE POSITIVE INCENTIVES TO EMPLOYERS WHO ALLOWED EMPLOYEES TO SERVE ON DISTRICT BOARDS.

+FOR EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT MAY CONSIDER GIVING SOME FORM OF SPECIAL TAX ALLOWANCE TO THOSE EMPLOYERS WHO SUPPORT AN EMPLOYEE SERVING ON A DISTRICT BOARD,+ HE SAID.

+SIMILARLY, SUCH ALLOWANCE MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR EMPLOYEES SERVING ON THE URBAN COUNCIL, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,+ HE SAID.

MR TONG SAID WE SHOULD ALSO ENSURE THAT OUR CITIZENS WERE PROPERLY EDUCATED ABOUT THE FUNCTIONING OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

+WITH THIS IN MIND, I AM DELIGHTED TO HEAR THAT PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE HEARINGS WILL SOON BE IN PUBLIC.

+THIS IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TOWARDS A MORE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

+I HOPE TO SEE OTHER KEY COMMITTEES, SUCH AS THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, OPEN THEIR PROCEEDINGS TO THE PUBLIC IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

MR TONG SAID THE WORLD WAS CLOSELY MONITORING HONG KONG'S PERFORMANCE SO WE MUST NOT DO ANYTHING TO DAMPEN THE ENTHUSIASM OF POTENTIAL INVESTORS.

+MOREOVER, WE MUST NOT DO ANYTHING THAT MAY WORRY EXISTING INVESTORS AND GIVE THEM SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT KEEPING THEIR INVESTMENTS IN HONG KONG.

+I BELIEVE THAT ONE OF THE 'DO NOTS' IS TAMPERING WITH OUR TAX SYSTEM UNNECESSARILY.

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+FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE SEVERAL PROVISIONS IN THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE WHICH I UNDERSTAND ARE CAUSING WIDESPREAD CONCERN AMONG THE BUSINESS AND INVESTING COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

FIRST, THERE WAS CONCERN THAT THE RATE OF TAXATION ON PROFITS AND SALARIES WOULD BE GRADUALLY ON THE INCREASE AND THAT THE TWO PER CENT INCREASE IMPOSED LAST YEAR ON BOTH THESE TAXES WAS ONLY A BEGINNING.

SECONDLY, THE PROVISIONS WHICH IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON THE TREATMENT OF INTEREST PAYMENTS, AND THAT OF INCLUDING OFFSHORE INTEREST INCOME DERIVED BY NON-FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE TAX NET, HAD BOTH ALARMED BUSINESSMEN AND INVESTORS.

MR TONG WARNED THAT THESE CONCERNS COULD DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD TO CONFIDENCE.

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ASSURANCES ABOUT EDUCATION SYSTEM WELCOMED
* * * *

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAVE WELCOMED ASSURANCES IN THE SINO-BRITISH DRAFT AGREEMENT RELATING TO EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

AT THE BOARD'S REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING HELD EARLIER THIS WEEK, MEMBERS EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE ASSURANCES CONTAINED IN SECTION X OF ANNEX I WOULD BE ENSHRINED IN THE BASIC LAW YET TO BE DRAFTED.

+THE SECTION PROVIDES A SOUND BASIS FOR HONG KONG TO CONTINUE TO EVOLVE AND DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT OUR POPULATION WILL HAVE THE SKILLS AND EXPERTISE REQUIRED TO ENABLE THE TERRITORY TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE ITS POSITION IN THE FIERCELY COMPETITIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADING ENVIRONMENT WITHIN WHICH HONG KONG OPERATES,+ THE BOARD'S CHAIRMAN, MR PETER C. WONG, SAID.

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TIN SHUI WAI PROJECT STARTS SOON
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ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONG KONG'S AMBITIOUS HOUSING PROGRAMME IN THE EARLY 1990'S WILL BE THE TIN SHUI WAI NEW TOWN PROJECT, YUEN LONG DISTRICT OFFICER, MR JAMES WILSON, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

HE WAS BRIEFING A TRADE AND ECONOMIC DELEGATION FROM GUANGDONG, LED BY MR ZHANG FENG, ADVISER OF THE GUANGDONG ECONOMIC WORK COMMISSION, WHEN THEY TOURED YUEN LONG TO LOOK AT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

THE TIN SHUI WAI PROJECT IS A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND MIGHTY CITY LIMITED.

MR WILSON SAID: +THIS PROJECT WILL PROVIDE A FIRM BASE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION, EXTENDING INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, CONTRIBUTING TO THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES REGION.

+THERE WILL BE ABOUT 135 000 PEOPLE LIVING IN TIN SHUI WAI -- HALF IN PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP ESTATES, AND THE REMAINDER IN PRIVATE HOUSING.

+THERE ARE ALSO PROVISIONS FOR POSSIBLE EXPANSION IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE AREA TO HOUSE 340 000 OR EVEN 680 000 PEOPLE.+

/THE NEW

THE NEW TOWN WILL HAVE A FULL RANGE OF GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL FACILITIES, WHICH WILL BENEFIT NEWCOMERS AS WELL AS EXISTING RESIDENTS OF NEARBY VILLAGES AT PING SHAN AND HA TSUEN.

+A WIDE RANGE OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENT WORKS WHICH WILL BE BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE TIN SHUI WAI PROJECT WILL ALSO BENEFIT VILLAGES IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS,+ MR WILSON SAID.

+HISTORICALLY, THE AREA IS VULNERABLE TO FLOODS DURING HEAVY RAINS BECAUSE IT IS A LOW-LYING AREA, BUT THERE ARE PROPOSALS TO BUILD A NEW DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND TO DEVELOP A FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME.

+IMPROVEMENTS WILL ALSO BE MADE TO EXISTING ROADS TO ALLOW BETTER ACCESS TO VILLAGES IN THE AREA.+

SINCE THE NEW TOWN WILL BE BUILT ON LOW-LYING LAND CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY FISHPONDS, IT IS PROPOSED TO FILL THE SITE TO A LEVEL HIGHER THAN POTENTIAL FLOOD LEVELS.

VARIOUS SOURCES OF FILL HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED, INCLUDING MARINE FILL FROM DEEP BAY AND THE PEARL RIVER ESTUARY AS WELL AS LAND FILL FROM LOCAL BORROW AREAS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS COMMISSIONED AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TO EXAMINE THE VARIOUS SOURCES OF FILL AND THE METHODS OF OPERATIONS.

+THE PURPOSE IS TO ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES AND TO RECOMMEND WAYS TO MINIMISE ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON CHANGES IDENTIFIED,+ MR WILSON SAID.

+PARTICULAR AREAS BEING LOOKED AT INCLUDE NOISE POLLUTION AND THE ECOLOGY OF OYSTERS AND BIRD LIFE IN DEEP BAY.

+TO ENSURE THAT THE HOUSING PROGRAMME IS NOT DELAYED, WORK ON THE TIN SHUI WAI PROJECT HAS TO START NOW, BEGINNING WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MAJOR DRAINAGE CULVERT WHICH IS THE FIRST STAGE OF THE FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME.

+WORK WILL COMMENCE IN ABOUT TWO MONTHS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ACCESS ROAD TO THE SITE FROM CASTLE PEAK ROAD NEAR HUNG SHUI KIU,+ HE ADDED.

FILLING OF THE SITE IS EXPECTED TO START IN MID-1986. INITIALLY LAND WILL BE FORMED FOR THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT AND THE ADJACENT MAIN DRAINAGE CHANNEL WILL BE CONSTRUCTED.

A FURTHER LAND BANK AREA TO THE NORTH OF THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT ZONE MAY BE FORMED AT A LATER DATE TO CATER FOR POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL EXPANSION.

THE DELEGATION WAS ALSO BRIEFED ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM, THE PROPOSAL FOR THE YUEN LONG-TUEN MUN CORRIDOR, AND THE DESIGN OF YUEN LONG TOWN.

SEPTEMBER PROVISIONAL TRADE FIGURES RELEASED
* * * * *

THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN SEPTEMBER 1984 ROSE BY 28 PER CENT OR \$2 749 MILLION OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR TO REACH \$12 414 MILLION, ACCORDING TO THE PROVISIONAL TRADE FIGURES PUBLISHED TODAY (THURSDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE VALUE OF RE-EXPORTS ALSO INCREASED, BY 41 PER CENT OR \$2 074 MILLION, TO \$7 142 MILLION.

THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS -- DOMESTIC EXPORTS PLUS RE-EXPORTS -- AT \$19 556 MILLION, WAS 33 PER CENT OR \$4 823 MILLION HIGHER THAN A YEAR AGO.

THE VALUE OF IMPORTS WAS \$18 587 MILLION IN SEPTEMBER 1984, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 20 PER CENT OR \$3 093 MILLION OVER THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

AS THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS WAS GREATER THAN THAT OF IMPORTS, THE VISIBLE TRADE ACCOUNT RECORDED A SURPLUS OF \$969 MILLION.

PUTTING THE MONTH'S TRADE FIGURES INTO CONTEXT, A GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS FOR THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1984 WAS \$160 470 MILLION, MADE UP OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS OF \$101 888 MILLION AND RE-EXPORTS OF \$58 582 MILLION.

COMPARED WITH THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1983, THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS HAD INCREASED BY \$49 219 MILLION OR 44 PER CENT, DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY \$29 253 MILLION OR 40 PER CENT, AND RE-EXPORTS BY \$19 966 MILLION OR 52 PER CENT. THE VALUE OF IMPORTS HAD INCREASED BY \$41 202 MILLION OR 34 PER CENT, TO \$163 072 MILLION.

AS THE GROWTH RATE OF THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORTS WAS MUCH FASTER THAN THAT OF IMPORTS, THE VISIBLE TRADE GAP HAD NARROWED TO 2 PER CENT IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1984, FROM 9 PER CENT IN THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

COMMENTING ON THESE COMPARATIVE FIGURES, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT SEPTEMBER 1984 WAS THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE MONTH IN WHICH A VISIBLE TRADE SURPLUS WAS RECORDED AND THAT THE THIRD QUARTER SURPLUS WAS THE FIRST QUARTERLY SURPLUS IN SEVEN YEARS.

HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT THE GROWTH RATES OF THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS, RE-EXPORTS AND IMPORTS HAD ALL SLOWED DOWN IN RECENT MONTHS, DUE PRIMARILY TO THE SUBSTANTIAL RECOVERY IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1983.

THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THIS TREND WILL CONTINUE FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE PRESENTS THE PROVISIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE FIGURES FOR SEPTEMBER 1984:-

TRADE FIGURES FOR SEPTEMBER, 1984

THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT HAS RELEASED THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE FIGURES FOR SEPTEMBER:-

<u>MERCHANDISE:</u>	DOMESTIC EXPORTS	: \$12 414 MILLION
	RE-EXPORTS	: \$ 7 142 MILLION
	TOTAL EXPORTS	: \$19 556 MILLION
	IMPORTS	: \$18 587 MILLION
	TRADE BALANCE	: \$ 969 MILLION (IN SURPLUS)

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

<u>LATEST 3 MONTHS</u>	<u>JULY-SEPTEMBER 1984</u>	<u>JULY-SEPTEMBER 1983</u>	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS	39 248	29 475	+ 9 773	+ 33.2
RE-EXPORTS	21 350	14 640	+ 6 710	+ 45.8
TOTAL EXPORTS	60 598	44 115	+16 483	+ 37.4
IMPORTS	57 517	45 795	+11 722	+ 25.6
TRADE BALANCE	+ 3 081	- 1 680	+ 4 761	

<u>SAME MONTH LAST YEAR</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER 1984</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER 1983</u>	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DEMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	12 414 (63.5%)	9 665 (65.6%)	+ 2 749	+ 28.5
RE-EXPORTS	7 142	5 068	+ 2 074	+ 40.9
TOTAL EXPORTS	19 556	14 733	+ 4 823	+ 32.7
=IMPORTS	18 587	15 494	+ 3 093	+ 20.0
TRADE BALANCE	+ 969	- 761	+ 1 730	

/LAST MONTH

<u>LAST MONTH</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u> 1984	<u>AUGUST</u> 1984	<u>INCREASE OR</u> <u>DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	12 414 (63.5%)	13 739 (65.7%)	- 1 325	- 9.6.
RE-EXPORTS	7 142	7 171	- 29	- 0.4
TOTAL EXPORTS	19 556	20 910	- 1 354	- 6.5
IMPORTS	18 587	19 126	- 539	- 2.8
TRADE BALANCE	+ 969	+ 1 784	- 815	

<u>CALENDAR</u> <u>YEAR TO-DATE</u>	<u>JAN.-SEPTEMBER</u> 1984	<u>JAN.-SEPTEMBER</u> 1983	<u>INCREASE OR</u> <u>DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS (% OF TOTAL EXPORTS)	101 888 (63.5%)	72 635 (65.3%)	+ 29 253	+ 40.3
RE-EXPORTS	58 582	38 616	+ 19 966	+ 51.7
TOTAL EXPORTS	160 470	111 251	+ 49 219	+ 44.2
IMPORTS	163 072	121 870	+ 41 202	+ 33.8
TRADE BALANCE	- 2 602	- 10 619	+ 8 017	

<u>LAST 12 MONTHS</u>	<u>OCTOBER 1983</u> <u>TO</u> <u>SEPTEMBER 1984</u>	<u>OCTOBER 1982</u> <u>TO</u> <u>SEPTEMBER 1983</u>	<u>INCREASE OR</u> <u>DECREASE</u>	
	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	\$ MN.	%
DOMESTIC EXPORTS	133 659	95 243	+ 38 416	+ 40.3
RE-EXPORTS	76 260	50 654	+ 25 606	+ 50.6
TOTAL EXPORTS	209 919	145 897	+ 64 022	+ 43.9
IMPORTS	216 644	160 326	+ 56 318	+ 35.1
TRADE BALANCE	- 6 725	- 14 429	+ 7 704	

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UK MEDICAL GROUP VISITING HK
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A GROUP OF OFFICIALS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY (DHSS) IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, HEADED BY DR E.L. HARRIS, THE DEPUTY CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, ARE IN HONG KONG ON A THREE-DAY VISIT.

THE GROUP HAD EARLIER BEEN TO CHINA FOR DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED PLANS FOR CO-OPERATION IN MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

DR HARRIS AND HIS PARTY ARRIVED IN HONG KONG ON TUESDAY BY TRAIN AND WERE MET BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES (HEALTH SERVICES AND PLANNING), DR S.H. LEE.

YESTERDAY THE GROUP MET THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG.

DR HARRIS TOLD THE DIRECTOR THAT HE AND HIS GROUP WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH THE GENERAL LEVEL OF HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND WITH MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

TODAY THE VISITORS WERE TAKEN ON A TOUR OF TWO OF THE DEPARTMENT'S CLINICS AND THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL IN SHA TIN.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ARE: MRS HARRIS; MRS A.A. POOLE, CHIEF NURSING OFFICER; DR R.M. OLIVER, HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH, DHSS, AND HEAD OF HEALTH AND POPULATION DIVISION TO THE OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE; AND MR G.C.M. LUPTON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIVISION OF DHSS.

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EEC MAKES 'CALL' ON CAT 86
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THE TRADE DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) ANNOUNCED THAT THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY HAS MADE AN EXPORT AUTHORISATION (EA) CALL ON CATEGORY 86 IN RESPECT OF EXPORTS TO THE U.K.

THE PRODUCTS UNDER THIS CATEGORY ARE: CORSETS, CORSET-BELTS, SUSPENDER-BELTS, BRACES, SUSPENDERS, GARTERS AND THE LIKE (INCLUDING SUCH ARTICLES OF KNITTED OR CROCHETED FABRIC), OTHER THAN BRASSIERES, WHETHER OR NOT ELASTIC.

PENDING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, THE DEPARTMENT HAS SUSPENDED THE ISSUE OF FURTHER EXPORT AUTHORISATIONS FOR THIS CATEGORY AS FROM 8.45 AM TODAY.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO ISSUE EXPORT LICENCES FOR THIS CATEGORY AGAINST VALID EXPORT AUTHORISATIONS APPROVED PRIOR TO THE SUSPENSION.

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CENTRE PRAISED FOR SEAMEN TRAINING
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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION (IMO), MR C.P. SRIVASTAVA, TODAY COMMENDED THE SEAMEN'S TRAINING TEMPORARY CENTRE OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL (VTC) AT LITTLE SAI WAN FOR THE HIGH STANDARD OF TRAINING IT OFFERED TO LOCAL SEAMEN.

MR SRIVASTAVA WAS PAYING AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE CENTRE THIS MORNING, ACCOMPANIED BY MR MORRIS MORGAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE VTC, AND MR FRANK CHAO, CHAIRMAN OF THE MERCHANT NAVY TRAINING BOARD.

HE SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED BY THE EFFICIENT RUNNING OF THE COURSES, AND THE HIGH QUALITY OF TRAINING STAFF AND FACILITIES AT THE CENTRE.

HE IS VISITING HONG KONG TO LOOK OVER FACILITIES AVAILABLE LOCALLY, SO AS TO ENABLE HONG KONG SEAMEN TO MEET REQUIREMENTS OF THE IMO'S CONVENTION OF STANDARD OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS, 1978 (STCW).

THE CONVENTION, MAKES IT MANDATORY FOR WATCHKEEPING RATINGS TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE QUALIFYING THEM TO TAKE UP NAVIGATIONAL AND ENGINE ROOM WATCHKEEPING DUTIES ON BOARD SHIP.

+SINCE THE OPENING OF THE CENTRE IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, ABOUT 500 SEAMEN HAVE COMPLETED THE SIX-WEEK TRAINING COURSE AND OBTAINED THE NECESSARY CERTIFICATES TO ENABLE THEM TO CONTINUE IN THEIR EMPLOYMENT,+ MR MORGAN SAID.

MR SRIVASTAVA SAID THAT THE IMO WOULD SUPPORT THE VTC'S PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT SEAMEN'S TRAINING CENTRE IN HONG KONG, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ITS ROLE AS A MAJOR SHIPPING OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN THE WORLD.

ESTABLISHED IN 1958, THE IMO IS WELL ESTABLISHED AS A WORLD FORUM FOR TECHNICAL MATTERS CONCERNED WITH THE SAFETY OF SHIPPING AND THE PREVENTION OF MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPS. ITS HEADQUARTERS ARE IN LONDON.

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INTELPOST EXTENDED TO BRAZIL

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FROM TUESDAY (OCTOBER 30), INTELPOST (INTERNATIONAL ELECTRONIC POST) NETWORK FROM HONG KONG WILL BE EXTENDED TO BRAZIL, A POST OFFICE SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TODAY.

+INTELPOST ITEMS POSTED IN HONG KONG BEFORE 6 PM WOULD BE DELIVERED THE SAME DAY IN SAO PAULO, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRASILIA AND 20 OTHER CITIES. ITEMS FOR OTHER AREAS IN BRAZIL WOULD BE DELIVERED ON THE NEXT WORKING DAY,+ HE SAID.

+INTELPOST IS IDEAL FOR SENDING URGENTLY NEEDED LETTERS, REPORTS, CHARTS, DRAWINGS, QUOTATIONS OR CONTRACTS NOT ONLY TO BRAZIL BUT TO 15 OTHER COUNTRIES INCLUDING THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES.

+THE DOCUMENTS, WHICH ARE HANDLED WITH CARE AND CONFIDENTIALITY, ARE SCANNED, CONVERTED INTO HIGH SPEED ELECTRONIC IMPULSES AND TRANSMITTED DIRECT TO THE RECEIVING STATION IN THE DISTANT COUNTRY,+ HE SAID.

THE COPY SENT FROM HONG KONG IS ENVELOPED AND DELIVERED IN BRAZIL TO THE ADDRESSEE BY SPECIAL MESSENGER OR NORMAL POST OFFICE SERVICES DEPENDING ON THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SENDER.

ALTERNATIVELY, ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE FOR COLLECTION FROM A POST OFFICE.

THE CHARGE FOR THE SERVICE TO BRAZIL WILL BE:-

FOR THE FIRST SIDE OF AN A4 SHEET OF PAPER \$70

FOR EACH SUBSEQUENT A4 SIDE SENT TO THE SAME ADDRESSEE AT THE SAME TIME \$35

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT INTELPOST IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES, ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, FRANCE, THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, LUXEMBOURG, MACAU, MALAYSIA, THE NETHERLANDS, PORTUGAL, QATAR, AND SWEDEN.

+INTELPOST IS ALREADY ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST PUBLIC ELECTRONIC MAIL SERVICES, AND IT IS STILL GROWING FAST,+ HE SAID.

PEOPLE WISHING TO USE THE SERVICE SHOULD HAND OVER THEIR DOCUMENTS AT EITHER THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, CONNAUGHT PLACE, OR THE TSIM SHA TSUI POST OFFICE AT 10 MIDDLE ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI. THOSE WITH FACSIMILE MACHINES IN THEIR OFFICES CAN ARRANGE TO TRANSMIT THEIR ITEMS DIRECT TO THE POST OFFICE INTELPOST TERMINAL IN THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

FURTHER INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE INTELPOST REPRESENTATIVE ON TELEPHONE 5-2671148.

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DB TO DISCUSS BUILDING MANAGEMENT SCHEME
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THE YAU MA TEI DISTRICT BOARD WILL MEET TOMORROW (FRIDAY) TO DISCUSS WHETHER A RECENT PILOT SCHEME ON MULTI-STOREY BUILDING MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO OTHER MISMANAGED BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT.

THE SCHEME, COMPLETED RECENTLY, WAS DESIGNED TO PREVENT THE FURTHER DETERIORATION OF SEVERAL PRIVATE MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS WHETHER TWO SUB-COMMITTEES SHOULD BE FORMED TO CONDUCT AND CO-ORDINATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN AND THE 1985 INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR.

THEY WILL ALSO GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE WHITE PAPER ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE AND WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE LATEST SITUATION OF THE TSIM SHA TSUI EAST TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE THE REVIEW OF THE BOARD FUNDS, PROGRESS REPORTS ON COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH BOARD MEMBERS, THE DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE AND VARIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

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70 MEN, WOMEN IN MARTIAL ARTS FINALS
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THE FINALS OF THE CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS SELF-ATTAINMENT AWARD COMPETITION WILL BE HELD AT THE MACPHERSON STADIUM, MONG KOK ON SATURDAY EVENING.

MORE THAN 70 MEN AND WOMEN FINALISTS WILL COMPETE IN FOUR DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES. AND SEVEN TEAMS WILL DEMONSTRATE THEIR SKILLS IN THE FINALS OF GROUP PERFORMANCE.

THEY WERE SELECTED FROM 350 PARTICIPANTS WHO TOOK PART IN THE SEMI-FINALS HELD LAST SUNDAY.

WINNERS WILL BE AWARDED PRIZES AT A CEREMONY TO BE HELD AT ABOUT 9.30 PM AT THE SAME PLACE.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION, MR LAM KIN-MING HAS BEEN INVITED TO OFFICIATE AT THE CEREMONY AND THE CHIEF RECREATION AND SPORT OFFICER (SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE), MR RAYMOND CHAN WILL MAKE A WELCOMING SPEECH.

THE EVENT IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE RECREATION AND SPORTS SERVICE OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION.

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FIRE OFFICERS HOLDING RELAY RACE
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SOME 150 OFFICERS AND MEN, AS WELL AS CIVILIAN STAFF OF THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL TAKE PART IN THE DEPARTMENT'S ANNUAL PEAK RELAY RACE ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG FIRE COMMAND AT 3 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE RACE WILL START FROM HARLECH ROAD, NEAR THE PEAK CAFE, AND FINISH AT THE SAME PLACE.

EACH TEAM WILL BE MADE UP OF FIVE RUNNERS WHO WILL EACH HAVE TO COMPLETE A RUN OF 3.5 KILOMETRES AROUND THE PEAK.

THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR JOHN MARCH, WILL START OFF THE RELAY RACE AND PRESENT TROPHIES AND BANNERS TO WINNERS.

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VARIETY SHOW HEADS MONG KOK FESTIVAL
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A VARIETY SHOW ENTITLED '+MUSIC FROM THE COMMUNITY+', WILL BE HELD AT THE CHAN HING SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRE TOMORROW (FRIDAY) TO MARK THE OPENING OF THE MONG KOK DISTRICT CULTURAL AND SPORTS FESTIVAL.

IT WILL FEATURE PERFORMANCES BY LOCAL AMATEUR SINGERS.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE CEREMONY. ALSO PRESENT WILL BE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FESTIVAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MR LAM KIM-MING AND THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR BOWEN LEUNG.

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TSUEN WAN HOLDING +ROAD SAFETY NIGHT+
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THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT ROAD SAFETY NIGHT WILL BE HELD AT SHA TSUI ROAD PLAYGROUND TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE EVENT IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE DISTRICT'S ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD, DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE POLICE.

THE PROGRAMME, STARTING AT 6 PM, WILL INCLUDE A CHILDREN'S DRAWING COMPETITION, GAMES STALLS, PERFORMANCE BY THE TVB VITALITY TEAM, ROAD SAFETY PATROL PARADE AND A MINI ROAD SAFETY TOWN.

THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ANGUS MUI; THE DISTRICT COMMANDER, MR D.J. GALLOWAY; AND SENIOR STAFF OFFICER OF TRAFFIC POLICE-NEW TERRITORIES, MR D.G. ROBINSON, WILL OFFICIATE AT AN OPENING CEREMONY AT 8 PM.

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NEW MAXICAB SERVICE IN WONG TAI SIN
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A NEW MAXICAB SERVICE WILL START RUNNING BETWEEN TSZ WAN SHAN (LOK CHING HOUSE) AND WONG TAI SIN MTR STATION FROM TUESDAY (OCTOBER 30).

THE SERVICE, NO. 37M, WILL RUN EVERY TWO MINUTES, AT A FARE OF 80 CENTS.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT TO AVOID WASTEFUL COMPETITION, AND TO PROVIDE A MORE COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC LIGHT BUS SERVICE FOR THE LOCAL COMMUTERS IN THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT, THE EXISTING PLB SERVICES AFFECTED BY THE NEW MAXICAB ROUTE WILL BE RE-ARRANGED AND WILL START OPERATING ON THE SAME DAY. AGREEMENT ON THIS WAS REACHED FOLLOWING MEETINGS BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE PLB OPERATORS CONCERNED.

THE RE-ARRANGED PLB ROUTES WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORT LINKS BETWEEN WANG TAU HOM AND SAN PO KONG, TSZ WAN SHAN AND LOWER WONG TAI SIN, AND KAI YIP ESTATE AND MONG KOK.

TO FACILITATE THE OPERATION OF THE RE-ROUTED PLB SERVICES, NEW PLB STANDS WILL BE DESIGNATED AT WAI WAH STREET, SHA TIN PASS ROAD (SOUTH OF LUNG CHEUNG ROAD) AND WANG TAU HOM CENTRAL ROAD.

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SEMINAR ON DRUG ABUSE FOR TEACHERS

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A SEMINAR ON DRUG ABUSE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF SOCIAL STUDIES AND ETHICAL AND MORAL EDUCATION, WILL BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 29 AT THE THEATRE, MAY HOUSE, ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE, ARSENAL STREET, HONG KONG, FROM 2 PM TO 4.30 PM.

THE SEMINAR IS ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY.

THE AIMS OF THE SEMINAR ARE TO ACQUAINT TEACHERS WITH THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE DRUG PROBLEM IN HONG KONG, TO EXPLORE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF EDUCATING PUPILS ON THE PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE AND TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHERS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS.

THE PROGRAMME WILL INCLUDE TALKS, SLIDE SHOWS, DISCUSSION AND A TOUR OF THE NARCOTICS BUREAU MUSEUM.

OWING TO LIMITED SEATING CAPACITY, ACCEPTANCE TO THE SEMINAR WILL BE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

SCHOOL HEADS WISHING TO NOMINATE TEACHERS TO ATTEND SHOULD SEND THEIR COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS TO THE SENIOR INSPECTOR, RELIGIOUS - ETHICAL EDUCATION, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, 5/F., LEE GARDENS, HONG KONG, BEFORE NOVEMBER 10.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE AT 5-8392483.

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ARTS COUNCIL LOOKING FOR LOGO

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THE EASTERN DISTRICT ARTS COUNCIL IS NOW LOOKING FOR A LOGO TO ENHANCE ITS IMAGE.

A DESIGN COMPETITION HAS BEEN LAUNCHED TO FIND A LOGO WHICH CAN REFLECT THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AS WELL AS SHOW THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISTRICT.

ALL DESIGNS SHOULD BE DRAWN ON A WHITE DRAWING PAPER MEASURING 30 CM BY 30 CM, AND NOT MORE THAN THREE COLOURS SHOULD BE USED FOR EACH DESIGN.

PEOPLE TAKING PART IN THE COMPETITION SHOULD PUT THEIR NAME, SEX, AGE, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND IDENTITY CARD NUMBER AT THE BACK OF THE DRAWING.

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THERE ARE NO RESTRICTIONS ON THE NUMBER OF ENTRIES, WHICH SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE AT 880-886 KING'S ROAD; OR ITS SUB-OFFICES IN CAUSEWAY BAY, SHAU KEI WAN AND CHAI WAN BY NOVEMBER 19.

ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ARTS COUNCIL.

INFORMATION LEAFLETS ON THE COMPETITION ARE AVAILABLE AT THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE AND ITS SUB-OFFICES.

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MOVING OFFICE

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THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS UNIT OFFICE WILL MOVE TOMORROW (FRIDAY), TO THE GROUND FLOOR OF GUARDIAN HOUSE, AT 32 OI KWAN ROAD, WAN CHAI.

THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE UNIT WILL BE AS FOLLOWS: 5-732484; AND 5-756521, EXT. 265.

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GLOUCESTER ROAD FLYOVER OPENS

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THE NEW GLOUCESTER ROAD FLYOVER LEADING FROM GLOUCESTER ROAD NORTHBOUND TO VICTORIA PARK ROAD WESTBOUND WILL BE OPENED TO TRAFFIC FROM 10 AM ON MONDAY (OCTOBER 29).

AT THE SAME TIME, THE SECTION OF GLOUCESTER ROAD NORTHBOUND, NORTH OF KINGSTON STREET, WILL BE RE-OPENED TO TRAFFIC.

NORTHBOUND VEHICLES FROM TAI HANG ROAD FLYOVER MAY USE THE NEW FLYOVER TO GO TO CENTRAL OR THE RE-OPENED GLOUCESTER ROAD SECTION TO OTHER PARTS OF CAUSEWAY BAY, BUT THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TURN LEFT INTO KINGSTON STREET.

THE NEW FLYOVER WILL BE PROHIBITED TO CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS, AND NO VEHICLE WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS.

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SEA WATER PUMPING FACILITIES
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THE ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE OF THE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT HAS AWARDED A \$1.5 MILLION CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING TWO PUMP SETS FOR A SEA WATER PUMPING STATION IN TUEN MUN.

LOCATED AT THE EASTERN TIP OF THE RECLAMATION AT CASTLE PEAK BAY, THE 200-SQUARE-METRE PUMPING STATION WILL SUPPLY SEA WATER TO THE TUEN MUN CULTURAL COMPLEX UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN THE CENTRE OF THE NEW TOWN.

WORK, EXPECTED TO TAKE SEVEN MONTHS TO COMPLETE, INCLUDES THE PROVISION OF VENTILATION AND FIRE FIGHTING SYSTEMS AND ELECTRICAL FIXING FOR THE STATION.

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